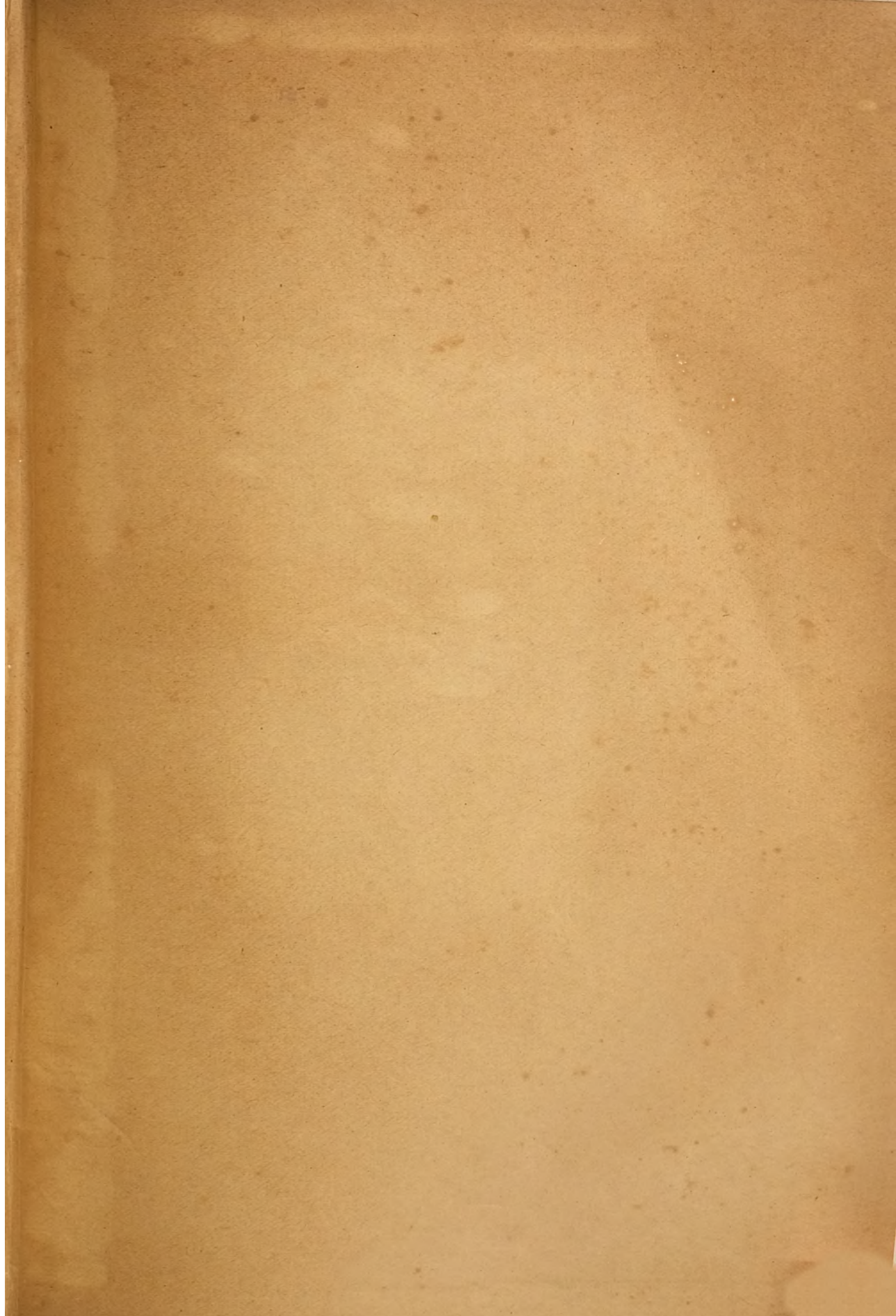


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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

VOL. XV

*Being the Monthly issues
January 1925 to December 1925*

LONDON: 38 SOHO SQUARE, W.1

W. & R. CHAMBERS, LIMITED.

EDINBURGH: 339 HIGH STREET

1925

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1925

Printed in Great Britain.
W. & R. CHAMBERS, LTD., LONDON and EDINBURGH.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

‘TIS SIXTY YEARS SINCE.’

THOMAS HARDY AND *CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL*.

1865. OUR GREATEST CONTRIBUTOR. 1925.

FIRST and Foremost among its living Contributors *Chambers's Journal* is proud to reckon Thomas Hardy, O.M.—and G.O.M. of English Letters. Sixty summers have come and gone since he made his first appearance in print—in these pages.

It was at the beginning of the year 1865 that Mr Hardy sent us ‘How I Built myself a House.’ This diverting little sketch, he himself informs us, was written ‘to amuse some architect’s pupils I was associated with.’ It was published in *Chambers's Journal* for March 18, 1865, and with the author’s kind concurrence we reprint it in this issue—the subject never having been of greater actuality than it is to-day. In those far-off times Mr Hardy was a rising young architect of four-and-twenty, winning prizes for designs, and not yet looking for laurels in the arena of literature. But soon he was to turn from storeys to stories, and the three-score years that have intervened have established him, as poet and as prose-writer, the revered Doyen of English writers, the unchallenged head of our Contemporary Literature.

To mark this Diamond Jubilee of so eminent a contributor we have pleasure in printing below a hitherto unpublished poem of Mr Hardy’s, which makes a happy companion picture to the sixty-year-old sketch. It would, we believe, be difficult, if not impossible, to find in the periodical literature of any country a parallel case of contributions to the same Journal by the same master pen with a span of sixty years between them. On this unique achievement we congratulate Mr Hardy—and we congratulate ourselves.

And at this, the outset of a New Year, we would express the hope that, throughout 1925, the homes of all our readers and of those who, like Mr Hardy, have spoken to them through our columns, may never lack, within doors and without, voices that ring with an infectious ‘Joy at being Alive.’

THE EDITOR.

A BIRD-SCENE AT A RURAL DWELLING.

WHEN the inmate stirs, the birds retire discreetly
From the window-ledge, whereon they whistled sweetly
And on the step of the door
In the misty morning hoar;
But now the dweller is up they flee
To the long-armed neighbouring codlin-tree;
And when he comes fully forth they seek the garden,
And call from the lofty costard, as asking pardon
For shouting so near before
In their joy at being alive—
Meanwhile the halting clock within strikes five.

I know a domicile of brown and green,
Where for a hundred summers there have been
Just such enactments, just such day-breaks seen.

THOMAS HARDY.

HOW I BUILT MYSELF A HOUSE.

By THOMAS HARDY.

[Reprinted from *Chambers's Journal* for March 18, 1865.]

My wife Sophia, myself, and the beginning of a happy line, formerly lived in the suburbs of London, in the sort of house called a Highly-Desirable Semi-detached Villa. But in reality our residence was the very opposite of what we wished it to be. We had no room for our friends when they visited us, and we were obliged to keep our coals out of doors in a heap against the back-wall. If we managed to squeeze a few acquaintances round our table to dinner, there was very great difficulty in serving it; and on such occasions the maid, for want of sideboard room, would take to putting the dishes in the staircase, or on stools and chairs in the passage, so that if anybody else came after we had sat down, he usually went away again, disgusted at seeing the remains of what we had already got through standing in these places, and perhaps the celery waiting in a corner hard by. It was therefore only natural that on wet days, chimney-sweepings, and those cleaning times when chairs may be seen with their legs upwards, a tub blocking a doorway, and yourself walking about edgeways among the things, we called the villa hard names, and that we resolved to escape from it as soon as it would be politic, in a monetary sense, to carry out a notion which had long been in our minds.

This notion was to build a house of our own a little further out of town than where we had hitherto lived. The new residence was to be right and proper in every respect. It was to be of some mysterious size and proportion, which would make us both peculiarly happy ever afterwards—that had always been a settled thing. It was neither to cost too much nor too little, but just enough to fitly inaugurate the new happiness. Its situation was to be in a healthy spot, on a stratum of dry gravel, about ninety feet above the springs. There were to be trees to the north, and a pretty view to the south. It was also to be easily accessible by rail.

Eighteen months ago, a third baby being our latest blessing, we began to put the above-mentioned ideas into practice. As the house itself, rather than its position, is what I wish particularly to speak of, I will not dwell upon the innumerable difficulties that were to be overcome before a suitable spot could be found. Maps marked out in little pink and green oblongs clinging to a winding road, became as familiar to my eyes as my own hand. I learned, too, all about the coloured plans of Land to be Let for Building Purposes, which are exhibited at railway stations and in agents' windows—that sketches of cabbages in rows, or artistically irregular, meant large trees that would afford a

cooling shade when they had been planted and had grown up—that patches of blue shewed fishponds and fountains; and that a wide straight road to the edge of the map was the way to the station, a corner of which was occasionally shewn, as if it would come within a convenient distance, disguise the fact as the owners might.

After a considerable time had been spent in these studies, I began to see that some of our intentions in the matter of site must be given up. The trees to the north went first. After a short struggle, they were followed by the ninety feet above the springs. Sophia, with all wifely tenacity, stuck to the pretty view long after I was beaten about the gravel subsoil. In the end, we decided upon a place imagined to be rather convenient, and rather healthy, but possessing no other advantage worth mentioning. I took it on a lease for the established period, ninety-nine years.

We next thought about an architect. A friend of mine, who sometimes sends a paper on art and science to the magazines, strongly recommended a Mr Penny, a gentleman whom he considered to have architectural talent of every kind, but if he was a trifle more skilful in any one branch of his profession than in another, it was in designing excellent houses for families of moderate means. I at once proposed to Sophia that we should think over some arrangement of rooms which would be likely to suit us, and then call upon the architect, that he might put our plan into proper shape.

I made my sketch, and my wife made hers. Her drawing and dining rooms were very large, nearly twice the size of mine, though her doors and windows shewed sound judgment. We soon found that there was no such thing as fitting our ideas together, do what we would. When we had come to no conclusion at all, we called at Mr Penny's office. I began telling him my business, upon which he took a sheet of foolscap, and made numerous imposing notes, with large brackets and dashes to them. Sitting there with him in his office, surrounded by rolls of paper, circles, squares, triangles, compasses, and many other of the inventions which have been sought out by men from time to time, and perceiving that all these were the realities which had been faintly shadowed forth to me by Euclid some years before, it is no wonder that I became a puppet in his hands. He settled everything in a miraculous way. We were told the only possible size we could have the rooms, the only way we should be allowed to go upstairs, and the exact quantity of wine we might order at once, so as to fit the wine-cellar he had in his head. His professional opinions,

propelled by his facts, seemed to float into my mind whether I wished to receive them or not. I thought at the time that Sophia, from her silence, was in the same helpless state; but she has since told me it was quite otherwise, and that she was only a little tired.

I had been very anxious all along that the stipulated cost, eighteen hundred pounds, should not be exceeded, and I impressed this again upon Mr Penny.

'I will give you an approximate estimate for the sort of thing we are thinking of,' he said. 'Linem.' (This was the clerk.)

'Did you speak, sir?'

'Forty-nine by fifty-four by twenty-eight, twice fourteen by thirty-one by eleven, and several small items which we will call one hundred and sixty.'

'Eighty-two thousand four hundred'—

'But eighteen hundred at the very outside,' I began, 'is what'—

'Feet, my dear sir—feet, cubic feet,' said Mr Penny. 'Put it down at sixpence a foot, Linem, remainders not an object.'

'Two thousand two hundred pounds.' This was too much.

'Well, try it at something less, leaving out all below hundreds, Linem.'

'About eighteen hundred and seventy pounds.'

'Very satisfactory, in my opinion,' said Mr Penny turning to me. 'What do you think?'

'You are so particular, John,' interrupted my wife. 'I am sure it is exceedingly moderate: elegance and extreme cheapness never do go together.'

(It may be here remarked that Sophia never calls me 'my dear' before strangers. She considers that, like the ancient practice in besieged cities of throwing loaves over the walls, it really denotes a want rather than an abundance of them within.)

I did not trouble the architect any further, and we rose to leave.

'Be sure you make a nice conservatory, Mr Penny,' said my wife; 'something that has character about it. If it could only be in the Chinese style, with beautiful ornaments at the corners, like Mrs Smith's, only better,' she continued, turning to me with a glance in which a broken tenth commandment might have been seen.

'Some sketches shall be forwarded, which I think will suit you,' answered Mr Penny pleasantly, looking as if he had possessed for some years a complete guide to the minds of all people who intended to build.

It is needless to go through the whole history of the plan-making. A builder had been chosen, and the house marked out, when we went down to the place one morning to see how the foundations looked.

It is a strange fact, that a person's new house drawn in outline on the ground where it is to stand, looks ridiculously and inconveniently

small. The notion it gives one is, that any portion of one's after-life spent within such boundaries must of necessity be rendered wretched on account of bruises daily received by running against the partitions, doorposts, and fireplaces. In my case, the lines shewing sitting-rooms seemed to denote cells; the kitchen looked as if it might develop into a large box; whilst the study appeared to consist chiefly of a fireplace and a door. We were told that houses always looked so; but Sophia's disgust at the sight of such a diminutive drawing-room was not to be lessened by any scientific reasoning. Six feet longer—four feet then—three it must be, she argued; and the room was accordingly lengthened. I felt rather relieved when at last I got her off the ground, and on the road home.

The building gradually crept upwards, and put forth chimneys. We were standing beside it one day, looking at the men at work on the top, when the builder's foreman came towards us.

'Being your own house, sir, and as we are finishing the last chimney, you would perhaps like to go up,' he said.

'I am sure I should much, if I were a man,' was my wife's observation to me. 'The landscape must appear so lovely from that height.'

This remark placed me in something of a dilemma, for it must be confessed that I am not given to climbing. The sight of cliffs, roofs, scaffoldings, and elevated places in general, which have no sides to keep people from slipping off, always causes me to feel how infinitely preferable a position at the bottom is to a position at the top of them. But as my house was by no means lofty, and it was but for once, I said I would go up.

My knees felt a good deal in the way as I ascended the ladder; but that was not so disagreeable as the thrill which passed through me as I followed my guide along two narrow planks, one bending beneath each foot. However, having once started, I kept on, and next climbed another ladder, thin and weak-looking, and not tied at the top. I could not help thinking, as I viewed the horizon between the steps, what a shocking thing it would be if any part should break; and to get rid of the thought, I adopted the device of mentally criticising the leading articles in that morning's *Times*; but as the plan did not answer, I tried to fancy that, though strangely enough it seemed otherwise, I was only four feet from the ground. This was a failure too; and just as I had commenced upon an idea that great quantities of feather-beds were spread below, I reached the top scaffold.

'Rather high,' I said to the foreman, trying, but failing to appear unconcerned.

'Well, no,' he answered; 'nothing to what it is sometimes (I'll just trouble you not to step upon the end of that plank there, as it will turn over); though you may as well fall from here as

from the top of the Monument for the matter of life being quite extinct when they pick you up,' he continued, looking around at the weather and the crops, as it were.

Then a workman, with a load of bricks, stamped along the boards, and overturned them at my feet, causing me to shake up and down like the little servant-men behind private cabs. I asked, in trepidation, if the bricks were not dangerously heavy, thinking of a newspaper paragraph headed 'Frightful Accident from an Overloaded Scaffold.'

'Just what I was going to say. Dan has certainly too many there,' answered the man. 'But it won't break down if we walk without springing, and don't sneeze, though the mortar-boy's hooping-cough was strong enough in my poor brother Jim's case,' he continued abstractedly, as if he himself possessed several necks, and could afford to break one or two.

My wife was picking daisies a little distance off, apparently in a state of complete indifference as to whether I was on the scaffold, at the foot of it, or in St George's Hospital; so I roused myself for a descent, and tried the small ladder. I cannot accurately say how I did get down; but during that performance, my body seemed perforated by holes, through which breezes blew in all directions. As I got nearer the earth, they went away. It may be supposed that my wife's notion of the height differed considerably from my own, and she inquired particularly for the landscape, which I had quite forgotten; but the discovery of that fact did not cause me to break a resolution not to trouble my chimneys again.

Beyond a continual anxiety and frequent journeyings along the sides of a triangle, of which the old house, the new house, and the architect's office were the corners, nothing worth mentioning happened till the building was nearly finished. Sophia's ardour in the business, which at the beginning was so intense, had nearly burned itself out, so I was left pretty much to myself in getting over the later difficulties. Amongst them was the question of a porch. I had often been annoyed whilst waiting outside a door on a wet day at being exposed to the wind and rain, and it was my favourite notion that I would have a model porch whenever I should build a house. Thus it was very vexing to recollect, just as the workmen were finishing off, that I had never mentioned the subject to Mr Penny, and that he had not suggested anything about one to me.

'A porch or no porch is entirely a matter of personal feeling and taste,' was his remark, in answer to a complaint from me; 'so, of course, I did not put one without its being mentioned. But it happens that in this case it would be an improvement—a feature, in fact. There is this objection, that the roof will close up the window of the little place on the landing; but we may

get ventilation by making an opening higher up, if you don't mind a trifling darkness, or rather gloom.'

My first thought was that this might tend to reduce myself and family to a state of chronic melancholy; but remembering there were reflectors advertised to throw sunlight into any nook almost, I agreed to the inconvenience, for the sake of the porch, though I found afterwards that the gloom was for all time, the patent reflector, naturally enough, sending its spot of light against the opposite wall, where it was not wanted, and leaving none about the landing, where it was.

In getting a house built for a specified sum by contract with a builder, there is a certain pit-fall into which unwary people are sure to step—this accident is technically termed 'getting into extras.' It is evident that the only way to get out again without making a town-talk about yourself, is to pay the builder a large sum of money over and above the contract amount—the value of course of the extras. In the present case, I knew very well that the perceptible additions would have to be paid for. Common sense, and Mr Penny himself perhaps, should have told me a little more distinctly that I must pay if I said 'yes' to questions whether I preferred one window a trifle larger than it was originally intended, another a trifle smaller, second thoughts as to where a doorway should be, and so on. Then came a host of things 'not included'—a sink in the scullery, a rain-water tank and a pump, a trap-door into the roof, a scraper, a weather-cock and four letters, ventilators in the nursery, same in the kitchen, all of which worked vigorously enough, but the wrong way; patent remarkable bell-pulls; a royal letters extraordinary kitchen-range, which it would cost exactly threepence three-farthings to keep a fire in for twelve hours, and yet cook any joint in any way, warm up what was left yesterday, boil the vegetables, and do the ironing. But not keeping a strict account of all these expenses, and thinking myself safe in Mr Penny's hands from any enormous increase, I was astounded to find that the additions altogether came to some hundreds of pounds. I could almost go through the worry of building another house, to shew how carefully I would avoid getting into extras again.

Then they have to be wound up. A surveyor is called in from somewhere, and, by a fiction, his heart's desire is supposed to be that you shall not be overcharged one halfpenny by the builder for the additions. The builder names a certain sum as the value of a portion—say double its worth, the surveyor then names a sum, about half its true value. They then fight it out by word of mouth, and gradually bringing their valuations nearer and nearer together, at last meet in the middle. All my accounts underwent this operation.

A Families-removing van carried our furniture and effects to the new building without giving us much trouble; but a number of vexing little incidents occurred on our settling down, which I should have felt more deeply had not a sort of Martinmas summer of Sophia's interest in the affair now set in, and lightened them considerably. Smoke was one of our nuisances. On lighting the study-fire, every particle of smoke came curling into the room. In our trouble, we sent for the architect, who immediately asked if we had tried the plan of opening the register to cure

it. We had not, but we did so, and the smoke ascended at once. The last thing I remember was Sophia jumping up one night and frightening me out of my senses with the exclamation: 'O that builder! Not a single bar of any sort is there to the nursery-windows. John, some day those poor little children will tumble out in their innocence—how should they know better?—and be dashed to pieces. Why *did* you put the nursery on the second floor?' And you may be sure that some bars were put up the very next morning.

HIS CLUB.

By ALAN SULLIVAN, Author of *Man's Work*, &c.

I.

PETTIGREW arrived every day at the club just as the big clock in the hall pointed to eleven. The clock was silent, like every other appanage of that august establishment. To belong to the Guelph had meant something in the past, though perhaps not so much of late. The average age of its members was about sixty.

He came in, taking always the same number of steps, gave the same friendly, little nod to the hall porter, hung coat, stick, and hat on the same peg, proceeded by the same route to the reading-room, and began with the same paper.

To little Pettigrew there was nothing humdrum in all this. It represented life and the fullness thereof. He had been a member now for nearly forty years. The man who put him up, and the other two who seconded, were long since dead. They had not thought of introducing him to any of the other members before they died, and, of course, Pettigrew had not introduced himself. The Guelph wasn't the sort of club where one did that. So he hadn't met any of them personally; though he knew most of them to nod to, and all the distinguished ones by name.

It pleased him very much when they nodded back, a short British nod that took everything for granted and then promptly dismissed it. It was sufficient all round that they were all members here; therefore beyond any question or breath of uncertainty. For the first few years he used to hope that matters would progress further, and that some of them would casually drop into a chair at his table. But nothing happened. Thinking it over, as he did many a time, Pettigrew decided that perhaps it was just as well. It would only have meant bridge, or whist, and this he could not afford.

The Guelph was, of course, Pettigrew's home, the home of both body and spirit, and he loved it more than anything in the world. He loved its vastness and sombre distinction, the vista

of great rooms with red marble columns—where the foot sank noiseless and everything was cushioned against the outer world, so that the drone and rumble of London were reduced to the merest faint vibration. He loved the wide fireplaces where huge piles of coal blazed on the slightest provocation, and the deep, brown leather chairs, against whose backs might be seen resting at certain hours the same heads, white, grizzled, or bald. He liked the long tables, also leather-topped, on which hundreds of papers and periodicals seemed to rearrange themselves continually, no matter what disorder was created. And, not least, he liked the dining-room with its glass like diamonds, and the lustre of silver and linen, and the gravity of the waiters, each with his own two tables—waiters who seemed to have sublimated all personal desire and emotion in one grave offering of themselves. How quiet they were—how completely attentive—how well they understood and remembered. Not meals these, but sacraments, thought little Pettigrew, being of a reverential nature himself.

What most men feel in their clubs is that here they are safe from something. It may be from emotion, or anxieties—of which there are too many outside reminders—or debtors, creditors or duns, or certain officious friends, or enemies, or women—or the lack of them—or children, business or the lack of business, or conversation, formality or informality. To put an impregnable wall between its members and all this, when desired, is the first office of every good club. That is why addresses are not given by the hall porter, nor any shred of information which might expose a member to anything whatever in the way of discomfort or intrusion. That is why sane men cling to their club as a drowning man grasps a floating spar. It is the one thing in the world meant solely for him.

II.

Little Pettigrew grasped more firmly than all the others. He had no business or creditors or

women or children to escape from. He had nothing except the club—and a bare sufficiency to be a member.

When he was sixty-eight—he was seventy now—the greater part of his savings was lost in the preferred stock of a foreign railway. The thing shocked him horribly, and there had been an element of unfairness about the catastrophe. Thousands of others were in a similar box. With them he hoped for a year or so to get something out of the wreck, then surrendered to the inevitable. There remained to him the sum of fifteen hundred pounds in British Consols, but the interest on this was negligible as an income. So Pettigrew decided to live on his capital.

He worked it out in a characteristic fashion. After consulting all the insurance records he could get hold of, it appeared, judging by averages, that he might reckon another five years of life. That would bring him to seventy-four. Three hundred a year for five years, with a little interest—constantly decreasing—coming in. The interest would give him something to play with. He budgeted, however, on the three hundred, and, this settled, felt a good deal happier.

There was, of course, the matter of his heart, which might upset everything. He had known about it for years, but the best advice he could get was, that if he continued to take the same care of himself as he did now there was no reason why he should not attain a good, round age. It was a case of 'a quiet, equable life, no excitement—no running upstairs or after a bus; better not smoke; glass of sherry at lunch, small whisky and soda at dinner. You can tell by the feel of the thing when you're overdoing it—five guineas, please—thank you—good morning.'

Ever since then he had gone to Harley Street on the second of January, and on the same errand. The great specialist was getting older too, he could see that, and in their jointly declining years these two white-haired old gentlemen, each a little nearer the goal, used to wonder in the back of their heads which of them would reach it first. Then Pettigrew always betook himself to the Guelph, read the *Morning Post* in the east chair of the west bay-window, inspected the sodden expanse of St James's Park, and partook of lunch with one small sherry, feeling that it was pretty clear sailing for the next twelvemonth. After lunch he had a nap in the silence room, took a leisurely stroll in Hyde Park round by The Row, the bandstand, and Stanhope Gate, and reached the club in comfortable time for tea. The rest of the day was very simple.

The other part of Pettigrew's life was spent in a single room off the Edgware Road, an address he had never given to the hall porter. He prepared his own breakfast of tea, toast,

marmalade, and one boiled egg. When eggs cost over twopence each, the really good ones, he had a kipper. In one corner of the room were some hooks behind a dingy chintz where he kept his four suits. These, he reckoned, would see him through. Beneath, on a shelf, were his shoes in a shining row, and all on trees. Under these, his spats. In the corner next the washstand, his trouser press. There was a gas grate and a ring, with a shilling slot meter. On the table a few photographs, one of his wife, dead forty years ago, the year before he joined the Guelph. Another—of the child who died with her. A very ancient one of himself in football clothes—he had been rather fast on his feet—his bare arms folded so as to make his muscles bulge. He noticed that fellows did the same thing now for the illustrated papers. A few books—*Marcus Aurelius*, Bacon's *Essays*, Burnaby's *Ride to Khiva*, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and *The Light of Asia*. On the walls very faded prints of some of the places he visited on his wedding journey. In the far corner, his bed, very straight, neat and narrow. He made it himself, reversing the top sheet every Saturday, and putting it underneath. Only the bottom one went to the laundry.

In dress he was extremely particular, and he wore spats the year round, which in summer went happily with his blue suit. A valet called every fortnight, and if one was careful about one's legs a trouser crease lasted a long time. As to evenings, he wore full dress only at the annual club dinner, or when the club happened to entertain some distinguished guest, which occurred but seldom. All his things were well made, and might be depended on for another four years. The blue and the gray in summer, gray and brown in winter, brown and blue in spring. Never the same suit on consecutive days. It was a great help to have the thing settled.

III.

There were two weeks out of fifty-two when Pettigrew felt extremely upset. This took place during the annual house-cleaning, when, first, hospitality was received from the Bloomington, and, second, it was returned. No one seemed to know anything about this arrangement except that it was a legacy of the past, very undesirable and equally unalterable. The Bloomington men felt the same way, but neither club would make the first move. One couldn't tell 500 men that—well!—The average age of Bloomington members was, perhaps, ten years less, which made all the difference. You could hear any one of them talking across the smoking-room. The Bloomington was about as old as the Guelph, say seventy years, but seemed to lack tradition. It entertained just as many distinguished guests, and had about the same number of distinguished

members. But there remained that difference. The Bloomington chaps held similar views, and among themselves gave identical reasons. Year after year the committee of one club entertained that of the other, and they interchanged the most admirable sentiments. It was really not feasible to alter the arrangement. These things weren't done.

Of course Pettigrew knew all about it. He heard it discussed by various members, after a glance round to see that there were no visitors, but no one ever talked it over with him. Once he thought that Whitchurch, who wrote the book about Burma, and whom he knew very well by name and appearance, was going to speak to him; but the latter, a little blind, had evidently taken him for some one else and moved on with a grunt. Pettigrew was aching to talk, but hadn't the courage, so he only flushed and went on with his paper, a prim, pathetic, little figure in carefully-brushed blue clothes, a very white collar, white spats, blue bow-tie, and a small, sensitive face with delicate mouth and lips.

Naturally, nothing about the Guelph, or anything that happened in it, ever appeared in the papers, except the secretary's formal notice of exchange of hospitality with the Bloomington. When one entered its doors one was lost to the world; and when Gibbs, O.B.E., chairman of the house committee, dropped dead in the billiard-room, it was merely stated that he had died in his club. Nothing disturbed the serenity of those halls, except an American who had been admitted, and persisted in talking in his usual voice. This occasioned a good deal of criticism of the member who sponsored him, and who privately admitted that his friend was too damned natural. Pettigrew, overhearing this, silently agreed. No; the Guelph was, in short, a haven where one could inhabit a shell within a shell, look out of the window at the most interesting street in the world, be protected and respected, if in silence, and bathed in the oil of comfort.

Pettigrew therefore treasured the club with a great and abiding passion. Others might like it. He adored it. By reason of it he was rescued from nonentity in a back room, and enabled to maintain unsullied that idea of Form which to so many lonely and elderly males is a deep and fortifying religion. It gave him something to live up to, and life had become one long, harmless dress parade. When he sat in the bay-window he caught the eyes of those who looked up, and perceived their chance wonderings as to who might be that perfectly-dressed man overlooking the centre of the world. It didn't matter that he was only Pettigrew. The pleasure persisted. He knew that he gave the impression of being a retired professional man of good birth and ample means. And since most of us live for the sake of the picture we

think we create, he was well content. Every now and then he would glance round at the other members, and note with quiet satisfaction what presentable fellows they all were. What dignity and traditions behind them! What a fine reserve! Thus argued his shy, hungry, but nevertheless thankful soul.

IV.

The great shock came with the annual meeting in October—he had just turned his seventy-first birthday—in the form of a report from the house committee. The Guelph was in financial straits. Rumours of this sort had been afloat about the Bloomington, but who ever thought of the Guelph? Not Pettigrew.

There was a hectic general gathering, which hurt him dreadfully. Members got up and said the committee was wasteful and didn't know its job. That was graceless. Another produced a wonderful menu from another club, which, he claimed, showed what was being done elsewhere, and at a profit, and was immediately asked to serve himself. He declined. Back and forth it went, while elderly gentlemen indulged in acrimonious repartee till it seemed to Pettigrew that the foundations of the world had shifted. Several thousand pounds were needed. An increase of dues and some private subscriptions could be reckoned on for part of this sum, but part only. When it was suggested that alliance with the Bloomington would solve the same difficulty for each, the meeting broke up in some confusion.

Pettigrew could not eat that night, and felt conscious of his heart. His food tasted like ashes. The waiters seemed strangely indifferent to what they must have known about; the chief steward as bland and punctilious as ever. But underneath it all Pettigrew knew that this substantial edifice was tottering. An increase of fees meant a decrease in membership. Several men had pointed that out. An alternative was the admission of a lot of new members. Where were these to be found? And what a change it would make in the club!

There may have been others who went home asking themselves 'What can I do?' At any rate, that is how it was with Pettigrew. He sat in his back room, put his chin in his hands and thought. What *could* he do? All so decent, and, in a way, kind. They would not have left him so much alone had they not thought he wanted to be left. Forty years now he had been receiving. Beyond the Christmas fund for the servants and paying of dues he had done nothing. Forty warm, comfortable years. He didn't know that by dining and lunching at the club every day of his life he had done more than any man in it. All he could see was that every day of his life the committee—and what good fellows they were!—and the club had been there at his service.

Then, suddenly, the idea came. If his heart had been strained that afternoon—and he felt that it had—he might be able to leave something to the club funds.

v.

He surprised the specialist by turning up in the consulting-room next morning, and was received in the most friendly manner. They were making about the same weather of it, and eyed each other with a certain interest. Pettigrew twirled his stick, and asked to be overhauled. 'Everything has gone well till yesterday,' he said, 'when I had a bit of a shock, and have been feeling it since. So I'd like to know if you have any cause to alter your last opinion.'

There was a brief, highly-skilled examination, and a looking-up of records.

'No,' said the great man; 'on the contrary, I find you in better shape than before. No harm done. You've taken very good care of yourself.'

'I've done all you said.'

'Evidently. On the strength of it I'll give you another three years. That is,' the specialist added with a grave smile, 'if you want them.'

Pettigrew changed colour and did not answer. The great man's eyes softened a little. He liked Pettigrew. The gaze of the latter became a little dim. He took out his pocket-book.

'How often have you been here?' he heard.

'Once a year for five years, Sir John.'

'H'm—yes—curiously enough we're rather alike in the matter of hearts. Mine has kept step pretty much with yours so far, but now you're ahead. However, it will work out the same way with both of us ultimately. Continue to avoid exertion, and you've nothing to fear for several years. Thank you, no fee this morning. I can really do nothing more for you. In fact,' he added curiously, 'I wonder a little why you came.'

Pettigrew didn't tell him, and went out.

'Charming man, that,' he said to himself, walking slowly toward Oxford Street to get a Park Lane bus.

Half-way there, he turned and went back to his room. He thought he saw an opportunity.

The reprieve gave him, say, another six years to live—but on a hundred and fifty a year. That meant resigning from the Guelph. The mere idea of this stunned him. Without the club he was a nonentity, a bit of human flotsam with no anchorage. This certainty worried him as a terrier worries a rat, and in his agitated mind the Guelph loomed like a palace. Six years in a single room. He licked his dry lips, and went there, blindly.

Ages since he had seen it at noontime. It looked drab, mean, comfortless—a hole to hide one's head in. He could live in the country on what he now had, but that meant banishment. Tragedy enfolded him. His mind

pitched back—back. Nothing to fasten on in the last forty years. One just like another; so much alike that they ran together in a sort of meaningless trickle. Had he been selfish and thought only of himself? Probably. Did he really want that reprieve and another six?

He sat for a long time, his heart pumping and fluttering, while he weighed the alternative. Something for the club? Something done in such a fashion that other members could not escape knowing him, or, at any rate, knowing his name? Another six years, Sir John had allowed him, 'if he wanted them.' Perhaps, after all, he didn't. Was it likely that any one would talk to him after nearly half a century of silence? Hardly.

He put his drawn, little face between his hands and surrendered to a truth inflexibly excluded for the greater part of his life. He was lonely. Horribly and damnably lonely. He had bluffed himself with the Guelph and make-believe. His pride in his appearance—bluff! His solitary little meals—bluff! The trouser crease and white spats—bluff! The way he held up his chin and stuck out his chest in Piccadilly—bluff! He saw it all now, and, with it, the way out.

vi.

It is a provision of mercy that in times of ultimate stress there comes to some a moment of great calm in which the mind disassociates from the body, and one observes oneself with a detached clearness as being merely a vehicle for the performance of certain duties. So it was with Pettigrew. The calm ensued. His heart steadied a bit. He began to write.

One letter to his landlady, enclosing a cheque. Another to the fortnight-valet, also with a cheque. These were comparatively simple. Over the third he took a good deal of time, making several rough copies. It would be read aloud in committee, and he wanted to use suitable phraseology. When it was in the desired form, he consulted his passbook very carefully, and noted the balance, a shade over nine hundred pounds with accrued interest; wrote a third cheque, for twenty-five pounds, reckoning this to be sufficient if the thing were done very simply; and a fourth for the remainder of his estate. These two he put into the letter addressed to the secretary of the Guelph. The others he left in the middle of the table.

He took one glance round the room, dropped a spare shilling in the slot meter, and went downstairs. The day was warm and bright for October, so he carried his overcoat. Chin up, chest stuck out, he walked with a distinctly military bearing to the nearest pillar-box and dropped in the third letter.

That cheered him. No turning back now. He didn't dwell on himself, but on the club weathering its financial storm, and saved from

amalgamation with the Bloomington. He thought of the committee, the secretary's voice when he read the letter and fingered the two cheques. Of the tribute, of the subdued little gathering a day or two later, of the formal announcement on the notice-board, of what might be said at the next annual meeting. This—and a lot more.

Suddenly he saw that this, too, was all bluff. No reason in it for what he was going to do.

He was lonely—damned lonely. O God! but he was lonely!

A hundred yards down the Edgware Road a red bus rumbled southward, flanked and followed by a maze of other traffic. Little Pettigrew took a long breath, jammed on his hat, and dashed for it as fast and straight as he could.

The last thing he ever heard was the scream of a woman.

FLY-FISHING IN CHINA.

By 'FLEUR DE LYS.'

THE Chinese method of restocking their ponds and lakes every spring with quantities of fry, and then netting the waters remorselessly in winter, when they are at their lowest, tends to make fish numerous and small. Fortunately, however, netting in China is by no means so efficient as in Europe, and the people, being singularly conservative in habit, cling to their old-fashioned nets, which no doubt the fish—mostly of the intelligent carp type—have in the course of ages become educated to avoid.

There are no trout in Central China, but several kinds of fish rise well to the fly, and offer very much better sport than our own coarse fish.

An excellent little surface feeder is the knife-fish, so named from the thinness of the body. This *Hemiculter leucisculus* is a delicate-looking little fellow, green above and silvery beneath, runs six to eight inches long, and swims near the surface in shoals. It is very active and lively, and takes a small trout-fly with pleasing readiness, rising with a splash like a burn trout. Knife-fish feed freely in the evenings on shallows close to the banks of lakes. The angler has no difficulty in selecting good places to fish from, as the little fish advertise themselves freely, splashing about at the surface in their hunt for insects. The larger ones are too heavy to flick out with a light trout-rod, but have to be drawn to the side and lifted gently ashore. Any small flies will serve: I find a hackle blue upright and a blue hackle with yellow body good killing patterns. The fish are quite nice to eat if fried crisp and brown, and served very hot. One of the charms of fishing for these little knife-fish is that, as the afternoon wears on, you will see the wakes of much larger fish as they circle over the shallows. If the tail fly is dropped ahead of one of those tracks it is very likely to be taken, and then instead of dragging a knife-fish ashore, one finds oneself engaged with bending rod in meeting the struggles of something lively and strong. When got ashore the fish will prove to be a handsome, slender carp with red fins, of half or three-

quarters of a pound. I have also taken another carp on the fly, which, I think, is merely the common *Cyprinus carpio*.

Nearly every Chinese pond holds murrel (*Ophiocephalus*). These are ugly predaceous brutes, with broad, flattened heads, and mouths full of teeth. The Chinese catch them by dapping with a frog attached to a long stiff bamboo. The frog is dabbled up and down on the weeds and water-lilies. I have often caught murrel this way, using a dropper tackle with a lead in the frog's mouth, and the hind-legs tied with a bit of cotton to the gut above the hook. A strong flip with finger and thumb at the top of the head is perhaps the kindest and quickest way of killing the frog before baiting. The Chinese only dabble the frog at the top of the water, but I find that with the dropper tackle it is often taken if worked with a sink-and-draw motion in holes among weeds. A small carp live-bait is also very effective for murrel; but there is a much more sporting way of taking these fish, and that is with a large fly, such as one would use for chub. The fly is cast into the clear lanes of open water among weeds, and, the murrel having been hooked, it is well to hustle him out at once, or he will bury himself in some mass of vegetation. If thick gut is used, it will not often be cut, for pond murrel do not run over three pounds. With river murrel, which get very much larger, gut is not safe, and I have often had even the thickest salmon gut severed by the formidable teeth of large specimens.

I have left nearly to the last a fish which has afforded me really magnificent sport. This is a large silvery fellow, shaped much like a sea-trout, which I believe to be *Elopichthys*, though I am not quite certain as to this being the correct identification. This fish is found in lakes, and after heavy rain goes to the mouths of streams running into pools, in order to feed on fry. In these currents of dirty, fast-running water it takes a fly freely. I find a long-shaped, but comparatively light fly, with two hooks set Stewart fashion one behind the other, very effective. The fly should be sunk well and worked very slowly against the current. The

fish make a sort of underwater swirl when taking, though sometimes one also sees them come up at the fly with a plunge. These fish have no teeth, but their mouths are very bony, and a large number get off while being poned. One evening in an hour's fishing I hooked six, four of which got off. The two I got out were, I think, the best of the lot; anyhow, they weighed five pounds each, and gave me a tremendous fight on my little $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet split-bamboo trout-rod. One of them got out sixty yards of line in one of his rushes. The largest I have caught so far has been seven and a quarter pounds. This fish also got out a lot of line at one time, and took a long time to play out; it gave, in fact, about the same amount of sport as a salmon of the same size. Unfortunately, these *Elopichthys* can be fished for successfully only when water is running into a lake, and when it would be considered too dirty at home even for minnow.

When the water is clear they nearly always come short at the fly. They must be fish with extraordinary eyesight to take the fly in such thick water.

In fast-running clear streams there is yet another Chinese fish which rises well to the fly. This is the so-called Rainbow Carp (*Opsariichthys bidens*), which has acquired its trivial name on account of its bright colouring during the spawning season. It runs up to at least three-quarters of a pound. The fly-fisher in China will be agreeably surprised at the activity and strength of the half and three-quarter pound carp which he catches on the fly. Those who have fly-fished for dace at home find the half-pounders very placid and lethargic as compared with trout: the slender Chinese carp are very different when hooked, and, though they do not jump, yet they give quite as much trouble as trout of similar calibre.

PERIL IN ADEN.

By J. BLAKE.

I.

A SMILING eager-voiced Arab boatman took me ashore; a serious-looking Somali who spoke English was my taxi-driver; an attentive Parsee supplied my little wants, including a worm-eaten guide entitled *Three Hours in Aden*. I was then told that I could not leave without seeing the famous 'Tanks,' which every one who landed at Aden went to see. Accordingly, I was whisked off in an old Ford, past heaps of coal stacked along the seashore; through a little gorge in the hillside—a run along the sea beach with a rocky, gray-coloured hill on the right named 'Shum Shum'—a winding climb to a gorge cut through the hill, with the cheerful local appellation of 'Hell's Gates'—out into a small plain, in the foreground of which spread out a small Arab town bearing the appropriate name of 'Crater'—a short drive through squalid streets, and the driver pulled up at the foot of the 'Tanks.'

In the course of a year thousands of visitors must run round Aden, see the 'Tanks,' and get back for the next meal on board ship without anything out of the ordinary happening to them. Still, for that short time at least, they are in a community of lawless people, controlled only by the strong hand of a civilised Power. There are large numbers of Somalis who have fled to Aden as a refuge from their enemies across in Africa; there are Indians forming the garrison of the place; Jews, Parsees, some pearl traders, big game hunters, who make Aden their headquarters; a sprinkling of Europeans, there only for purposes of trade, and a few others for various curious reasons of their own.

There could not but be stirring incidents in a place so filled with a restless and adventurous population. Nevertheless, thanks to British law and order, out of the thousands of passengers who land, probably not one has any experience out of the usual. Such, I felt, with an unreasonable dissatisfaction at the prospect, would likely be my fate.

The 'Tanks' are situated in a narrow valley in the bare, rocky hills. They consist of a series of reservoirs constructed by building walls across the valley at convenient intervals, usually at no great distance from one another. In fact, in the case of those towards the top, the water from one tank overflows directly into that below. The lowest is the largest of all, and has rarely been known to overflow. Normally the valley is absolutely dry, and there are no springs to fill the tanks. Only on those rare occasions when there is rain is there any water on the barren hillsides. Engineers have ingeniously constructed a series of drains which, when it does rain, trap almost every drop of water that falls on the steep sides of the little valley.

There had been one of those rare falls of rain recently, and looking up from where I was, I could see the series of walls across the valley leading up to quite precipitous heights, down which the water was busily rushing, filling the restricted space with an impressive roar.

II.

Having explored the more accessible parts in company with a motley crowd of Arabs, Jews, Somalis, and a sprinkling of passengers of various ships, I noticed a thin stream of people

who climbed up a steep path leading to the upper tanks. The desire to get out of the crowd and to fill up the time still on my hands led me to join the climbing few.

A dozen or so Arabs overtook me, climbing as if in haste, and soon disappeared round a spur. Knowing the Arab character and its easy excitement over anything new, I concluded that, as likely as not, beyond a desire to see a novel sight, they had no particular reason for haste, and my own progress continued to be leisurely, especially over one or two bits which were rather nasty for any one not going barefooted.

It seems strange to me now that I undertook that climb to the upper tanks. There was nothing very impressive that I expected to see. The bare hillsides, over which the sun had already set, formed a most depressing and uninviting scene. I remember I was in one of those unsatisfactory moods which come over us at times. I told myself nothing would ever happen to me again. All the stirring events of my life were in the past, and I must be content with an uneventful future. Everything would go according to programme. I would get to the top, then hurry down and catch my unpaid taxi back to the ship, and by 8 p.m. would be dining alongside the lady going back to New Zealand with a family of five.

I was getting quite bitter about the dullness of life when a large stone clattered down the hillside and shot past my face into the valley below. I looked up. There was nothing to be seen. The bare sides of the hill slightly overhanging the track at this point, and I concluded that the stone had been accidentally dislodged by some one passing along a path above me.

A short distance farther on I found I had reached the highest point of the path, and was now looking towards the highest tank, into which the water was directed from all sides of the steep hill around. I halted here for some time. The tanks as seen from this point made a curious sight. They were connected with one another by a series of falls of muddy water. I noticed the upper tanks were placed at very short intervals down the ravine. In fact, as I have said, in the first few from the top the water overflowing from the upper tanks produced waterfalls dropping directly into those below. Lower down, the space between the tanks gradually increased, and the water could be seen gleaming in stretches of steep sloping channels connecting one with another.

All sight-seers, except a couple of Parsees, had already gone. I was surprised not to see the Arabs who had overtaken me on the way up, as they had not passed me on their way down, and they were not visible on the last bit of track leading down to the topmost tank. This confirmed me in my theory of a path above me, along which they had probably returned. On

my inquiring from one of the Parsees if this were so, he replied in English, 'Yes; an upper path comes down round that curve.'

'Is it a better path to go back by?' I asked.

'By no means,' he replied. 'In fact, so far as I am aware, it is entirely disused, and no one would think of using it unless he wished to avoid being seen.'

I then told him of the falling stone. He looked grave.

'I should not go any farther,' he said. 'This place has before now been the scene of robbery and murder. It has a bad name among us, and we never venture up here alone. Come back with us.'

'Not after coming so far,' I protested. 'Besides,' I said, with a laugh, 'I am doomed to a humdrum life. Nothing ever happens to me now.'

After some further efforts to persuade me the Parsees hurried away, advising me, at least, to waste no more time than was necessary, as the sun had already sunk and darkness would follow swiftly.

III.

I then started on the climb down, and had almost reached the topmost tank when, looking up the way I had come, I saw that a group of Arabs had come round the curve which the Parsee had pointed out to me. A glance made me sure that their intentions towards me were hostile. They were all armed with formidable daggers, which stood out from their belts at the angle affected hereabouts by the desert camel-men. On seeing me they gesticulated threateningly, and shouted out something in Arabic, while two of them ran down the path the Parsees had taken, evidently with the intention of guarding against the possible arrival of new-comers from that side. Seeing that I did not appear to understand, one of them called to me in English, 'Halt!' At the same time two or three rushed down the path towards me, brandishing their weapons.

Although it was now plain that robbery or murder was what I was threatened with, I still remember having a curious conviction that I was bound to come out of this without anything very serious happening to me. Without taking any apparent notice of the Arabs I continued my progress to the brink of the tank, with the full expectation of finding a way by which I could escape. I was disappointed.

The hillside came down steeply on two sides of the tank, showing no signs of a possible track for escape. Another side was bounded by the wall of the half-full tank. Through an opening in this wall, about five feet from the top, the water rushed into the tank below, leaving the water of the tank at such a level below the top of the wall that it would be impossible for me to swim out and scramble to the top.

The remaining side was that down which I had come.

I was completely cut off. The Arabs were rushing down the only path out of this place, and there seemed nothing for me to do but to face them, and make a stand with my back to one of the steep sides.

Desperately I looked round once more, and my eye caught something which promised a means of escape.

The wall of the tank rose some five feet above the level of the water, and at one end, almost hidden by a projection of the hillside, I caught a glimpse of a rope-ladder dangling into the water. It seemed only a few strokes away, so without pausing to lighten myself of any of my clothes, I plunged into the tank and struck out for the ladder. I had, however, not counted on the strong current which flowed to the opening in the wall and thence fell into the next tank, some thirty feet below. It was only with a severe struggle that I managed to reach the ladder and clamber up to the top of the wall.

Looking over, I saw directly below me a rough track, apparently for the use of workmen, leading down one side of the hill to a similar tank below. I hurriedly pulled up the ladder and lowered it down the opposite side towards this track. Then I cautiously descended the face of the wall. As my head came level with the top of the wall, I had the satisfaction of seeing the first Arabs rush up to the brink of the tank and cry out in disappointment. One of them threw a knife at me just too late; the blade hit the top of the wall with a clang, and then I heard it plump into the tank below me.

IV.

I now seemed to have escaped after all. As I came to the last rung of the ladder and felt for the track below, which I believed led to safety, I once more began to think of the comparative ease with which I had got away. I should get back after an ignominious chase and a ducking. My old feeling of bitterness at the want of adventure in my life began to return. I determined not to hurry. It seemed to me waste of time. As my foot touched the track I heard a loud splash below me, and hurriedly turned round to face the sound.

Below me, clambering out of the lower tank, was an Arab. He had apparently made use of the current I had resisted and dived through the opening, out of which the water fell into the tank below. As soon as he was out of the tank, he drew a dagger and advanced a short distance up the track down which I must go if I hoped to escape. He stopped at a place where the track practically disappeared, down which it would be necessary for me to clamber with my back towards him.

For a moment I thought of taking a running

leap at him. A second glance showed this to be a hopeless plan. The farthest point I could hope to reach was an irregular slope just in front of him, which would certainly throw me on my face. On the other hand, the moment I started to climb down he would of course advance, and have my back at the mercy of his knife.

He was now standing half-way up the track between the two tanks. Behind me I could hear, above the sound of water falling from the upper to the lower tanks, the shouts of the remaining Arabs, who might any moment discover some means of getting over the wall behind me.

Then a means of escape occurred to me. I would escape in the same way as the Arab had cut me off. On my right was a sheer fall into the lower tank, which, as I have already described, overflowed in its turn into another below. Whether the third tank was as deep as the two upper ones, of course, I had no idea.

I advanced boldly down the track as if to make a desperate attempt to pass him. As soon as I reached the top of the steep incline below which he was waiting I turned sharply to the right and plunged headlong into the lower pool. As I rose I felt the strong current draw me to the outlet.

Drawn onwards, I could only think of what was at the foot of the falls. The next instant I felt myself shoot out into the open. I had a moment's glimpse of the distant town at a great depth below me. Fortunately it was a small fall, as I fell anyhow with a resounding smack into the third tank. I struggled out of the water as fast as I could, and once more struck the path leading down to the tanks below.

Looking back, I saw the Arab preparing to follow me by the track leading down from above.

Then came a nightmare race down that awful path. My pursuer soon found I was gaining on him, and determined to repeat his bold dive to get ahead of me. As I approached the fifth or sixth tank I looked back. He was not to be seen. Next instant I saw a dark object shoot out from the outlet through which the water was falling from the upper tank, and my pursuer fell, to be dashed to death on the cement channel which received the fall near this tank. A moment later his body was swept across the surface of the tank into the one below.

When eventually I reached the foot of that valley I found his body had reached there before me.

I am still rather vague as to what happened after that, until I found myself climbing up the gangway, thinking in a confused way that my three hours in Aden had, at least, given me enough incident to remove temporarily my dissatisfaction with the ordinary routine of a quiet life.

THE DARTMOOR VET.

A CHARACTER SKETCH.

By BEATRICE CHASE.

I.

ON Easter Sunday morning I woke at half-past five, to find my poor little Tiger Puss Puss dying on the foot of my bed. He had retired overnight apparently quite well, and the shock was indescribable.

I jumped up and spoke to him, but he made no response. He seemed to be semi-unconscious. There was no apparent pain nor any symptom except very rapid breathing and a comatose condition. It was a revelation when no responsive purr greeted my gentle stroking.

I dressed quickly, and went over to the blue-jackets' cottage and routed out Jack Loftus. He came over, looked at Tiger, who worships him, and could offer no suggestion.

I sent a telephone message to the vet as soon as the office opened at 8 A.M. and waited, trembling, for the reply. I had never seen the vet. I did not even know if he would condescend to attend poor, ordinary little cats. London vets do, of course, but vets in this country are concerned chiefly with farm stock and horses. And this man, the nearest, is ten miles off.

The answer was depressing. Mr Bird was very sorry, but he had an urgent case of a valuable pedigree dog, fifteen miles the other side of his home, and was unable to say when he could attend Tiger.

Of course, one could not expect my common English tom-cat to take precedence of a valuable dog, so I returned to the poor mite feeling more down than ever.

Without unduly disturbing him I succeeded in taking an under-arm temperature. It was 108, which terrified me. I did not then know that a cat's normal temperature is 102. His pulse was too quick to count at all.

I sat beside him at intervals till eleven o'clock, when I was called down by the door-bell, it being the bluejacket's stand-easy time.

On the step stood one of the smartest-looking men I ever saw. He had iron-gray hair, the gray that suggests powder, and was most expensively dressed in typical country rig, including an inch-thick double-breasted overcoat, a beautiful Jaeger scarf, and handsome stout boots with leggings. He was the picture of the country squire dressed for the part.

I stared at him, amazed, as he saluted smartly.

'Good-morning, madam. I had a call to see a sick cat.'

This radiant stranger was the vet, poor Tiger's

doctor! My relief was such that I could have hugged him.

II.

I asked him in, warned him to tread lightly, because ever since his trapping Tiger has been terrified of the sound of a man's footstep, and took him up to where the little patient was still on the foot of my bed. I had been afraid to lift or touch him.

Tiger still took no notice—a bad sign, for, ordinarily, he swears like a little viper at a strange man.

The vet sat down and looked at him.

'Has he been sick? No? Can you account for it at all? Was he all right at bedtime? Are any of the neighbouring cats ill?'

I noticed that, while talking, his eyes were never off the patient.

Then he lapsed into silence for a time, still watching intently.

'It's chest trouble, I reckon,' he said at last, thoughtfully. 'Heart or lungs. He is sickening for something. We have never had so much "flu" among cats in my memory. And a month or so ago, there was "sleeping sickness" among them all over the west of England.'

'Oh, surely it isn't that?' I exclaimed in agony.

'No, no. I don't think so. I'll soon tell 'ee,' he answered soothingly, producing from his breast-pocket a dainty little stethoscope.

He rose, came close to the bed, adjusted the ear-pieces, and put the nozzle softly on one of the little striped sides. Tiger took no notice. The vet worked gently all over his sides and the front of his throat and chest, and then removed the instrument, and sat down without speaking for a minute.

'What do you think it is?' I faltered.

'It's pericarditis—inflammation of the heart, you know—and I am afraid there is valve trouble too, but I can't tell that yet, not till the action is quieter. He has got a very rapid pulse. And there is some inflammation in the left lung and a touch of bronchitis.'

'My poor little Tiger!'

'Yes. He is very ill, but I hope we shall pull him through. He will want a lot of nursing.'

'I shall do nothing else,' I said, chokingly. 'I sha'n't leave him at all day or night. What treatment do you wish?'

The vet produced a small bottle from another pocket. He had come prepared.

'I want five drops of this mixture given to him every two hours. Have you a minim glass?'

Yes. Well, drop it from that into a small spoon—an egg-spoon is best—and you open his mouth and let some one else slip the drops in at one corner near the throat. Don't administer medicine from the front, ever. They are apt to shake it out. Put it in at the corner of the mouth near the throat and they are sure to swallow. Don't hold his head too high to make swallowing difficult. Just in a natural, easy position. Cats are very difficult patients. They don't trust mankind as dogs do. Cats, they go off into a world of their own when there is trouble. They like to fend for themselves. Well, and you must give him inhalation of Friar's balsam in boiling water. One of they oil-stoves with a kettle on it near the bed, or a little below it so's the steam can rise. And he must have a linseed poultice every six hours. And put a piece of flannel round after you take it off to prevent chill. The poultice must go each side just in his armpits. That's all you can do for the next twenty-four hours.'

My heart sank as he rose to go. He was so kind, so competent, and lived so far away, that I mentally clung to him. It was then only noon, with many long daylight hours to live through, and after them the endless dark night, when I should be alone with the poor pathetic little heap of suffering.

'I will come to-morrow,' went on the vet, with his eyes fixed still on the patient.

'It's bank holiday,' I faltered.

He looked at me keenly. 'Be you going away?'

'I? Good gracious, no! I never go trips; and, in any case, I wouldn't leave Tiger. I thought you might be glad of a day off.'

He gave a short laugh.

'We don't get much off-time in my job; no, and don't want it neither, if there's a sick beast about. I shouldn't care about pleasuring if I was leaving a dumb thing in pain. Well, madam, they drops are the best stuff in the Pharmacopœia. They'm a patent, and they'll keep the throat open and take down inflammation where nothing else will. Between you and I, I've taken them myself many a time and given them to my wife. Last week I went to bed one night with such a sore throat I didn't know how to speak or swallow, and woke up quite well in the morning. They are an American mixture.'

He was making his way back to the door during this conversation. I hated to let him out of the place.

'You will be sure to come in the morning, won't you? You see, I can't 'phone to-day or to-morrow after ten, as it's closing hours. It couldn't have happened at a more awkward time.'

He turned and gave me a searching look. He seemed to look right through everyone and everything, and his manner had a charming

imperiousness, as if he never met with anything but unquestioning obedience.

'I will be sure to come,' he assured me.

'And what about the dog?' I asked, suddenly remembering. 'It is more than good of you to come here so early in the day. I didn't expect you till the afternoon. You haven't been to the dog yet, have you?'

'No, fey. He's twenty miles from here, more.'

'I can't ever thank you for being so prompt. And my poor little thing isn't a valuable animal in any way.'

'There's values and values, madam,' he answered, running down the steps.

III.

I listened to the sound of his engine starting, and then returned to my little patient, who still was immovable. Jack Loftus lurched in at once to know the verdict, and I commandeered him to administer the drops. He has beautiful hands, and is very gentle and clever with flowers and animals.

We managed very well. Tiger was too ill to make much fuss, and he swallowed them without difficulty.

Then we set about the inhalation. I always keep Friar's balsam in stock, but there was no linseed-meal, and all the distant shops were shut. The bluejacket cast himself into this breech, inquired at both farms with no success, and then sallied forth to scour the neighbourhood. He returned in under an hour with a small tinful, very damp and mouldy, but better than nothing till I could somehow procure more from somewhere.

When I applied the first poultice, for a few seconds there was a tiny purr of relief.

So the day dragged on. Jack Loftus came the last thing at night to help me with the drops again, and said he would look in about midnight and at 4 A.M.

That is Jack. He will do those mad, wonderful things for any one or anything in trouble, and doesn't even want it mentioned.

There was no change by morning. The faithful vet arrived at exactly the same hour. Again he walked in, sat down and watched the patient. Then came the sounding and the report 'No change.'

'He's no worse and no better, madam. The thing must take its course till the crisis. You can only carry on with the same treatment.'

I thanked him, and as he was leaving he seemed to read my thoughts, for he turned, gave me one of his searching glances, and said, 'Now, the days and nights seem very long, and I seem very far away.'

He paused, and I struggled with a lump in my throat.

'I wish I was nearer, and I would look in every evening at bedtime. But, as I can't, you

send one of your men over and ring me up, any time, *any time*, day or night, and tell me anything or ask anything.'

And he plunged out in the same frantic hurry to dodge my thanks.

I heard during the day that he had taken the trouble to go to the post-office and warn them that, whatever hour of the day or night I wished to get through to him, they were to manage it, regardless of closing times.

IV.

That day and night dragged on like the previous ones. But by Easter Tuesday morning the poor mite seemed to be much weaker. He had taken no food or drink, not even one drop of milk since the Saturday.

The vet reported punctually on the Tuesday morning. He sat a long time in silence after the examination.

'He is very ill—very ill,' he said at last. 'But I don't think we can do anything more. I wish he would cough. Has he coughed at all?'

'Not once.'

'It's curious,' he said reflectively. 'His bronchial tubes are choked, and it would relieve his breathing if he would cough, and clear some of the mucus. Well, we can't make him. Carry on, madam, and hope for the best.'

By that evening I was too spent to watch again, so Jack Loftus agreed to come in here for the night and sit up with Tiger.

We had the fire lighted in the sunshine room, plenty of coal laid in, and I carried Tiger down on a cushion and put him in his favourite chair before the fire.

The bluejacket arrived at 10 P.M. in a huge pea-coat, and a most cheerful mood, remarking with a twinkle that he had kept many a dog-watch in his day, but this was the first cat-watch. No, he wouldn't take any refreshment; he didn't want any means of making tea or cocoa during the night. He would lie on the rug before the fire. He did not want a lamp or a book. He would administer the drops regularly, and call me if there was any change. All he asked was leave to go outside for ten minutes at 2 A.M. and smoke a pipe.

Of course I was wretched at leaving Tiger, fearing he would be gone by morning, but the bluejacket was most cheerful.

'Don't you worry, miss. He's worth a hundred dead cats now.'

So I left him, but had hardly reached my room before an amazing thing happened. I heard a call from Jack, ran to the stairs, and there was Tiger at the foot. He had crawled off his cushion and to the staircase, and was too weak to mount, but looked up at me, dumbly asking to be carried. I ran down, lifted him up, and took him back to my bed, where he lay down with an appearance of contentment. This

was a problem. I could not risk moving him again, and apparently he was not happy away from me. Finally I asked Jack if he would stay warm by the fire, and come up to my room and give the drops every two hours if I lay down in my dressing-gown for some sleep.

This was done, and at 3 A.M., as things were unchanged and I had had some sleep, I asked Jack to go off to bed, which he did. At 5.30, while I was alone, to my horror Tiger crawled somehow off the bed and tottered to my wash-stand, creeping underneath.

That I knew was the end. I had heard how animals creep under things to die.

I stood in agony, praying that it might soon be over, when, to my amazement, Tiger crawled out and crossed the room. He was so weak he kept falling over, but he went to a wall, crouched down by it, and put his little paws up the wall, patting as if he were by a rat or rabbit hole. The awful truth rushed over me. He was delirious from fever and want of food and sleep. He looked up at me at intervals, with bright eyes and enormous pupils, and kept feeling about the wall for a hole.

Fearing he was going mad, I fled over to the cottage, roused another bluejacket, and asked him to 'phone to the vet saying what was happening. Then I returned to Tiger, who was still trying to chase imaginary prey.

At about eight he crawled back to the bed, asking me to lift him up, which I did, and he subsided. I found his temperature was lower and his breathing seemed easier.

The vet arrived at 9 A.M., looking very worried.

'He is better,' I said, in greeting. 'But, for a bit, he was absolutely off his head.'

Mr Bird sighed with relief.

'Well, I brought a bromide injection. But he won't want it now.'

'Bromide? Do vets use that, and hypodermically?'

'Yes, fey. We use it a lot for bulls. Bulls be rather subject to meningitis, and I was once called to a very bad case. I gave him chloral and bromide, and bled him, and gave him cold water applications to the head, and we pulled him through.'

Then he examined Tiger, and pronounced him to be out of danger, provided we could combat the reaction and the stage of exhaustion and weakness. 'You must give him Brand's beef jelly in a spoon, and a little milk in a spoon. His strength must be kept up now.'

Then he sounded him, and to my intense relief said that the valve trouble in the heart had been only functional and had subsided.

V.

Next day, which was bright and sunny, poor Tiger seemed at his very lowest. I telephoned

in despair, and received the amazing order to wrap him in a warm shawl and carry him out into the sun for half-an-hour.

It seemed insane, but I did.

The poor little thing shivered the whole time from exhaustion, but his delicate little nostrils worked and quivered as if he enjoyed the freshness after the stuffy house and the sickly-sweet inhaling. When I carried him back he slept profoundly.

From the following day all danger was over, and then the convalescence problem began. I noticed the same thing at every visit—that the vet would converse and tell stories about his patients and experiences always with his eyes on Tiger, and that he stopped in the middle of a sentence if Tiger moved so much as an ear.

Also, the man never seemed to be in a hurry. He would spend any length of time sitting, talking and watching. After a bit I commented on this, and he answered: 'Yes; you see with us the main thing is diagnosis. You can't come in and lay a horse on the table and say, "Now, tell me where you feel it." You have got to watch till you see yourself where he feels it. 'Tis the same with all dumb things. They can't tell you anything, so you have to know how to find it out; and you don't have to make no mistake neither. Once I was called to a valuable Pekingese with what they said was chronic colic. I watched for a day or so—a day or so!—and decided the symptoms pointed more to obstruction. I asked to X-ray the little thing, and we found a stone inside it. It had swallowed a stone while playing. Folk shouldn't throw stones for dogs to pick up. It's a fool trick. Well, I asked for one of the operating vets from London, and he came, and we removed the stone. Once a cat was brought to me with a queer throat symptom. They thought it was diphtheria. I kept it under observation and decided to operate. I did, and found a needle in one of its neck glands. Chloroform? Oh, we live on it, I reckon. A vet is never without his chloroform bottle. We give it for almost everything. I have a complete set of chloroform masks for each different sort of animal—horses, cats, dogs. A horse takes two ounces to send him to sleep. No, they aren't sick after it. Don't feel it a bit. Well, I want to give your little treasure some quinine pills as soon as he eats any solid food. Only one pill a day, madam, in his meat. It may make him buzzy in the head if you give more.'

To watch and listen to that man was a liberal education. His kindness, his patience, his sagacity, his chivalry to weak, dumb, and helpless things! I should think the vet is born, not made, though I was thrilled to find that his training includes a knowledge of French and Scripture among other subjects.

VI.

His funniest story was as follows. I wish I could have had it produced on the gramophone to give the voice and Devon dialect:

A distracted farmer once went to him beseeching immediate help for a whole squad of valuable poisoned ponies. The poor owner drew a lurid picture of their condition, and the vet hurried back with him to his orchard, where the patients were all collected. Some were lying down, too ill to rise. Others were staggering about, and some were leaning weakly against supports.

'There they be, the whole lot,' moaned the farmer. 'And who could ha' done it beats me. I didn't know I had an enemy in the world.'

The vet diagnosed in a flash and had a little game. 'And how do 'ee know they 'm poisoned?' he asked.

'Why, man, look at 'en,' shouted the exasperated farmer.

'I be looking at 'en, and they 'm only what I've seen you more than once.'

The farmer stared, dazed. 'What do 'ee mean?'

'They 'm only what I've seen you,' repeated the vet, 'and that's tight.'

'What do 'ee mean? I've never been tight?'

'Oh, haven't you?' said Mr Bird innocently. 'Well, your ponies are, if you never have been.'

The farmer stared as if he thought the vet had gone mad. 'Drunk? But who's gived 'en drink?'

'Apples, man, apples. Do 'ee know that fresh apples will make horses so drunk as a lord?'

Then he turned to vigorously, and in a short time had most of the ponies on their hooves again. I am muddled as to that treatment. I think it was an emetic and the inevitable drench.

The day he paid his last visit and said good-bye was a day of real sadness. But Tiger was too well to need further care.

I felt to have lost a rare friend. Never in any trouble have I had such *sympathetic* kindness. Without a word from me, he understood all that Tiger is to me. When departing, he confided to me that from the first he had had no real hope of saving the patient, and every time his telephone bell rang, day or night, for three days, he said to his sons, 'That's to say Tiger is gone.' I have never known any doctor, however kind, who cared for his patient as that vet cared for Tiger to every tiny detail, and when my time comes to fight for my life, I wish I may be in the care of such a man.

Animals have a terrible lot of suffering, but if this man is, as I hope, a typical vet, they also have their compensations.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

By JOHN BUCHAN, Author of *John Burnet of Barns*, *Greenmantle*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—IN WHICH THREE GENTLEMEN CONFESS THEIR ENNUI.

THE great doctor stood on the hearth-rug looking down at his friend who sprawled before him in an easy-chair. It was a hot day in early July, and the windows were closed and the blinds half down to keep out the dust and the glare. The standing figure had bent shoulders, a massive clean-shaven face, and a keen interrogatory air, and might have passed his sixtieth birthday. He looked like a distinguished lawyer who would soon leave his practice for the Bench. But it was the man in the chair who was the lawyer, a man who had left forty behind him, but was still on the pleasant side of fifty.

'I tell you for the tenth time that there's nothing the matter with you.'

'And I tell you for the tenth time that I'm miserably ill.'

The doctor shrugged his shoulders. 'Then it's a mind diseased, to which I don't propose to minister. What do you say is wrong?'

'Simply what my housekeeper calls a "no-how" feeling.'

'It's clearly nothing physical. Your heart and lungs are sound. Your digestion's as good as anybody's can be in London in midsummer. Your nerves—well, I've tried all the stock tests, and they seem to be normal.'

'Oh, my nerves are all right,' said the other wearily.

'Your brain seems good enough, except for this dismal obsession that you are ill. I can find no earthly thing wrong, except that you're stale. I don't say run down, for that you're not. You're stale in mind. You want a holiday.'

'I don't. I may need one, but I don't want it. That's precisely the trouble. I used to be a glutton for holidays, and spent my leisure moments during term planning what I was going to do. Now there seems to be nothing in the world I want to do—neither work nor play.'

'Try fishing. You used to be keen.'

'I've killed all the salmon I mean to kill. I never want to look the ugly brutes in the face again.'

'Shooting?'

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'Too easy and too dull.'

'A yacht.'

'Stop it, old fellow. Your catalogue of undesired delights only makes it worse. I tell you that there's nothing at this moment which has the slightest charm for me. I'm bored with my work, and I can't think of anything else of any kind for which I would cross the street. I don't even want to go into the country and sleep. It's been coming on for a long time—I dare say it's due somehow to the War—but when I was in office I didn't feel it so badly, for I was in a service and not my own master. Now I've nothing to do except to earn an enormous income, which I haven't any need for. Work comes rolling in—I've got retainers for nearly every solvent concern in this land—and all that happens is that I want to strangle my clerk and a few eminent solicitors. I don't care a tinker's curse for success, and, what is worse, I'm just as apathetic about the modest pleasures which used to enliven my life.'

'You may be more tired than you think.'

'I'm not tired at all.' The speaker rose from his chair, yawning, and walked to the window to stare into the airless street. He did not look tired, for his movements were alert, and, though his face had the slight pallor of his profession, his eye was clear and steady. He turned round suddenly.

'I tell you what I've got. It's what the Middle Ages suffered from—I read a book about it the other day—and it's called *tædium vitæ*. It's a special kind of ennui. I can diagnose my ailment well enough, and Shakespeare has the words for it. I've reached a point where I find "nothing left remarkable beneath the visiting moon."

'Then why do you come to me, if the trouble is not with your body?'

'Because you're *you*. I should come to you just the same if you were a vet, or a bone-setter, or a Christian Scientist. I want your advice, not as a fashionable consultant, but as an old friend and a wise man. It's a state of affairs that can't go on. What am I to do to get rid of this infernal disillusionment? I can't go through the rest of life dragging my wing.'

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DECEMBER 13, 1924.

The doctor was smiling. 'If you ask my professional advice,' he said, 'I am bound to tell you that medical science has no suggestion to offer. If you consult me as a friend, I advise you to steal a horse in some part of the world where a horse-thief is usually hanged.'

The other considered. 'Pretty drastic prescription for a man who has been a Law Officer of the Crown.'

'I speak figuratively. You've got to rediscover the comforts of your life by losing them for a little. You have good food and all that sort of thing at your command—well, you ought to be in want for a bit, in order to appreciate them. You're secure and respected and rather eminent—well, somehow or other get under the weather. If you could induce the newspapers to accuse you of something shady and have the devil of a job to clear yourself it might do the business. The fact is, you've grown too competent. You need to be made to struggle for your life again—your life or your reputation. You have to find out the tonic of difficulty, and you can't find it in your profession. Therefore I say "steal a horse."'

A faint gleam appeared in the other's eyes. 'That sounds to me good sense. But, hang it all, it's utterly unpractical. I can't go looking for scrapes. I should feel like play-acting if in cold blood I got myself into difficulties, and I take it that the essence of your prescription is that I must feel desperately in earnest.'

'I'm not prescribing. Heaven forbid that I should advise a friend to look for trouble! I'm merely stating how in the abstract I regard your case.'

The patient rose to go. 'Miserable comforts are ye all,' he groaned. 'Well, it appears you can do nothing for me except to suggest the advisability of crime. I suppose it's no good trying to make you take a fee.'

The doctor shook his head. 'I wasn't altogether chaffing. Honestly, you would be the better of dropping for a month or two into another world—a harder one. A hand on a cattle-boat, for instance.'

Sir Edward Leithen sighed deeply as he turned from the doorstep down the long, hot street. He did not look behind him, or he would have seen another gentleman approach cautiously round the corner of a side street, and, when the coast was clear, ring the doctor's bell. Sir Edward was so completely fatigued with life that he neglected to be careful at crossings, as was his habit, and was all but slain by an omnibus. Everything seemed weary and over-familiar—the summer smell of town, the din of traffic, the panorama of faces, pretty women shopping, the occasional sight of a friend. Long ago, he reflected with disgust, there had been a time when he had enjoyed it all.

He found sanctuary at last in the shade and coolness of his club. He remembered that he

was dining out, and bade the porter telephone that he could not come, giving no reason. He remembered, too, that there was a division in the House that night, an important division advertised by a three-line whip. He declined to go near the place. At any rate, he would have the dim consolation of behaving badly. His clerk was probably at the moment hunting feverishly for him, for he had missed a consultation in the great Argentine bank case which was in the paper next morning. That also could slide. He wanted, nay, he was determined, to make a mess of that case.

Then he discovered that he was hungry, and that it was nearly the hour when a man may dine. 'I've only one positive feeling left,' he told himself, 'the satisfaction of my brute needs. Nice position for a gentleman and a Christian!'

There was one other man in the dining-room, sitting at the little table in the window. At first sight he had the look of an undergraduate; a Rugby Blue, perhaps, who had just come down from the university, for he had the broad, slightly-stooped shoulders of the football-player. He had a ruddy face, untidy sandy hair, and large, reflective gray eyes. It was those eyes which declared his age, for round them were the many fine wrinkles which come only from the passage of time.

'Hullo, John,' said Leithen. 'May I sit at your table?'

The other, whose name was Palliser-Yeates, nodded. 'You may certainly eat in my company, but I've got nothing to say to you, Ned. I'm feeling as dried-up as a dead starfish.'

They ate their meal in silence, and so pre-occupied was Sir Edward Leithen with his own affairs that it did not seem to him strange that Mr Palliser-Yeates, who was commonly a person of robust spirits and plentiful conversation, should have the air of a deaf-mute. When they had reached the fish, two other diners took their seats and waved them a greeting. One of them was a youth with lean, high-coloured cheeks, who limped slightly; the other a tallish, older man, with a long, dark face, a small, dark moustache, and a neat, pointed chin, which gave him something of the air of a hidalgo. He looked weary and glum, but his companion seemed to be in the best of tempers, for his laugh rang out in that empty place with a startling boyishness. Mr Palliser-Yeates looked up angrily, with a kind of shiver. 'Noisy brute, Archie Roylance!' he observed. 'I suppose he's above himself since Ascot. His horse won some beastly race, didn't it? It's a good thing to be young and an ass.'

There was that in his tone which roused Leithen from his apathy. He cast a sharp glance at the other's face. 'You're off colour?'

'No,' said the other brusquely. 'I'm perfectly fit. Only I'm getting old.'

This was food for wonder, inasmuch as Mr

Palliser-Yeates had a reputation for a more than youthful energy, and, although forty-five years of age, was still accustomed to do startling things on the Chamonix *aiguilles*. He was head of an eminent banking firm, and something of an authority on the aberrations of post-war finance.

A shade of sympathy came into Leithen's eyes. 'How does it take you?' he asked.

'I've lost zest. Everything seems more or less dust and ashes. When you suddenly wake up and find that you've come to regard your respectable colleagues as so many fidgety old women, and the job you've given your life to as an infernal squabble about trifles—why, you begin to wonder what's going to happen.'

'I suppose a holiday ought to happen.'

'The last thing I want. That's my complaint. I have no desire to do anything, work or play, and yet I'm not tired—only bored.'

Leithen's sympathy had become interest. 'Have you seen a doctor?'

The other hesitated. 'Yes,' he said at length. 'I saw old Acton Croke this afternoon. He was no earthly use. He advised me to go to Moscow and fix up a trade agreement. He thought that might make me content with my present lot.'

'He told me to steal a horse.'

Mr Palliser-Yeates stared in extreme surprise. 'You! Do you feel the same way? Have you been to Croke?'

'Three hours ago. I thought he talked good sense. He said I must get into a rougher life, so as to appreciate the blessings of the life that I'm fed up with. Probably he is right, but you can't take that sort of step in cold blood.'

Mr Palliser-Yeates assented. The fact of having found an associate in misfortune seemed to enliven slightly, very slightly, the spirits of both. From the adjoining table came, like an echo from a happier world, the ringing voice and hearty laughter of youth. Leithen jerked his head towards them.

'I would give a good deal for Archie's gusto,' he said. 'My sound right leg, for example. Or, if I couldn't get that, I'd like Charles Lamanha's insatiable ambition. If you want as much as he wants, you don't suffer from tedium.'

Palliser-Yeates looked at the gentleman in question, the tall dark one of the two diners. 'I'm not so sure. Perhaps he has got too much too easily. He has come on uncommon quick, you know, and, if you do that, there's apt to come a moment when you flag.'

Lord Lamanha—the title had no connection with Don Quixote and Spain, but was the name of a shieling in a Border glen which had been the home six centuries ago of the ancient house of Merkland—was an object of interest to many of his countrymen. The Marquis of Liddesdale, his father, was a hale old man who might

reasonably be expected to live for another ten years, and so prevent his son's career being compromised by a premature removal to the House of Lords. That son had a safe seat for a London division, was a member of the Cabinet, and had a reputation for the matter-of-fact oratory which has displaced the pre-war grandiloquence. People trusted him, because, in spite of his Hidalgo-ish appearance, he was believed to have that combination of candour and intelligence which England sighs for in her public men. Also he was popular, for his record in the War, and the rumour of a youth spent in adventurous travel, touched the imagination of the ordinary citizen. At the moment he was being talked of for a great Imperial post which was soon to become vacant, and there was gossip, in the alternative, of a ministerial readjustment which would make him the pivot of a controversial government. It was a remarkable position for a man in his early forties to have won, who had just entered public life with every disadvantage of birth.

'I suppose he's happy,' said Leithen. 'But I've always held that there was a chance of Charles kicking over the traces. I doubt if his ambition is an organic part of him, and not stuck on with pins. There's a fundamental daftness in all Merklands. I remember him at school.'

The two men finished their meal, and retired to the smoking-room, where they drank their coffee abstractedly. Each was thinking about the other, and wondering what light the other's case could shed on his own. The speculation gave each a faint glimmer of comfort.

Presently the voice of Sir Archibald Roylance was heard, and that ebullient young man flung himself down on a sofa beside Leithen, while Lord Lamanha selected a cigar. Sir Archie settled his game leg to his satisfaction, and filled an ancient pipe. 'Heavy weather,' he announced. 'I've been trying to cheer up old Charles, and it's been like castin' a fly against a thirty-mile gale. I can't make out what's come over him. Here's a deservin' lad like me strugglin' at the foot of the ladder and not cast down, and there's Charles high up on the top rungs as glum as an owl, and declarin' that the whole thing's foolishness. Shockin' spectacle for youth.'

Lamanha, who had found an arm-chair beside Palliser-Yeates, looked at the others, and smiled wryly.

'Is that true, Charles?' Leithen asked. 'Are you also feeling hipped? Because John and I have just been confessing to each other that we're more fed up with everything in this gay world than we've ever been before in our useful lives.'

Lamanha nodded. 'I don't know what has come over me. I couldn't face the House to-night, so I telephoned to Archie to come and

cheer me. I suppose I'm stale, but it's a new kind of staleness, for I'm perfectly fit in body, and I can't honestly say I feel weary in mind. It's simply that the light has gone out of the landscape. Nothing has any savour.'

These three men had been at school together. They had been contemporaries at the university, and close friends ever since. They had no secrets from each other. Leithen, into whose face and voice had come a genuine interest, gave a sketch of his own mood, and the diagnosis of the eminent consultant. Archie Roylance stared blankly from one to the other, as if some new thing had broken in upon his simple philosophy of life.

'You fellows beat me,' he cried. 'Here you are, every one of you a swell of sorts, with everything to make you cheerful, and you're grousin' like a labour battalion! You should be jolly well ashamed of yourselves. It's fairly temptin' Providence. What you want is a holiday and some hard exercise. Go and sweat ten hours a day on a steep hill, and you'll get rid of these notions.'

'My dear Archie,' said Leithen, 'your prescription is too crude. I used to be fond enough of sport, but I wouldn't stir a foot to catch a sixty-pound salmon or kill a fourteen pointer. I don't want to. I see no fun in it. I'm *blasé*. It's too easy.'

'Well, I'm dashed! You're the worst spoiled fellow I ever heard of, and a nice example to democracy.' Archie spoke as if his gods had been blasphemed.

'Democracy, anyhow, is a good example to us. I know now why workmen strike sometimes and can't give any reason. We're on strike—against our privileges.'

Archie was not listening. 'Too easy, you say?' he repeated. 'I call that pretty fair conceit. I've seen you miss birds often enough, old man.'

'Nevertheless it seems to me too easy. Everything has become too easy, both work and play.'

'You can screw up the difficulty, you know. Try shootin' with a twenty bore, or fishin' for salmon with a nine-foot rod and a dry-fly cast.'

'I don't want to kill anything,' said Palliser-Yeates. 'I don't see the fun of it.'

Archie was truly shocked. Then a light of reminiscence came into his eye. 'You remind me of poor old Jim Tarras,' he said thoughtfully.

There were no inquiries about Jim Tarras, so Archie volunteered further news.

'You remember Jim? He had a little place somewhere in Moray, and spent most of his time shootin' in East Africa. Poor chap, he went back there with Smuts in the War and perished of blackwater. Well, when his father died and he came home to settle down, he found it an uncommon dull job. So to enliven it he invented a new kind of sport. He knew all

there was to be known about *shikar*, and from trampin' about the Highlands he had a pretty accurate knowledge of the countryside. So he used to write to the owner of a deer-forest and present his compliments, and beg to inform him that between certain dates he proposed to kill one of his stags. When he had killed it he undertook to deliver it to the owner, for he wasn't a thief.'

'I call that poaching on the grand scale,' observed Palliser-Yeates.

'Wasn't it? Most of the fellows he wrote to accepted his challenge, and told him to come and do his damndest. Little Avington, I remember, turned on every man and boy about the place for three nights to watch the forest. Jim usually worked by night, you see. One or two curmudgeons talked of the police and prosecutin' him, but public opinion was against them—too dashed unsportin'.'

'Did he always get his stag?' Leithen asked.

'In-var-i-ably, and got it off the ground and delivered it to the owner, for that was the rule of the game. Sometimes he had a precious near squeak, and Avington, who was going off his head at the time, tried to pot him—shot a gillie in the leg, too. But Jim always won out. I should think he was the best *shikari* God ever made.'

'Is that true, Archie?' Lamancha's voice had a magisterial tone.

'True—as—true. I know all about it, for Wattie Lithgow, who was Jim's man, is with me now. He and his wife keep house for me at Crask. Jim never took but the one man with him, and that was Wattie, and he made him just about as cunnin' an old dodger as himself.'

Leithen yawned. 'What sort of a place is Crask?' he inquired.

'Tiny little place. No fishin' except some hill lochs, and only rough shootin'. I take it for the birds. Most marvellous nestin' ground in Britain, barrin' some of the Outer Islands. I don't know why it should be, but it is. Something to do with the Gulf Stream, maybe. Anyhow, I've got the greenshank breedin' regularly, and the black-throated diver, and half-a-dozen rare duck. It's a marvellous stoppin'-place in spring, too, for birds goin' north.'

'Are you much there?'

'Generally in April, and always from the middle of August till the middle of October. You see, it's about the only place I know where you can do exactly as you like. The house is stuck away up on a long slope of moor, and you see the road for a mile from the windows, so you've plenty of time to take to the hills if anybody comes to worry you. I roost there with old Sime, my butler, and the two Lithgows, and put up a pal now and then who likes the life. It's the jolliest bit of the year for me.'

'Have you any neighbours?'

'Heaps; but they don't trouble me much.'

Crask's the earthenware pot among the brazen vessels—mighty hard to get to and nothing to see when you get there. So the brazen vessels keep to themselves.'

Lamancha went to a shelf of books above a writing-table and returned with an atlas. 'Who are your brazen vessels?' he asked.

'Well, my brassiest is old Claybody at Haripol—that's four miles off across the hill.'

'Bit of a swine, isn't he?' said Leithen.

'Oh no. He's rather a good old bird himself. Don't care so much for his family. Then there's Glenraden t'other side of the Larrig' (Archie indicated a point on the map which Lamancha was studying) 'with a real old Highland grandee livin' in it—Alastair Raden—commanded the Scots Guards, I believe, in the year One. Family as old as the Flood and very poor, but just manage to hang on. He's the last Raden that will live there, but that doesn't matter so much, as he has no son—only a brace of daughters. Then, of course, there's the show place. Strathlarrig—horrible great house as large as a factory, but wonderful fine salmon-fishin'. Some Americans have got it this year—Boston or Philadelphia, I don't remember which—very rich, and said to be rather high-brow. There's a son, I believe.'

Lamancha closed the atlas. 'Do you know any of these people, Archie?' he asked.

'Only the Claybodys—very slightly. I stayed with them in Suffolk for a cover shoot two years ago. The Radens have been to call on me, but I was out. The Bandicotts—that's the Americans—are new this year.'

'Is the sport good?

'The very best. Haripol is about the steepest and most sportin' forest in the Highlands, and Glenraden is nearly as good. There's no forest at Strathlarrig, but, as I've told you, amazin' good salmon fishin'. For a west coast river I should put the Larrig next to the Laxford.'

Lamancha consulted the atlas again and appeared to ponder. Then he lifted his head, and his long face, which had a certain heaviness and sullenness in repose, was now lit by a smile which made it handsomer and younger. 'Could you have me at Crask this autumn?' he asked. 'My wife has to go to Aix for a cure, and I have no plans after the House rises.'

'I should jolly well think so,' cried Archie. 'There's heaps of room in the house, and I promise you I'll make you comfortable. Look here, you fellows! Why shouldn't all three of you come? I can get in a couple of extra maids from Inverlarrig.'

'Excellent idea,' said Lamancha. 'But you mustn't bother about the maids. I'll bring my own man, and we'll have a male establishment except for Mrs Lithgow. . . . By the way, I suppose you can count on Mrs Lithgow?'

'How do you mean "count"?' asked Archie, rather puzzled. Then a difficulty struck him.

'But wouldn't you be bored? I can't show you much in the way of sport, and you're not naturalists like me. It's a quiet life, you know.'

'I shouldn't be bored,' said Lamancha. 'I should take steps to prevent it.'

Leithen and Palliser-Yeates seemed to divine his intention, for they simultaneously exclaimed. 'It isn't fair to excite Archie, Charles,' the latter said. 'You know that you'll never do it.'

'I intend to have a try. Hang it, John, it's the specific we were talking about—devilish difficult, devilish unpleasant, and calculated to make a man long for a dull life. Of course you two fellows will join me.'

'What on earth are you talkin' about?' said the mystified Archie. 'Join what?'

'We're proposing to quarter ourselves on you, my lad, and take a leaf out of Jim Tarras's book.'

Sir Archie first stared, then he laughed nervously, then he called upon his gods, then he laughed freely and long. 'Do you really mean it? What an almighty rag! . . . But hold on a moment. It will be rather awkward for me to take a hand. You see I've just been adopted as prospective candidate for that part of the county.'

'So much the better. If you're found out—which you won't be—you'll get the poaching vote solid, and a good deal more. Most men at heart are poachers.'

Archie shook a doubting head. 'I don't know about that. They're an awfully respectable lot up there, and all those dashed stalkers and keepers and gillies are a sort of trade union. The scallywags are a hopeless minority. If I get sent to quod—'

'You won't get sent to quod. At the worst it will be a fine, and you can pay that. What's the extreme penalty for this kind of offence, Ned?'

'I don't know,' Leithen answered. 'I'm not an authority on Scots law. But Archie's perfectly right. We can't go making a public exhibition of ourselves like this. We're too old to be listening to the chimes at midnight.'

'Now, look here.' Lamancha had shaken off his glumness, and was as tense and eager as a schoolboy. 'Didn't your doctor advise you to steal a horse? Well, this is a long sight easier than horse-stealing. It's admitted that we three want a tonic. On second thoughts Archie had better stand out—he hasn't our ailment, and a healthy man doesn't need medicine. But we three need it, and this idea is an inspiration. Of course we take risks, but they're sound sporting risks. After all, I've a reputation of a kind, and I put as much into the pool as any one.'

His hearers regarded him with stony faces, but this in no way checked his ardour.

'It's a perfectly first-class chance. A lonely house where you can see visitors a mile off, and

an unsociable dog like Archie for a host. We write the letters and receive the answers at a London address. We arrive at Crask by stealth, and stay there unbeknown to the countryside, for Archie can count on his people, and my man is a sepulchre. Also we've got Lithgow, who played the same game with Jim Tarras. We take on a job which will want every bit of our nerve and ingenuity, with a reasonable spice of danger—for, of course, if we fail, we should cut queer figures. The thing is simply ordained by Heaven for our benefit. Of course you'll come.'

'I'll do nothing of the kind,' said Leithen.

'No more will I,' said Palliser-Yeates.

'Then I'll go alone,' said Lamancha cheerfully. 'I'm out for a cure, if you're not. You've a month to make up your minds, and meanwhile a share in the syndicate remains open to you.'

Sir Archie looked as if he wished he had never mentioned the fatal name of Jim Tarras. 'I say, you know, Charles,' he began hesitatingly, but was cut short.

'Are you going back on your invitation?' asked Lamancha sternly. 'Very well, then, I've accepted it; and, what's more, I'm going to draft a specimen letter that will go to your Highland grandee, and Claybody, and the American.'

He rose with a bound and fetched a pencil and a sheet of note-paper from the nearest writing-table. 'Here goes—Sir, I have the honour to inform you that I propose to kill by legitimate means a stag—or a salmon as the case may be—on your land between midnight on — and midnight —. We can leave the dates open for the present. The animal, of course, remains your property and will be duly delivered to you. It is a condition that it must be removed wholly outside your bounds. In the event of the undersigned failing to achieve his purpose he will pay as forfeit one hundred pounds, and if successful, fifty pounds to any charity you may appoint. I have the honour to be, your obedient humble servant —'

'What do you say to that?' he asked. 'Formal, a little official, but perfectly civil, and the writer proposes to pay his way like a gentleman. Bound to make a good impression.'

'You've forgotten the signature,' Leithen observed dryly.

'It must be signed with a *nom de guerre*.' Lamancha thought for a moment. 'I've got it. At once business-like and mysterious.' At the bottom of the draft he scrawled the name 'John Macnab.'

(Continued on page 35.)

THE BREAKING OF THE BANKS ON REED'S ISLAND.

By ERNEST A. LITTEN, F.Z.S.

WIND and water, when properly harnessed, are of inestimable value to man; but either of these untamed, so to speak, is at times a terrible menace, and, when working in conjunction, they defy practically all efforts to restrain them.

'Reed's Island' or 'Read's Island' is an island in the river Humber some miles up the river. Within the memory of old men it was possible to walk out to it from the mainland at certain times. The swift seven-knot current of the river, however, did not take long to cut itself a passage, and, for a matter of an average lifetime, the island has been one at all stages of the tide. For a time the size of the island was under an acre, but the rich silt brought down by the river was deposited on and around it, until it grew to be some nine or ten acres in extent. The owners, realising its value as a summer pasture for cattle, built a bank of earth around it to keep out the water, and cut draining dykes across it. In summer the cattle grow fat on the rich grass, and the ground will carry a heavy stock, but as winter draws near they have to be shipped back to the mainland again, as the conditions change entirely.

One house is to be found, about the centre of the island, on its rising ground, but not very far from a creek where the cattle schooner is moored,

as well as a couple of row-boats. The family consists of husband and wife and three children, but when going to school the children have to lodge on the mainland, as fairly frequently weather conditions make it impossible for a boat to get across to the mainland. In winter the life is a lonely one, for only a few black-faced sheep, an odd cow or two, and a dog make up the stock, in addition to a small head of poultry. At present there is also a riding-horse, but no wheeled conveyance is kept.

Some years ago the government had a special use for the island, and a few officers and men were living there for a time. Finding the place ideal for coursing, they introduced hares, which did remarkably well, and multiplied exceedingly.

It does not take a great deal of imagination to picture the loneliness of the keepers of the island. Everything needed in the house had to be brought across by boat, from coal to needles. No kindly neighbours or friends handy in times of difficulty or trouble; practically no callers.

One evening they were sitting down quietly in their living-room, when the door was suddenly pushed open, such an unusual event as to make them almost scared! As a matter of fact it was only their own nine-year-old son, who was supposed to be safely in lodgings on the main-

land, where he was attending school. School had closed down owing to sickness, and the boy simply borrowed a boat, and, being used to the somewhat dangerous and difficult crossing, made no bones of attempting it in the dark, and just 'came along,' as he told them.

A few years ago the continuous heavy rainfall made many of our rivers overflow their banks, and thousands of acres of low-lying land were under water. The north-east of England was no exception in this respect, and the floods spread far and wide, the rivers being unable to carry off the water fast enough. The land got water-logged, and still the rain continued. And then happened that dangerous conjunction of wind and water that nearly resulted in the drowning of all living things on the island. The river in flood, high tides backed up by a mighty wind, and reaching its most dangerous state during the night hours! Fortunately the cattle had all been taken back to the mainland, so they were safe; but the pressure of the water on the banks and the overflowing of the dykes caused anxiety to the only man on the island, to say nothing of the young wife and mother.

The remaining few head of stock were safely housed and fed, and, hoping that things would improve ere morning, the family of four went to bed. The noise of the elements allowed the older ones to sleep only by fits and starts, and then suddenly all thought of sleep was banished. A number of screams and piercing cries rang out above the noise of the gale, which at first made them think that a vessel had been wrecked on the island, and that all hands were being drowned. Quickly they struggled into some clothes, and as the man went out to see what he could do, the mother waited on tenter-hooks in the house.

The screaming increased in violence, and seemed to come nearer and nearer to the house, until it was almost too much for the lonely waiting woman. At last, after half-an-hour or so—it seemed many hours—the husband returned and told the wife quickly to dress the children up warmly, ready to go at a minute's notice. In reply to her questions he said, 'The banks are broken and the island is flooded, but I have dragged the boat up to the garden fence, so that if the flood comes up here we must take to the boat and do the best we can.' But what

of the screaming, which was almost more nerve-racking than the danger itself? 'Tis the hares getting drowned; there are scores of them all trying to swim out of the flood, but the water is sure to get them, and they know it. It may get us too, so we cannot help them. They must just take their chance.'

Having done all that was possible to get ready for a quick departure if the worst came they got a hurried meal, but all the time these terrible screams, almost human, of the drowning hares were ringing out above the wind and rain. The time of high water passed, and then the water ceased to rise. After a bit it even receded a few inches, and they were able to pluck up courage once more, feeling that the immediate danger was over.

At long last daylight came, and what a desolate scene lay around them—water and mud, mud and water. The tops of the banks were still standing, but with ugly, dangerous gaps in places, through which the water was now running out into the already swollen river. As the higher ground cleared, the corpses of some hundreds of fine hares came to view, making the ground somewhat resemble a battlefield. Some were in heaps where they had reached a tiny island and sought safety, and others had died alone, having swum about until their strength gave out. 'Twas a ghastly sight, and the sound of their death-cries will never be forgotten by that little family gathering on the island.

As soon as it was safe to get to the mainland this was done, for great was the anxiety of friends as to the fate of the island family. Several hundred men have since been employed to try to renew the bank, but the wind and water together can always defeat their efforts.

Those of us who have visited this island in pursuit of ducks and geese during the winter months can, to some extent, visualise the night of the flood, and above the roaring north-easter can fancy we hear the screaming of the terrified hares. If the water had risen only a few feet higher, the house and outbuildings must have been washed away; and although the family would have been able to get into their boat, it is more than likely that they would never have been able to win to safety over the flooded river that was a raging torrent, sweeping all before it.

THE KING OF THE SNAKES.

By OLIVER ROLLAND.

IT is most astonishing how the belief in witchcraft, in some form or other, persists among the white people of South Africa. As I write, a case is before the Courts at Kimberley in which a white man and his wife have been deluded and defrauded by an Indian wizard.

The arrest of the witch-doctor by the police brought to light the fact that this particular gentleman had a clientèle amongst the whites in various parts of this vast country. Some wrote for love-potions; some for charms; one requested him to cause a certain young lady

to leave her home and join the writer in a distant part of the country. One old chap, evidently a sufferer from some kind of heart affection, wrote saying that he had done all the witch-doctor commanded, but still the pain remained, and so on.

Strangest of all, in my experience, after twenty years' residence, it is the white people of the towns who appear to be 'had' most by the black witch-doctors. I cannot account for it; I can only state the fact as proved by our Court records. I could understand, to some extent, the man or woman living for years in the wilds among natives becoming somewhat more infected with a belief in the supernatural than the average town-dweller. The vast solitude; the uncanny silence; the wonderful folklore of the natives; and the impressive belief in himself of the bedecked witch-doctor—all these eventually have some effect, in spite of one's better knowledge. Up to a certain age white children born among natives invariably believe in throwing the bones and 'smelling out'—what else could one expect? Nevertheless, it is the veldsman who treats the *m'tagart* more or less as a joke, while townsmen seem to fall an easy prey to those professing to possess supernatural powers.

As an example: Three years ago I was resident in Durban. In my garden I grew a magnificent, and prolific, vine. One season, as the fruit ripened to maturity, I noticed that continually an odd grape from the bunch was picked, as if by childish fingers. Always went the ripest grape. I questioned my own children, but each and all denied any knowledge of the occurrence. This went on until I set my Kaffir servant to watch. He discovered that a wild monkey came from Stella Bush in the early hours each night for the purpose of robbing my vine. I lay in wait for that monkey, and for two nights had the chagrin of hearing him cheek me from the top of a mango tree growing in my neighbour's garden. After the two nights, probably becoming scared, he came no more.

Some time later, my neighbour, a phlegmatic German by the way, dropped in for a chat. In the course of casual conversation I mentioned the incident of the monkey. He was greatly interested, and inquired if I had actually seen the animal. Of course I had not—whereupon he told me, very seriously, that he and his wife had heard the chattering and, feeling alarmed, had sent for a witch-doctor, who had informed them that the noise was the spirit of his father speaking to him. My friend, apparently objecting to his father's ghost disturbing his rest, had bought certain charms from the witch-doctor—at a stiff price, too—and, since then, he naively added, 'Father has come back never!'

To this day, that otherwise sane man firmly refuses to believe that what he and his wife

had heard was but the chattering of a monkey that nightly came to rob my vine.

Witch-doctors often obtain their reputations fortuitously. How I obtained the title of the 'King of Snakes' is worth relating. For some years my duties had kept me in the heart of the Mavenda country. One afternoon, according to custom, taking my siesta in the cool of my rondavel, I was suddenly aroused by my induna, who explained in Sesuto, 'Come quickly, baas—a big, big, snake!' Now, contrary to common belief, natives are very much afraid of snakes, and every colonial feels in duty bound to act the modern St Patrick on every possible occasion. Therefore I seized a heavy crop and ran after my induna, who went off at a great pace. At the back of the kraal I found a gathering of natives, standing in a wide circle, all teetering away like so many startled apes. 'Silence!' I commanded; 'where is the snake?' It was pointed out to me, and turned out to be a mamba not above average size.

'Give me your coat, Hobo,' I said to my induna, and, upon his compliance, I placed the garment lightly over the lethargic reptile, which had evidently dined recently. Hastening to the rondavel, I procured a four-gallon paraffin tin, in which I cut a hole large enough to allow of the entry of the snake. With this I hurried back to the scene of excitement.

Now a sleepy snake, having dined, will lie quiet for hours if covered; but disturbed, he will make for the nearest hole or, if one be not handy, will attack his disturbers. Knowing his ways very well, I placed the hole in the paraffin tin immediately opposite the place where I knew the snake's head to lie. To awe the now curious natives, I then chanted the first verse of the *Marseillaise* in French, and suddenly snatched off the coat and commanded in Sesuto: 'Enter the tin, O evil one. I, thy king, command thee!'

The effect, to the natives, was *m'tagart*. The disturbed reptile made for that paraffin tin, and the mamba being slightly on the fat side, it was amusing to watch its effort to get through the hole. All the time I encouraged it, until the last inch had disappeared, when I plugged it in. Later, in camp, a pot of boiling-water did the rest.

The effect upon the natives was wonderful. My fame spread throughout the country, and from that day I was hailed as the greatest witch-doctor of all, and my native name became the equivalent of 'The King of Snakes.'

Old M'Pefa, cunning old rascal, the real tribal witch-doctor, became a great friend of mine afterwards. Whenever one of his charms failed to work he would visit me, and the way he used to try to pump me regarding my 'big *muti*' was most amusing. Even now, I occasionally meet a boy in Johannesburg who remembers 'The King of the Snakes.'

ILLUSIONS.

By L. M. CORIN.

I.

IT was 5 o'clock, and the doors would not open until 7.45. An east wind was blowing, and in its train came penetrating gusts of snow at intervals. But the inclement weather acted as no deterrent to the enthusiastic theatre-goers who would sooner renounce a warm fireside than miss Frank Maine's *première*.

Martha Tintagel was at the pit-door before his first intrepid devotee made her appearance. She had lodged two stacks of folding-stools against the wall, and, despite the bitterness of the night, was optimistic that the whole of her stock would be requisitioned. When Frank Maine was starring she usually basked in a reflected prosperity.

Her hands were blue with the cold, her nose was very red, and her lips felt cracked and dry, though she was too wise to moisten them. Yet she was serene, even merry. She exchanged a cheery word with the newspaper-boys, the theatre-attendant, and a genial policeman, before custom demanded her attention.

She had very blue eyes, and her complexion, which had to withstand the rigours of an outdoor life, was remarkably clear and bright. Fashion at the time decreed that hats should be 'perched' upon wearers' heads. In that respect Martha was *à la mode*, though her head-gear boasted a gorgeous feather set at an angle that the *élite* of the day scarcely countenanced.

Martha's shawl was of a pronounced pattern. Beneath it a wide expanse of carefully laundered white apron showed in front, while a voluminous display of violet velvet was visible from the rear, and her shoes were substantial. Undoubtedly her chief attractions lay in her vivacity and youth.

Rapidly the leathern bag which hung from her waist filled with coins as her stock-in-trade was depleted; and when her entire store had been hired she watched, in common with her long queue of customers, the performance of the self-styled 'funny' man, who succeeded only in being pathetic.

Martha felt sorry for him. How could one be properly funny if one was hungry and cold? She suspected he was both, and could aver from experience that the sensations were not conducive to a sense of humour. He would have passed her with his furtive air and the shabby cap slightly withdrawn, but she was temporarily affluent by comparison, and sixpence from her bag found its way into his cap.

He gave her one swift, surprised look, and ambled on down the long line of people.

Her reward was as unexpected as it was

quick. The man with the chestnut grid who was coming round the corner knew Martha. He had reason to, as she had tended his wife in a recent illness. 'Catch, Martha!' he said.

Martha caught a shovelful of hot, aromatic chestnuts in the corner of her shawl, and laughed at her own adroitness as she thanked the donor. 'I'm in luck's way to-night,' she said.

II.

Five minutes before the doors opened Martha, in accordance with custom, collected her stools; then glanced expectantly across the road to the eel-pie shop. Some of the habitués of 'The Elysium' might deplore the fact that the pit and gallery entrances had such plebeian environment; but Martha, looking at the steamed window through which the, to her mind, delectable pies were hazily visible, was distinctly cheered by the prospect.

Jo Baxter worked in that shop; he admired her, and his love-offerings took the substantial and welcome form of eel-pies. She was quite as expectant as she had been the previous Saturday, but she was apprehensive as to the propriety of accepting further pies, for on the intervening Sunday she had promised Jack Webb, a local bootmaker, that she would be his wife.

However, Jo appeared with the pie, and Martha yielded to its temptation. She was quite convinced that Jack was the man for her, but she liked Jo immensely, though he puzzled her. He had been in turn a bricklayer, a painter, a driver of a C. P. van, and his latest venture had carried him into the shop of George Robotham.

Martha had remarked that she didn't think it 'much of a job,' and he had answered, 'What's the odds! I'm only gettin' my bearings. 'Tain't likely I mean to stop in that poky 'ole. Fact, Martha, I ain't no intention of stoppin' in this country at all. I mean to see the world, and don't intend stoppin' in the gutter neither.'

To Martha this talk seemed to border on the revolutionary, and she had reminded him of the adage about the rolling stone, aware as she was that on more than one occasion he had secured 'an Irishman's rise.'

But as she was graciously accepting the pie she was wondering how Jo would take the news. She sat down on one of her stools that she might eat this savoury supper ere its warmth departed on the biting breeze. 'It's mighty kind of you,' she said.

Jo grinned. 'I'm done for to-night, Martha, so I shall be able to see you 'ome. Reckon old

Robotham recalls the time when 'e 'ad a girl—what d' you say, Martha?'

Martha flushed and looked guilty, but her comment was non-committal. 'Don't know about that!'

But she was eyeing him askance between the bites. Would he be nasty about it? Would he say she had been leading him on? Had she? Martha was not quite sure.

III.

In a few minutes she was walking lightly along at his side, while he slung the strapped stools on his arm and laughed at Martha's trivialities. Before she had summoned courage to tell him she was engaged to another, she found herself listening to another proposal.

'I've saved a bit, Martha—told you once I meant to go to the States, didn't I? Well, I'm goin' soon, but I'd like your promise that you'll come out to me soon as I've settled down. You sha'n't regret it! Now, what do you say, kid?'

'Lor', now!' said Martha in consternation. 'If you'd only asked me Saturday night there ain't no tellin' wot mightn't 'a 'appened; but I bin and promised meself to Jack Webb, and I can't go back on my word.'

Jo screwed his lips up in a curious fashion, but his reply was philosophic. 'Oh well, my gal, I s'pose you know your own mind best.'

'Jack's a steady fellow, and 'e's asked me twice before,' she said, wondering whether she *had* known her own mind.

'And I'm not?' he asked whimsically. 'Don't you see, Martha, I've only been servin' a kind of prenticeship to an all-round knowledge o' things? Don't you see I mean to make somethin' of myself before I've done?'

Martha's vision was circumscribed. She did not see *that*; but she saw that he was rather handsome and very likeable. She was silent.

'Oh well,' he continued, 'if you 'urry up about it, I'll stand best man and wish the pair of you luck before I cross the briny.'

She looked gratefully at him, but inwardly she was rather piqued that he should take his dismissal so cheerily.

'That's uncommon kind of you, Jo,' she said. 'And Jack does say wiv 'is steady trade there ain't no need to wait.'

They drew up at the tenement house where Martha lodged with her widowed mother. Jo handed her the stools, bade her a brief good-night, and strode rapidly down the street.

He officiated as best man at the wedding, and Martha was once more a little piqued that he should bear up so very bravely in face of his frustrated hopes.

Jo went away without divulging the fact that his rival's steadiness was more apparent than real; neither did he mention that Jack, after purchasing what few items of furniture he deemed necessary, had not the wherewithal to

buy the 'real gold ring' upon which Martha insisted, and that in consequence he had 'obliged' the bridegroom with a couple of pounds.

Six weeks later Jo, with high hopes and an almost empty wallet, sailed for America.

IV.

Before Jo Baxter became president of the Ackroyd Textile and Woollen Trust he had sampled many callings. He had been in his time odd man on a sheep farm, navvy on a new rail-line, rancher in a small way, and rancher in a large way.

He had travelled to success, taking his learning, as the locomotives their water-supply—*en route*.

It was a fortunate day for him when he went into Arkansas City and encountered Molly Tiffarney behind the high counter of the new and dignified post-office. She had bright auburn hair and greeny-gray eyes, was self-reliant, counted out his change to him swiftly and unerringly, and didn't trouble to vouchsafe him a second glance.

It was this indifference that roused his interest. He pugnaciously resolved that she should notice him, and for that reason he saw to it that business took him frequently to the Arkansas post-office.

Presently Molly took due cognisance of him. Certainly, she admitted, he was a big, strong man, but he was uncouth. She granted, after a while, that he had a winning smile, and that he could conceal quite a few social defects. He was triumphant when she let him take her to a circus. He was enraptured when she permitted him to take her to the finest restaurant the city boasted. That outing was nearly his undoing.

Molly did not approve his table manners, and did not disguise the fact when he proposed another visit. Thereupon he set himself the task of improving them, and betook himself to the 'Alcazar' for the sole purpose of taking stock of his fellow-diners. He learned his lesson. Again, Molly had taken a course of elocution, and found her admirer sadly inexperienced with words. He took counsel with M'Kinnon, one-time dominie! Also he observed that her eyes were apt to be critical when they ran over the line of his clothes. He changed his tailor! Back in the valley he still wore check shirt, leather belt, knickers, and leather-thonged gaiters, but his sartorial outfit for high days and holidays was beyond reproach.

It was due to her influence that he made a belated acquaintance with the city library. Molly had said so frankly that she couldn't bear an ignorant man.

But it was not until after their marriage that Jo began to lift up his head in a social sense. Molly steadily fed the flame of ambition that had always burned within him. She urged to

fresh enterprise. So confident was she that her husband could do a wonderful overseas trade if he would but organise and handle the output of the scattered settlers, that he felt it incumbent upon him to prove that her belief in his omnipotence was not unfounded.

He launched out into this new activity, and concealed any doubts that assailed him. The venture was a complete success. He required no further urging; the spirit of adventure beckoned from that day.

He became an influential business man.

V.

Several more years passed before he was returned as 'Democrat' to the Senate. It was a great day both for him and for Molly—the crown of untiring efforts. Molly was a finished expositor (on paper), and Jo had a telling forensic style never hitherto suspected—a combination which resulted in some excellent extempore speeches.

Molly's ambition ran along social rather than political lines, but she knew quite well that success in the latter sphere would be a passport into the former.

As a senator her husband had a big pull. At the next election a Republican was returned in his stead, but by that time the Ackroyd Textile and Woollen Trust was of international importance.

The Baxters had two children, both a credit to their training. The boy graduated at Harvard, and the girl took 'honours' in art. The head of the family held forth with eloquence on the subject of the education of the child. Doubtless, memories of his own early years contributed to his earnestness.

It was during Alec Baxter's second year at Harvard that his father launched into literature with a brochure, 'Opportunity Crosses each Man's Path.' In this he dwelt, with a full share of Americanised *amour propre*, on his own invincibility in the face of obstacles and his successful climb to success. He omitted the 'Martha' incident.

He advocated the keeping of a journal and the recording of progress, affirming that since the first day he set foot in the States he had adhered to this practice. Molly acquired this information through reading her husband's book, which proved that his confidence had reservations. She was inclined to resent it, and passed one or two snappy comments; but Jo knew his American wife, and seized the occasion to announce that he'd been inquiring the price of Haliburton House—a palatial property that she had set her heart on.

She forgot the diary!

It was true that Jo Baxter kept a diary, and kept it under lock and key, too. It was well that Molly had not seen how coolly he had recounted the tale of his wooing.

'Decided after knowing Molly Tiffarney six months,' one entry ran, 'that she's the girl for me. Asked her to be my wife. Consented.'

Later he entered up, 'Married to-day,' and actually followed the statement with the query, 'Is marriage a lottery?'

Subsequently he recorded in a bold hand, 'Molly has not fallen short of expectations.'

And when he was returned for Askansas he wrote briefly, 'A great day!'

It would have interested not a few of his constituents to read another item which ran, 'Gratifying concession to the Ackroyd Textile and Woollen Trust.' But, as stated, the diary was safely under lock and key.

VI.

At forty-five Jo Baxter was to all intent—in outlook, appearance, and language—a typical American. It was no homesick feeling which lured him to England. He put the desire into plain words: 'I kind of want to see what lil ol' England looks like these days!'

Molly was an American born and bred, but she was just as curious to see what England looked like these days. Jo was for taking the children (now grown-up), but Molly didn't like her age being made apparent by Dorothy's proximity. As she said, it wasn't as if she *looked* forty-two. And then the children were assured a far easier time than their parents had known. On the whole she thought they two deserved a holiday.

So they booked a suite on the *Athenic*, and came over alone and in state.

Molly was discovering England while her husband set about its rediscovery. She toned down her Americanisms, but he didn't bother, being inordinately proud of the land of his adoption.

He went to have a look at the house where he was born, and found it a rather distressing link with the past. He returned to the Imperial, appreciative of its comforts, and inconsequently tipped the first waiter he met. The couple did the sights with habitual American precipitancy, and, anyway, Jo learnt more of England than he had as a native.

A chance picture from his car of a waiting queue watching the antics of a 'funny man' brought back thoughts of Martha. He had occasionally thought of her in the intervening years, and imagined her progressively comfortable and buxom. He suddenly decided that he and his wife would visit the Elysium. Directly he reached the hotel he 'phoned through and secured a box. It was not staging a good play, and it was deliberately-cultivated sentimentalism that led him back to the old spot. He did not expect to see Martha. But he did see her.

Their car, swinging past the pit and gallery entrance, was suddenly stayed by a policeman's arresting hand, when he caught sight of her. He was sure it was Martha, though in a shabby

black hat and a dilapidated shawl she did not look the blithe figure of former days.

'My dear,' he said to his wife, 'I see a friend of my youth.'

'Where?' she demanded.

'There,'—he indicated Martha.

The car began to move on.

'Shades of the Apostles!' ejaculated Molly. 'You're sure not renewing acquaintance these days.'

'Oh yes, I am.' He spoke with determination, but Molly could speak that way too. She was kind-hearted enough, but she saw nothing in Martha beyond a figure clad in a horrid shawl and an unforgivable hat—probably still in the gutter through drink, soliloquised Molly.

Jo Baxter followed his wife up the well-carpeted stairs, not braving her displeasure. He slipped into the box at her side. But his conscience was troubled. There was Martha—outside in the cold! Martha impoverished and prematurely aged! How many times on a public platform had he deprecated 'side.'

VII.

The next evening he excused himself glibly. He didn't believe in—if tact didn't decree—unnecessary candour with his wife on questions that vexed her. He was going in search of Martha.

He had looked out his plainest suit and most inconspicuous hat.

Martha knew him at once. 'Why, if it ain't Jo!' she exclaimed in reply to his quiet, 'Wa-al, and how's Martha? Hasn't the world been kind to you?'

'Oh, pretty middlin'.' She answered his query with attempted cheerfulness.

'And how's Jack?'

'Oh, in 'is grave this nine year,' she said; 'but the kiddies are off hand now. It was a hard job when they were young. Jack was ill off and on for years.'

Several passers-by looked curiously at the pair, and the American's eyes involuntarily followed their retreating figures, though he drew himself sharply to attention when he realised he was half-agreeing with their evident opinion of Martha.

Were coats dearer than shawls? He asked the question mentally and irrelevantly, then recalled his dictum of 'no side.' 'What do you say, Martha,' he suggested diffidently, 'to a little supper with me—just for old time's sake?'

Martha looked from her stock-in-trade to her shabby shoes. 'I'd like to, but——'

'Oh, bother buts,' he said. 'Get somebody to hike that bundle of sticks home for you.'

She called a boy, went deliberately to the modiste's that flanked the Elysium, and gazed at her reflection in the mirror there. She was ill-pleased. She came back to him apologetically. 'I ain't togged up for company!'

Mentally he agreed; his verbal comment was: 'You don't calculate that makes any odds to me!'

He found a *very* quiet restaurant. He did not enjoy the meal; Martha's lack of table manners was so disconcerting. He thought irritably and somewhat unreasonably, considering the different circle in which they had moved, that, as he had taught himself, she ought to have learned to comport herself more gracefully at table.

Suddenly Martha observed that he was regarding the antics of her knife and fork with great intentness; she got very hot and confused, and apologised for all sorts of things—her dress, her hair, her manner, her talk.

He reproached himself and became extremely cordial. 'I wasn't finding fault, Martha.'

'No, no,' she agreed hastily, 'it's only my nerves.'

VIII.

The meal over, he escorted her home, utterly ashamed because he could not be oblivious to the glances that were directed after their incongruous figures. Martha was in turn sentimentally reminiscent, weighed down with worries, and optimistic that a brighter day would dawn.

He felt for her one sincere emotion—and that was pity. Her lot had not been cast in Easy Street.

At parting he spoke very gently—merely as a penance for his mental attitude towards her. How could she guess that?

He begged her not to be offended; told her that he'd made a lot of money, and pressed a packet of notes into her hand.

Martha had seen, but never before had in her possession, bank-notes. She was tearfully grateful, and he squeezed her hand compassionately and asked her not to cry. She dried her tears and smiled at him, and for one brief instant her eyes magically regained their old intense blueness and beauty.

'Good-bye, Martha,' he said. 'Of course, I'm married—married an American girl years ago—we've got two children.'

Indoors, Martha sank limply into a chair. 'I oughter 'ave married *im*,' she soliloquised. 'E's got on an' no mistake. But 'e's just as tender-hearted. 'E must 'a still cared or 'e'd never 'ave looked at me the way 'e did. Nice eyes! 'Eallus 'ad nice eyes! But Lor', he's bin and married some purse-proud Yankee gal, an' me—wot a fool I was—my tale might 'a 'ad a 'appy ending.'

Martha crinkled the notes, spread them out on the table, spelled them out, and shed tears of mingled gratitude and regret.

The diary told a different tale.

'Gosh! What luck she'd accepted Jack Webb the Sunday before! My life-story might not have had such a happy ending had she said "Yes" to *me*,' Jo confided to its pages.

FOLKLORE FROM A FAROE PRÆSTEGAARD.

By ELIZABETH TAYLOR.

I.

THIS is a præstegaard¹ on the northern end of the most northern island of the Faroe group. If you climb a little way up a fjeld-slope north of the præstegaard, you can see the headlands of the six islands that form the parish of the pastor; Fuglø and Svinö on the east, this island, Viderö, and on the west Bordö, Kunö, and Kalsö. Their mighty promontories brave the northern seas that stretch, without a break, to the ice-floes of the Pole. Only young and strong men can serve in such a parish, in a storm-centre where Gulf Stream and Polar Current strive for the mastery.

The præstegaard is built of drift-wood that is well tarred every June, and roofed with birch-bark from Norway and grass-sods from the fields. The pastor and pastorinde are in far-away Denmark, but I have permission to stay here as a charge of the maids, Sigga and Drikke. I live in the seaward gable of the great attic, called the Maidens' Bower. A *nisse*—a kind of Danish brownie—lives next to the Maidens' Bower in a secluded north-west corner. As *nisses* are not indigenous to the Faroes, it is supposed that this one was a stowaway among the pastor's belongings when he came from Denmark six years ago.

The first year I made little progress in collecting bits of folklore. I knew no Old Norse (the language of the people) and not enough Danish to talk freely. The peasants have a great fear of ridicule, and if I had asked bluntly, 'Do you believe in *huldre-folk* [the underground folk]?' the answer would have been, 'The Lord preserve us—no! How could *froken* [miss] think I could be so foolish!' I found it best to adopt the methods of Robert Louis Stevenson when he trotted out his native brownies and kelpies in order to extract from some reluctant South Sea islander his own particular spooks.

The few accounts of the Faroes that have been published in English speak of *huldre-folk* as fairies, brownies, and the little people, but those who write about fairies in the islands are strangely unobservant. Where are the sylvan glades and bosky dells, the warmth and sunshine, the freely-growing green things beloved of fairies and butterflies? Not a tree, not a shrub grows wild in the Faroes. There are no butterflies, bees, or wasps. They would blow out to sea, or be drenched and battered by the cold storms that often last long even in the summer time. One fact I can affirm with con-

fidence. *Where there are no butterflies there are no fairies.*

II.

The nearest approach to fairies in size are the *voetrirr*—little creatures that live in cow-sheds or under houses, and, in good weather, often sit under the eaves, or after dark climb up and peer into the windows. They are associated with Christian service, while *huldre-folk* are of the Devil. They stay only where there are God-fearing, peace-loving people. Quarrelling and profanity drive them away. Even now I think that some of the old women, remembering the little *voetrirr*, pause in the doorway before they throw out hot water in the dark, and call out in warning, 'Take care, you who sit there-out!'

Some writers have also given the name *huldre-folk* to giants and giant trolls, but at the present time—and indeed as long ago as 1670, when Pastor Lucas Debes wrote about them in his book on the Faroes—*huldre-folk* are said to resemble human beings in size and appearance. They have homes underground in the wild outfields, in ravines and clefts up among the fjelds or near the sea. They have boats like those of the Faroe folk, and go to the fishery; they have cows, sheep that are always gray, dogs that are always black, and often have a light on the ends of their tails. Not always are the *huldre-folk* harmful. Many stories are told of kindly services rendered. Milk girls, lost in the fog, have been guided back to the village gate, and warning of approaching storms has been given to fishermen at sea. But if offended they take revenge, preferably on the anniversary of the day when the offence was given. Usually they are invisible, though at will they can reveal themselves. One who has second-sight can see them, and if you should go to the wild outfields with such a *fremsynt* (one who has second-sight) be careful not to tread in his footsteps, or touch his arm or his shoulder if you walk by his side. If you do, you will see what he sees.

Sometimes the *huldre-folk* put sweets or bright ribbons on a boulder or a grassy-slope near their own dwelling-places, and if a child eats the sweets or a young girl wears the ribbon, they will thenceforth see the *huldre-folk* and will be in their power. Sometimes a *fremsynt* sees a *huldre-maiden* dancing the bride's dance at a wedding-feast; or a *huldre-man* at such a feast will be hidden under a table, and when discovered will run out quickly in the darkness. *Huldre-children* have been seen playing with the children of this hamlet, though only once has a *huldre-child* been known to

¹ A manse.

enter a house. Then a little huldre-boy ventured inside, but soon a voice was heard calling, 'Reuben! Reuben!' The child burst into tears and ran out quickly. He was never seen again.

It would seem that (as with humans) there are good huldre-folk and bad ones. Why, if all serve the Powers of Evil, should many huldre-parents desire *souls* for their babies? A Faroe baby is in danger until it is christened. Huldre-folk will lie in wait to smuggle a huldre-baby into the cradle, hoping that the change will not be detected. If the huldre-baby is christened, it will possess a soul.

There are stories, too, of huldre-women in travail who could not be delivered unless aid was given by a *Christian* midwife. On New Year's Eve, a Faroe midwife stood by her fire stirring barley porridge. In came a black hound and pulled at her skirts, indicating by signs that she must come outside with him. She did so, and there stood a huldre-man waiting. He begged her to come and help his wife. Her eyes were bandaged, and she was led away up on the fjeld-side to the huldre-man's home. There she helped a young huldre-woman in dire need. Afterwards she was led back to her own home. Dawn had come before she reached her cottage, and all asked where she had been, but all she answered was, 'A large head has come into the world this day.' From that they knew she had been absent on a midwife errand, but more she never told. She received a handsome present also, but was bound to silence about it.

III.

Lately, storm-bound by really terrible gales, I have passed many hours in the great attic looking over old books and records of the olden times when the pastors spent a lifetime in the remoter parishes. One extract from the records determines the time when two men lived who were rivals in the mystic arts of sorcery.

'1706-66. Klement Jensen, Pastor in Vide-reide, Videro, during 60 years. This was "The Wise Priest," who, for the reason that he had gone in "The Black School," was equal in sorcery to Guttorm of Mula.'

Guttorm of Mula, and his wise old father, Rasmus of Haraldsund—how the personality of some men survives through many generations! So vivid are the stories told about Rasmus and Guttorm, so often are their sayings repeated, that at first I thought they had died but a short time ago.

Rasmus was a kind of chief in the six Northern Isles, and not always amenable to the tyranny and oppression of the trade monopoly and the Danish officials in Thorshavn. Both father and son were noted as powerful sorcerers—they had gone through the 'Black School'; but they used their wisdom only for the good of their fellow-men. Here is a little

tale about a fight the old man had with the Powers of Darkness made manifest in the huldre-folk who lived in the clefts and hollows of the island of Bordö.

Rasmus had five sons, clever lads, at sea. One morning, before the dawn, as they rowed seawards, they saw a boat in a rock-cleft on Bordö, where huldre-folk are said to dwell. The lads thought it was a boat from Strond, where the folk have big noses, and one of them called out mockingly, 'Always late for the fishing, Big Noses!' and other mocking words.

'*That shall be revenged!*' a voice answered from the shadows; but the lads only laughed and rowed on. They told their father about it when they returned.

'A troublesome nose that shall be to you,' mused Rasmus, and wrinkled up his own.

A year from that time, Rasmus, saying nothing to his sons, went down to the boat-house in the night, and hid himself in the boat, under the sail. He knew his sons would not permit him, old as he was, to go with them, and he feared that his power in sorcery would be needed that day. Towards morning the sons came, dragged out the boat, took their places at the oars, and rowed seawards. As they passed that unlucky cleft where they had seen the men the year before, out came a boat right towards them, so fast that the foam flew high from the prow. Straight towards them it came as though to cut them down. A huldre-boat it was, with huldre-men in it. Then the sail was thrown aside, and Rasmus sprang up. They had need of him! Against such foes only the power of sorcery could avail. Rasmus reached out, seized the prow, and with his strong arm wrenched it to one side, so that it struck only a slanting blow. A huldre-man in the prow seized one of the boys. Rasmus planted his foot on his son's sea-shirt, so that he could not be dragged away. 'Lord, save us!' cried Rasmus, and gripped the huldre-man, and they fought as the boats went on. The sons of Rasmus rowed with all their might. A dark cloud hid Rasmus and the huldre-man. Within its gloom the two were still struggling as the boats came north of Mula, and there came in sight the church of Videreide, with the cross on it, and beyond it the dawn breaking. At the same instant the huldre-man cried out, 'Knis-knas! The Red Cock in the East!'—that is to say, 'My strength is gone, for now rises the sun!' 'Ris-ras!' gasped Rasmus, and in a twinkling vanished the huldre-boat. When Rasmus and his sons came home, the old man told them that they must never again call out mocking words to a boat in the dusk.

IV.

From my window in the Maidens' Bower I can see across the water the tiny hamlet of Mula, under the grim heights of Bordö. There

lived Guttorm, son of Rasmus. It is said of him, 'a rare man, advanced in wisdom, trustworthy in every way.' He is connected with this old præstegaard by tales that show his power of sorcery—stories of Guttorm going out in a great gale to save life at sea, and calming the waves as the boat advanced; of Guttorm laying the troubled spirit of an unbaptised murdered child who had returned in the dreaded form of a 'niagrisur,' demanding the right to lie in sanctified earth. Of the many stories about Barbara of Sumbö (a village on the southernmost island), I like best the one of how she came north to see which was the stronger in sorcery, Guttorm of Mula or herself—Barbara the fair, who once had been tried for her life as a witch, and would have been burned had not the judge said *she was too beautiful to be tarred*. When she arrived Guttorm was with his sons at sea. She began to mix and to brew. She put limpet shells on the stream Matará, and said that the number that sank should be the number of the boats that were lost at sea. Such a storm Barbara raised by her spells that Guttorm and his sons barely escaped with their lives. As they rowed homewards the spindrift was like flying ashes, the waves blood-red to see.

'What is this?' cried one of his sons. 'The waves are on fire!'

'I know what it is,' Guttorm answered. 'Row thou, row! All is not well at home!'

As they came near the Mula landing-cliffs they saw Barbara sitting on the hillside by the stream, her long yellow hair flowing free about her. Then came the punishment of Barbara. Guttorm took his woollen mitten, put in it a stone weight from the fishing-nets, and struck her across the nose. He cut off those yellow locks, and with them much of her power vanished. He bound her to a seat close to the open hearth, and built thereon a great brewing-fire. He conjured her up on the house roof, and brought on a north-east storm with snow. Finally, at dawn, he let her go, more dead than alive. She had learned only too well—poor wicked Barbara—who in the Faroes was strongest in sorcery.

Nevertheless, Barbara had some power left. She vowed that no grass should ever grow on the place where Guttorm had conjured her, and to this day the sods on the Mula roof are bare where Barbara sat that night.

Guttorm's youngest son was called after his father. Guttorm told his wife that she must never let the little one go out in the *haugi* (the wild out-fields) fasting, or without his knife. At last, when he was almost grown up, he did go, fasting, and without his knife, and from that day he was lost. Many years later, a pastor of Videreide, who had second-sight, was going by sea around Mula with a crew of Videreide men. Looking landward, he saw young Guttorm crossing a grassy fjeld-slope.

'There goes a lost sheep of my flock,' said the pastor.

The men asked, 'Would it not be possible to get young Guttorm back?'

'No,' said the pastor with sorrow. 'He is a lost soul.'

v.

Rasmus and Guttorm live, not alone in musty records and old legends, but in the lives of those around me. In my wanderings about these six northern islands, if I meet some one, man or woman, who has a bright, full eye, a keen intelligence, who tells a story modestly and yet with a certain dramatic power, who is not ashamed to speak of the old customs and beliefs, then I query, 'You are, I believe, of the family of Guttorm of Mula?' and almost invariably the answer is, 'Yes, I am, but how did the Frøken know?'

One old woman I met in a distant hamlet, worn, bowed over with rheumatism, but I fancied I saw in her signs of the old race. So I did not ask her for stories, but, at a venture, I told her a little one about a descendant of Guttorm of Mula who had second-sight, and was thought to be almost equal in sorcery to Guttorm. It was his custom to remain in the church on New Year's Day after service, and, while sitting there quietly in the silent church, he would see the shapes of those who were to die in the coming year pass by him, go up the aisle, and stand before the altar. One New Year's Day he saw his old wife going up the aisle, and closely following her he saw himself. She died in the first week of the new year, and, seven days later, he died also.

As I ended my little tale I saw the face of the old woman light up with pride and pleasure. 'Frøken,' she cried, 'that old man was my grandfather!'

A woman who was also a descendant of Guttorm of Mula had second-sight from her eighth year. One summer morning she was playing outside her father's cottage, when she saw before her eyes, like a vision, bird-cliffs, sea-fowl, the sea below, and a man falling to his death. Frightened, she cried aloud, and ran to the cottage. Later in the day news came that on a distant island, at the same time, a man had been killed on the bird-cliffs. It was his custom to wear the old style Faroe dress that had long ago passed from use. The child had never before seen or heard of the man.

vi.

The gift of second-sight is not a happy one, and at the christening of a baby the godmother is careful to tilt the head backward, so that the water will not flow into the eyes and the child have second-sight. Jonas Lie calls second-sight a malady of the soul that no reflection, no reason, no remedy can cure. One is born with

a third window in the house of the soul in addition to one's two sound eyes—a window that opens out to a world of which others only dream. When the impulse comes one is forced to approach and gaze therefrom.

Many stories told me are of great age, but what shall one think of tales like the following one, that belong to the last generation?

It is the custom, during church services, for those who cannot attend to sit quietly at home, and not allow their children to play outside. One Sunday morning, a day of bright weather, a father and mother permitted their little three-year-old boy to play near the cottage door. Suddenly a black cloud came before the window, hiding all without; it vanished in a moment, and the parents ran out, but the child had gone. Search was made at once, the help of the pastor and district sheriff besought, and for three days parties of men looked far and wide for the child. The morning of the fourth day, a woman living ten miles away saw a child standing near her cottage. She asked him how he came there. He answered that 'the white man' had brought him. He was warm and clean, was not hungry or thirsty. Now, how could the child have traversed ten miles of rough country, bogs, fjeld-streams, and difficult rocky trails? His little sheepskin moccasins were quite clean.

The man who told this tale (it dates from his mother's time, and she dwelt near the place where the child lived) was a reliable man of much intelligence. He evidently believed this to be the work of huldre-folk. It was done to punish the parents for their neglect of Sunday customs, but the huldre-folk would not let the child suffer.

A pastorinde, when speaking of the huldre-folk, told me that in lonely parishes, where there is no companionship with men of education and varied interests, a stay of more than six years is unwise. Often, to men of imagination and sympathy, there comes a time when they query, 'Is it not possible that the Creator, in His inscrutable wisdom, permits these creatures to exist?' And then their wives decide that it is high time to take steps towards a flitting to prosaic work-a-day Denmark.

A pastor confessed to me that on one wild and lonely trail over fjeld and moor that he had to traverse alone he always felt a presence that accompanied him, heard a soft footfall just one step behind him and a little to one side, that again and again he has reasoned with himself, saying, 'It is only an echo—a nervous fancy; I will not turn and look!' Yet at last he has wheeled about suddenly, desperately, to find—nothing, and to go on unhappily, feeling again that invisible presence, hearing again that hushed footfall.

There is a Faroe saying, 'A knifeless man is a lifeless man,' or, in other words, 'A man with

no knife loses his life.' Steel protects against evil, both on land and at sea. Even now, a man will not go to the fishery or to the wild haugi without his knife, but if questioned about it he will make some jest about foolish old customs. In calm weather on a sunny day one can laugh at silly superstitions, but in darkness and storm, with danger on fjelds and sea, the old beliefs wake to life again.

VII.

Last Christmas Eve, in a terrible gale from the north-west, a young man tried to return to his home to 'hold Yule' with his family. The rocky trail passed around Mulen, where huldre-folk were said to dwell. On those rugged slopes young Guttorm had gone 'fasting and without his knife,' and never returned to the homes of men. All that night the gale raged. In the late dawn, the young man's body was found close to his father's door. His clothes were in tatters, his face, hands, feet, and knees cruelly lacerated. . . . A little group of men were talking together the next evening. One said gravely, '*All was not as it should be*' (an expression that signifies that supernatural powers had a part therein). 'That is true,' was the general assent. Then a man questioned. 'You heard? *He had no knife with him.*' 'Ay, we heard,' was the answer. That was all. Now these men knew well the mighty power of the dreaded 'cast-wind,' the *echo* wind, confined in great gales up in the hollows and clefts of the high fjelds in gathering force, until it bursts down with a report of a gun on the lands below. These men had seen the carcasses of sheep whirled up and cast down again and again on sharp ice and jagged rocks until they were a mass of broken bones and crushed flesh. Yet they gave no thought to the cast-wind as the cause of that tragic death. No, the lad, passing over those slopes where the huldre-folk dwelt, had no protecting steel with him; he had met the huldre-folk, had striven with them—and they had conquered.

A land of storms, yet there is a charm in high latitudes that the South cannot know; the mystery of starless summer nights, when the pale moon casts no shadows; the wonderful cloud and mist effects; the purity of colour in the dust-free air and deep sub-arctic sea. There are nights of coming storm when fishermen in home-hurrying boats see long lines of fjelds glowing as with inner fires, each blood-red peak flying a fiery banner like a volcano in eruption. Not seldom have the older men spoken to me of those calm and solemn hours at sea when the sunset and the sunrise colours together linger in the North. Their eyes 'behold the beauty of the Night,' and in the peace that broods over land and sea, they feel that the powers of darkness have no might.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

FROM THE HIMALAYAS.

By Lieut.-Colonel P. T. ETHERTON.

'EAST is east, and west is west, and never the twain shall meet.' So said a famous writer who was well qualified to express an opinion on such a debatable question; one who spoke with conviction and a deep insight into men and things. The dictum reminds me of the adventures and experiences of a soldier of the Royal Garhwal Rifles, a crack regiment of the Indian army recruited from the Garhwalis, those hardy mountaineers of the Himalayas, whose valleys and rock-bound corries form so prominent a feature of the north-eastern frontier of India.

The rifleman in question accompanied me on a journey across Asia from India to Russia, Germany, and England, a trek of 3500 miles, passing through wild, inhospitable, and unknown regions of Central Asia, and finally, after innumerable adventures, emerging at Flushing, twelve months from the start. It is partly of his impressions of the West that I propose to deal in this article, as throwing additional light on the mentality of the Oriental as we see it in the masses.

The bare list of the names of places gone through in the long journey provokes curiosity and speculation, not only as to the physical geography of these *terrae incognitae*, but as to the inhabitants and the tide-waters of civilisation now breaking around the frontiers and shores of the haunts of Kirghiz, Kalmuks, and other nomads. The route led for many hundreds of miles by the sinuous Russian frontier in Central Asia, as well as through borderlands held by Chinese troops, or states but nominally owing dependence to the Flowery Kingdom. We passed through Yarkand, once the capital of ancient Tartary, where the Chinese governor gave an official dinner in honour of the expedition; thence onward by the Tarim basin and over the Thian Shan, or Heavenly Mountains, the home of the Asiatic Wapiti stag, ibex, roe-deer, wild sheep, and red and black bear. Then on to Sairum Nor and the Ebi Nor country, immense inland seas, on the shores of which we first saw wild horses. Although we had set out in March, the month of December had come as we pressed on into Mongolia, where the rivers were frozen, solid sheets of ice that would have borne a siege train. In such a land the shelter

of the felt huts or *yurts* of the nomad inhabitants, though by no means sanitary, was, nevertheless, most delectable. The thieving propensities of the natives had to be repressed at times with a firm hand, but the expedition pushed on in the teeth of a blizzard to the river Irtysh; the extremes of temperature were as nothing to guard against—the danger lay in the searching and wounding wind. From a small Russian military post on the Siberian frontier of Mongolia the journey was continued by sledge for 800 miles through Siberia to the Trans-Siberian Railway, and so onward through Russia and Germany to the shores of the North Sea.

We reached Flushing late at night by the express from Berlin, going at once on board the boat which was awaiting passengers for Sheerness. It was the first time the soldier from the Himalayas had set eyes upon the sea. He could not believe that it was genuine, and inquired earnestly if it were really all water. How the boat could get along without some one to push it, or some means by which it could be hauled, passed his comprehension, and lengthy explanations as to the capacity and power of engines, steam, and propellers appeared to leave him more mystified than ever.

On our arrival in London the underground railways were at once a source of lasting admiration. Before descending into the bowels of the earth it was explained that we were about to proceed to another part of London by means of a railway which, in this case, so far departed from the general rule as to find its way beneath the ground rather than above it. It was further pointed out that it resorted to this apparently extraordinary course owing to the extent and congested nature of the village above, which explanations seemed to be more or less satisfactory. On reaching the platform below he looked about for any signs of a train. He was then asked to listen carefully, and, applying himself eagerly to this exercise, remarked that he heard a sound in the distance as of some souls in torment, increasing to an extent that indicated a fight between a host of devils. The roar was intensified until a train burst from the tunnel, bells and gates clanged, passengers hurriedly alighted, and the monster sped on

again, disappearing, as our orderly expressed it, like a gigantic rat in a hole. On arrival of the next train he sprang aboard, alighting at our destination with an alacrity that would have done credit to the most accomplished strap-hanger, 'for,' said he, 'unless one got off in a hurry one might never get off at all, such was the speed and activity of this wonderful *gharri*' (carriage).

A visit to the Natural History Museum at South Kensington was productive of much quaint comment, and the writer had to demonstrate in terms of companies and double-companies just how much provender would be required to satisfy the appetite of a whale, a task calling for no slight display of imagination and mathematical skill.

The cruiser *Dreadnought* was then lying in Portsmouth Harbour, and the naval authorities accorded permission to look over it. The torpedoes, guns, and hydraulic loading were viewed with wonder not unmixed with awe, as well as the range and destructive powers of the projectiles. A year or so prior to the visit the *Dreadnought* had received attention from a party of 'Varsity wags who had impersonated an Abyssinian prince and his suite, an incident that excited much comment and amusement at the time. On approaching the gangway, armed with the requisite credentials, the writer was asked in an anxious undertone if all was in order, and not another case of the Abyssinian prince!

The horses, more particularly those of the brewer's dray type, received special praise for their size and strength, especially after the scraggy specimens one sees in India. The Oriental of the masses thinks largely in sheep and cattle, bread and water, and the immediate necessities of life. Beyond these and his wife and household, his views and outlook on life do not rise to any broader horizon. This is exemplified in an amusing incident that occurred during the visit of the Indian contingent to this country for the coronation of the present king. A party of them had been invited to inspect the house and park of a certain nobleman, where they were entertained to a feast prepared by Indian cooks. The spread followed a tour of the castle and grounds, and at its conclusion the host proposed the health of his guests in a short and happy speech. The senior Indian officer, a veteran of many frontier wars, who had crossed swords with wild Afridis from the Afghan border, and crafty warriors from the Abor jungles of north-eastern Burma, where the first indication of an enemy at hand is a flight of poisoned arrows, was deputed to reply on behalf of the assembled company. Such was his record that he could have told wondrous tales of life along the frontier, of battle, murder, and sudden death, and might well have held his audience spellbound. He rose to thank the host

for a sumptuous entertainment, and pausing, as if to give full weight to his words, added that he must congratulate the noble owner on the size and beauty of his cows, which were simply splendid! He then resumed his seat amidst the applause of his comrades.

One day we had occasion to visit the offices of a well-known daily in the Strand, and whilst I was engaged with a member of the staff the orderly was installed in a seat by the window commanding a view of the street, and the thoroughfare leading to Kingsway. About an hour later we returned to find him gazing intently into the roadway, seemingly fascinated by the stream of passers-by. Left thus alone, one might have thought he would have been bored with the long wait, but on the contrary, in answer to a question as to how he had found the time pass, he replied, 'I have been here but a few minutes, and since you left me many thousands of people, both men and women, have passed this window; yet, albeit I have looked well and closely, I have not seen the same person pass twice. It is indeed a wonderful country; how can you explain it all?'

It may be imagined that the letters he addressed to his relations in India came as a breath from the unknown, something quite beyond the ken and comprehension of those wild mountaineers of the Himalayas, who tend their flocks and herds unmindful of the world beyond, the rise and fall of nations, and the passing of empires.

One reminiscence awakens another, and, although it is a far cry from the snows of the Himalayas to the battlefields of France, it was there that our rifleman's regiment gained additional glory, proving their worth as much in the fighting line as in the less glorious field of trans-Asiatic exploration.

The letters from Indian soldiers at the front to their relatives and friends overseas were subject to the usual scrutiny by the censor, and many and strange were the compositions dealt with. They helped to lighten the censor's burden, and brought a touch of humour to a task that was otherwise dull and thankless.

To those who have travelled in Normandy, and the northern parts of France, the horse harnessed to a horizontal pole which he revolves by walking round a large trough, and so operating a mangle for washing clothes, must be a familiar sight, although of recent years it has fallen somewhat into disuse. Similarly the dog placed inside a large wheel which is revolved by the act of treading, although the animal does not actually move forward. The wheel being thus set in motion, and kept so by the dog pedalling, as it were, operates a churn for butter-making. This elicited the remarks in one of the letters in question that they were, indeed, in an extraordinary country, for here the horses washed the clothes, the dogs made the butter,

and the cats sat alongside the milk and never drank it!

Another penned a line to say that eleven kings were at war, but that the worst of these was the German king, who had blasted us all with his artillery, and, said this hero, 'as I write heads are lying around me like boulders.'

In describing his adventures under fire and elsewhere, an obviously athletic soldier of a Punjabi regiment related how he was lying wounded in a hospital when a German shell struck the roof and blew the entire place to atoms. 'I rose,' he said, 'from my bed, and ran for nine miles—until I got into another hospital.'

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER II.—DESPERATE CHARACTERS IN COUNCIL.

CRASK—which is properly Craoisg, and is so spelled by the Ordnance Survey—when the traveller approaches it from Larrig bridge, has the air of a West Highland terrier, *couchant* and *regardant*. You are to picture a long tilt of moorland running east and west, not a smooth lawn of heather, but seamed with gullies and patched with bogs and thickets, and crowned at the summit with a low line of rocks, above which may be seen peeping the spikes of the distant Haripol hills. About three quarters of the way up the slope stands the little house, white-washed, slated, gray stone framing the narrow windows, with that attractive jumble of masonry which belongs to an adapted farm. It is approached by a road which scorns detours and runs straight from the Glen highway, and it looks south over broken moorland to the shining links of the Larrig, and beyond them to the tributary glen of the Raden and the dark mountains of its source. Such is the view from the house itself, but from the garden behind there is an ampler vista, since to the left a glimpse may be had of the policies of Strathlarrig, and even of a corner of that monstrous mansion, and to the right, of the tidal waters of the river and the yellow sands on which in the stillest weather the Atlantic frets. Crask is at once a sanctuary and a watchtower; it commands a wide countryside, and yet preserves its secrecy, for, though officially approached by a road like a ruler, there are a dozen sheltered ways of reaching it by the dips and crannies of the hillside.

So thought a man who, about five o'clock on the afternoon of the 24th of August, was inconspicuously drawing towards it by way of a peat road which ran from the east through a wood of birches. Sir Edward Leithen's air was not more cheerful than when we met him a month ago, except that there was now a certain vigour in it which came from ill-temper. He had been for a long walk in the rain, and the scent of wet bracken and birches and bog myrtle, the peaty fragrance of the hills salted with the tang of the sea, had failed to comfort, though not so long ago these things had had the power to intoxicate. Scrambling in the dell of a burn, he had observed both varieties of the filmy fern

and what he knew to be a very rare cerastium, and, though a lover of plants, he had observed them unmoved. Soon the rain had passed, the west wind blew aside the cloud-wrack, and the Haripol tops had come out black against a turquoise sky, with Sgurr Dearg, awful and remote, towering above all. Though a keen mountaineer, the spectacle had neither exhilarated nor tantalised him. He was in a bad temper, and he knew that at Crask he would find three other men in the same case, for even the debonair Sir Archie was in the dumps with toothache.

He told himself that he had come on a fool's errand, and the extra absurdity was that he could not quite see how he had been induced to come. He had consistently refused; so had Palliser-Yeates; Archie as a prospective host had been halting and nervous; there was even a time when Lamancha, the source of all the mischief, had seemed to waver. Nevertheless some occult force—false shame, probably—had shepherded them all here, unwilling, unconvinced, cold-footed, destined to a preposterous adventure for which not one of them had the slightest zest. Yet they had taken immense pains to arrange the thing, just as if they were all exulting in the prospect. His own clerk was to attend to the forwarding of their letters, including any which might be addressed to 'John Macnab.' The newspapers had contained paragraphs announcing that Lady Lamancha had gone to Aix for a month, where she would presently be joined by her husband, who intended to spend a week drinking the waters before proceeding to his grouse-moor of Leriote in the Borders. The *Times* three days ago had recorded Sir Edward Leithen and Mr John Palliser-Yeates as among those who had left Euston for Edinburgh, and more than one social paragraph had mentioned that the ex-Attorney General would be spending his holiday fishing on the Tay, while the eminent banker was to be the guest of the Chancellor of the Exchequer at an informal vacation conference on the nation's precarious finances. Lamancha had been fetched under cover of night by Archie from a station so remote that no one but a lunatic would think of using it. Palliser-Yeates

had tramped for two days across the hills from the south, and Leithen himself, having been instructed to bring a Ford car, had had a miserable drive of a hundred and fifty miles in the rain, during which he had repeatedly lost his way. He had carried out his injunctions as to secrecy by arriving at two in the morning by means of this very peat road. The troops had achieved their silent concentration, and the silly business must now begin.

Leithen groaned, and anathematised the memory of Jim Tarras. As he approached the house he saw to his amazement a large closed car making its way down the steep moor. Putting his glass on it, he watched it reach the glen road and then turn east, passing the gates of Strathlarrig, till he lost it behind a shoulder of hill. Hurrying across the stableyard, he entered the house by the back door, disturbing Lithgow the keeper in the midst of a whispered confabulation with Lamancha's man, whose name was Shapp. Passing through the gun-room, he found in the big smoking-room, which looked over the valley, Lamancha and Palliser-Yeates, with the crouch of conspirators, flattening their noses against the window-panes.

The sight of him diverted the attention of the two from the landscape.

'This is an infernal plant,' Palliser-Yeates exclaimed. 'Archie swore to us that no one ever came here, and the second day a confounded great car arrives. Charles and I had just time to nip in here and lock the door, while Archie parleyed with them. He's been uncommon quick about it. The brutes didn't stay for more than five minutes.'

'Who were they?' Leithen asked.

'Only got a side glance at them. They seemed to be a fat woman and a girl—oh, and a yelping little dog. I suppose Archie kicked him, for he was giving tongue from the drawing-room.'

The door opened to admit their host, who bore in one hand a large whisky-and-soda. He dropped wearily into a chair, where he sipped the beverage. An observer might have noted that what could be seen of his wholesome face was much inflamed, and that a bandage round chin and cheeks which ended in a top knot above his scalp gave him the appearance of Ricquet with the Tuft in the fairy tale.

'That's all right,' he said in the tone of a man who has done a good piece of work. 'I've choked off visitors at Crask for a bit, for the old lady will put it all round the countryside.'

'Put what?' said Leithen; and 'Who is the old lady?' asked Lamancha; and 'Did you kick the dog?' demanded Palliser-Yeates.

Archie looked drearily at his friends. 'It was Lady Claybody and a daughter—I think the second one—and their horrid little dog. They won't come back in a hurry—nobody will come

back—I'm marked down as a pariah. Hang it, I may as well chuck my candidature. I've scuppered my prospects for the sake of you three asses.'

'What has the blessed martyr been and done?' asked Palliser-Yeates.

'I've put a barrage round this place, that's all. I was very civil to the Claybodys, though I felt a pretty fair guy with my head in a sling. I bustled about, talkin' nonsense and offerin' tea, and then, as luck would have it, I trod on the hound. That's the worst of my game leg. The brute nearly had me over, and it started howlin'—you must have heard it. That dog's a bit weak in the head, for it can't help barkin' just out of pure cussedness—Lady Claybody says it's high-strung because of its fine breedin'. It got something to bark for this time, and the old woman had it up in her arms fondlin' it and lookin' very old-fashioned at me. It seems the beast's name is Roguie, and she called it her darlin' wee Roguie, for she's pickin' up a bit of Scots since she came to live in these parts. . . . Lucky Mackenzie wasn't at home. He'd have eaten it. . . . Well, after that things settled down, and I was just goin' to order tea, when it occurred to the daughter to ask what was wrong with my face. Then I had an inspiration.'

Archie paused and smiled sourly. 'I said I didn't know, but I feared I might be sickenin' for small-pox. I hinted that my face was a horrid sight under the bandage.'

'Good for you, Archie,' said Lamancha. 'What happened then?'

'They bolted, fairly ran for it. They did record time into their car—scarcely stopped to say good-bye. I suppose you realise what I've done, you fellows. The natives here are scared to death of infectious diseases, and if we hadn't our own people we shouldn't have a servant left in the house. The story will be all over the countryside in two days, and my only fear is that it may bring some medical officer of health nosin' round. . . . Anyhow, it will choke off visitors.'

'Archie, you're a brick,' was Lamancha's tribute.

'I'm very much afraid I'm a fool, but thank Heaven I'm not the only one. Sime,' he shouted in a voice of thunder, 'what's happened to tea?'

The shout brought the one-armed butler and Shapp with the apparatus of the meal and an immense heap of letters, all addressed to Sir Archibald Roylance.

'Hullo! the mail has arrived,' cried the master of the house. 'Now let's see what's the news of John Macnab?'

He hunted furiously among the correspondence, tearing open envelopes and distributing letters to the others with the rapidity of a conjuror. One little sealed packet he reserved to

the last, and drew from it three missives bearing the same superscription. These he opened, glanced at, and handed to Lamancha. 'Read 'em out, Charles,' he said. 'It's the answers at last.'

Lamancha read slowly the first document, of which this is the text:

GLENRADEN CASTLE,
STRATHLARRIG.
Aug. —, 19—.

SIR,—I have received your insolent letter. I do not know who you may be, except that you have the morals of a bandit and the assurance of a halfpenny journalist. But since you seem in your perverted way to be a sportsman, I am not the man to refuse your challenge. My reply is, sir, damn your eyes and have a try. I defy you to kill a stag in my forest between midnight on the 28th of August and midnight of the 30th. I will give instructions to my men to guard my marches, and if you should be roughly handled by them you have only to blame yourself.—Yours faithfully, ALASTAIR RADEN.

JOHN MACNAB, Esq.

'That's a good fellow,' said Archie with conviction. 'Just the sort of letter I'd write myself. He takes things in the proper spirit. But it's a blue look-out for your chances, my lads. What old Raden don't know about deer isn't knowledge.'

Lamancha read the second reply.

STRATHLARRIG HOUSE,
STRATHLARRIG.
Aug. —, 19—.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your letter was somewhat of a surprise, but as I am not yet familiar with the customs of this country, I forbear to enlarge on this point, and since you have marked it 'confidential' I am unable to take advice. You state that you intend to kill a salmon in the Strathlarrig water between midnight on September 1 and midnight on September 3, this salmon, if killed, to remain my property. I have consulted such books as might give me guidance, and I am bound to observe that in my view the laws of Scotland are hostile to your suggested enterprise. Nevertheless, I do not take my stand on the law, for I presume that your proposition is conceived in a sporting spirit, and that you dare me to stop you. Well, sir, I will see you on that hand. The fishing is not that good at present that I am inclined to quarrel about one salmon. I give you leave to use every method that may occur to you to capture that fish, and I promise to use every method that may occur to me to prevent you. In your letter you undertake to use only 'legitimate means.' I would have pleasure in meeting you in the same spirit, but I reckon that all means are counted legitimate in the capture of poachers.—Cordially, JUNIUS THEODORE BANDICOTT.

Mr J. MACNAB.

'That's the young 'un,' Archie observed. 'The old man was christened "Acheson" and don't take any interest in fishin'. He spends his time lookin' for Norse remains.'

'He seems a decent sort of fellow,' said Palliser-Yeates, 'but I don't quite like the last sentence. He'll probably try shooting, same as the fellow did on the Beaulieu. Whoever gets this job will have some excitement for his money.'

Lamancha read out the last letter.

227 NORTH MELVILLE STREET,
EDINBURGH.
Aug. —, 19—.

re Haripol Forest.

SIR,—Our client, the Right Honourable Lord Claybody, has read to us on the telephone your letter of August —, and has desired us to reply to it. We are instructed to say that our client is at a loss to understand how to take your communication, whether as a piece of impertinence or as a serious threat. If it is the latter and you persist in your intention, we are instructed to apply to the Court for a summary interdict to prevent your entering upon his lands. We would also point out that under the Criminal Law of Scotland any person whatsoever who commits a trespass in the daytime by entering upon any land without leave of the proprietor in pursuit of, *inter alia*, deer, is liable to a fine of £2, while if such person have his face blackened, or if five or more persons acting in concert commit the trespass, the penalty is £5 (2 & 3 William IV. c. 68).—We are, Sir, Your obedient servants,

PROSSER, M'KELPIE & MACLYMONT.

JOHN MACNAB, Esq.

Lamancha laughed. 'Is that good law, Ned?'

Leithen read the letter again. 'I suppose so. Deer being *feræ naturæ*, there is no private property in them or common law crime in killing them, and the only remedy is to prevent trespass in pursuit of them or to punish the trespasser.'

'It seems to me that you get off pretty lightly,' said Archie. 'Two quid is not much in the way of a fine, for I don't suppose you want to black your faces or march five deep into Haripol. . . . But what a rotten sportsman old Claybody is.'

Palliser-Yeates heaved a sigh of relief. 'I am bound to say the replies are better than I expected. It will be a devil of a business, though, to circumvent that old Highland chief, and the young American sounds formidable. Only, if we're caught out there, we're dealing with sportsmen, and can appeal to their higher nature, you know. Claybody is probably the easiest proposition so far as getting a stag is concerned, but if we're nobbled by him we needn't look for mercy. Still, it's only a couple of pounds.'

'You're an ass, John,' said Leithen. 'It's only a couple of pounds for John Macnab. But if these infernal Edinburgh lawyers get on to the job, it will be a case of producing the person of John Macnab, and then we're all in the cart. Don't you realise that in this fool's game we simply cannot afford to lose—none of us.'

'That,' said Lamancha, 'is beyond doubt the truth, and it's just there that the fun comes in.'

The reception of the three letters had undoubtedly brightened the atmosphere. Each man had now something to think about, and till it was time to dress for dinner, each was busy with sheets of the Ordnance maps. The rain had begun again, the curtains were drawn,

and round a good fire of peats they read and smoked and dozed. Then they had hot baths, and it was a comparatively cheerful and very hungry party that assembled in the dining-room. Archie proposed champagne, but the offer was unanimously declined. 'We ought to be in training,' Lamancha warned him. 'Keep the "Widow" for the occasions when we need comforting. They'll come all right.'

Palliser-Yeates was enthusiastic about the food. 'I must say, you do us very well,' he told his host. 'These haddocks are the best things I've ever eaten. How do you manage to get fresh sea fish here?'

Archie appealed to Sime. 'They come from Inverlarrig, Sir Erchibald,' said the butler. 'There's a wee laddie comes up here sellin' haddies verra near every day.'

'Bless my soul, Sime. I thought no one came up here. You know my orders.'

'This is just a tinkler laddie, Sir Erchibald. He sleeps in a cairt down about Larrigmore. He just comes up with his powny and awa back, and doesna bide twae minutes. Mistress Lithgow was anxious for haddies, for she said gentlemen got awfu' tired of saumon and trout.'

'All right, Sime. I'll speak to Mrs Lithgow. She'd better tell him we don't want any more. By the way, we ought to see Lithgow after dinner. Tell him to come to the smoking-room.'

When Sime had put the port on the table and withdrawn, Leithen lifted up his voice. 'Look here, before we get too deep into this thing, let's make sure that we know where we are. We've all three turned up here—why, I don't know. But there's still time to go back. We realise now what we're in for. Are you clear in your minds that you want to go on?'

'I am,' said Lamancha doggedly. 'I'm out for a cure. Hang it, I feel a better man already.'

'I suppose your profession makes you take risks,' said Leithen, dryly. 'Mine doesn't. What about you, John?'

Palliser-Yeates shifted uneasily in his chair. 'I don't want to go on. I feel no kind of keenness, and my feet are rather cold. And yet, you know, I should feel rather ashamed to turn back.'

Archie uplifted his turbaned head. 'That's how I feel, though I'm not on myself in this piece. We've given hostages, and the credit of John Macnab is at stake. We've dared old Raden and young Bandicott, and we can't decently cry off. Besides, I'm advertised as a smallpox patient, and it would be a pity to make a goat of myself for nothing. Mind you, I stand to lose as much as anybody, if we bungle things.'

Leithen had the air of bowing to the inevitable. 'Very well, that's settled. But I wish to

Heaven I saw myself safely out of it. My only inducement to go on is to score off that boulder Claybody. He and his attorney's letter put my hackles up.'

In the smoking-room Lamancha busied himself with preparing three slips of paper and writing on them three names. 'We must hold a council of war,' he said. 'First of all, we have taken measures to keep our presence here secret. My man Shapp is all right. What about your people, Archie?'

'Sime and Carfrae have been warned, and you may count on them. They're the kind that ask no questions. So are the Lithgows. We've no neighbours, and anyway, they're not the gossipin' sort, and I've put them on their Bible oath. I fancy they think the reason is politics. They're a trifle scared of you, Charles, and your reputation, for they're not accustomed to hidin' Cabinet Ministers in the scullery. Lithgow's a fine crusted old Tory.'

'Good. Well, we'd better draw for beats, and get Lithgow in.'

(Continued on page 53.)

RHEIMS CATHEDRAL.

Before.

A SOARING dream flung lightly on the sky—
Or so it seems—the giant structure raises
High-pointed arch and sculptured tower in praises
Which thrill and melt into God's blue on high.
Deep history of Man! Aspiring stone!
From down the soil each rumbling buttress
towers
In scrolls and columns, to what blinding powers
Of a divinest logic, carved and grown.
Not this alone—the silence of pale saint,
And high-crowned king, and antique prophet
hoary—
From each twined porch and smallest door, a
glory
Of human music streaming! High, now faint
Man's passionate worship on Man's human wings
Throbs here in grand completion of God's things.

After.

ALL this lies dead and silent with the stones
For all the world to sigh at with the winds. . . .
Its own lashed sacred dust whorls up and blinds
Not e'en a crippled beggar in his bones!
Transparent as an eggshell on that sky—
Unchanging sky!—blurred filagree of lace
Still tries to cling in shrouds o'er its wan face,
The antique dulled suggestion scattered by.
Choked in its own dim powder, one long pain;
Proud saint and prophet, Virgin diademed—
Man's thrice-fired soul by Man's own hand con-
demned—
'Tis still divinest logic! What huge chain
Far-flung from human eye, if so it be!
And generations later—shall *they* see?

HELENA DE VEER.

HOW THE YANKEES TWICE 'FORCED' THE DARDANELLES.

By Commander LORD TEIGNMOUTH, R.N.

FEW readers of this magazine, probably, are sufficiently versed in the naval history of the United States to be aware that, notwithstanding the aloofness from the affairs of the Old World which has been the key-note of its foreign policy since the 'Declaration of Independence,' the nation, during the first thirty years of its existence, was engaged in almost continuous hostilities with the Old World Powers.

Trouble first arose with the Dey of Algiers, whose piratical attacks on Mediterranean commerce had been tolerated for years past in a manner discreditable to the Christian states of Europe. This Algerian piracy had to be endured by a new country like the United States, simply for lack of means of self-defence. From the persistent way in which American commerce now appeared to be singled out for capture or destruction, it was evident that the dey was intent on forcing the nation to submit to the same humiliating system by which other states purchased immunity for their shipping—namely, by payment of blackmail, or 'tribute,' as the dey preferred to call it. And this savage ruler, not content with raiding American commerce, further threatened personal violence to any agent of the Republic who dared to set foot in his dominions. This, however, was more than the most peace-loving of peoples could stomach; and a naval force of six frigates was ordered to be prepared, with a view to enforcing respect for the American flag.

In the sequel, hostilities were avoided, and a year later (1795) a treaty was concluded with the dey. Commenting on this episode, Fenimore Cooper, the United States naval historian, states that the peace thus procured cost the United States a sum 'quite sufficient to have kept the barbarian's ports hermetically sealed until he should have humbly sued for permission to send a craft to sea.'

Two years later, we read of the *Crescent* frigate being sent by the President of the United States to the Dey of Algiers 'as compensation for delay in fulfilling Treaty stipulations.' As the vessel also took twenty-six barrels of dollars 'and many valuable presents,' the story is suspiciously suggestive of 'blackmail.' She further conveyed a gentleman, as the future United States Consul-general, who had already spent ten years in Algiers as a prisoner. The captain and the chief officer and several of the crew had also, it seems, experienced a similar unpleasant detention.

The manner in which the dey requited this uncalled-for generosity was characteristic, and supplies a melancholy commentary on the folly

of condoning acts of black piracy—instead of hanging the pirates, when caught, and destroying their nests.

From what follows, there is every reason to believe that, ever since the patched-up peace of 1795, to say nothing of the present of a frigate by way of 'compensation,' along with its cargo of dollars and 'valuable presents,' the barbarian ruler of Algiers had been consistently levying blackmail, under the name of 'tribute,' from the 'free and independent' citizens of the United States who, it is only right to remind the reader, had recently shaken off the galling yoke of a British king.

The historian of the United States navy states that in May 1800 a frigate, bearing the honoured name of their first President, *George Washington*, commanded by Captain Bainbridge, sailed under orders to convey 'tribute' to Algiers—in other words to carry blackmail to the dey. Were not the subsequent happenings recorded by so reliable a historian as Fenimore Cooper, one would be justified in treating the above statement, as well as the entire story, as a joke. History, however, is full of these surprises. And the sequel only proved the folly of pandering to the greed of a savage.

No sooner had the *George Washington* reached her destination, and delivered the 'tribute,' than the dey coolly demanded that the vessel should be placed at his disposal. For what purpose? For the conveyance of what he called a 'Mission' to Constantinople; in reality, to carry blackmail to his over-lord, the sultan, who had taken offence at some act of the dey's. And to Captain Bainbridge, of the *George Washington*, was to be deputed the doubtful honour of conveying the *douceur*. Yes, and convey it he did—though not without remonstrance! Thus did one false step lead to another.

Captain Bainbridge could not, of course, refuse to carry 'tribute' from the United States to Algiers, no matter what his own views on the subject might be; but when it came to being ordered by a barbarian to convey blackmail to the sultan, his conscience revolted at the very suggestion. And so, on hearing of the dey's intention, he sought an interview with the tyrant, to whom he politely intimated his regret that the orders he had received from his own government would not admit of compliance with His Highness's wishes. Thereupon the latter, discarding the mask of politeness, gave his visitor to understand—somewhat bluntly, one opines—that both he and the *George Washington* were in his power, and that a request from the Dey of Algiers was equivalent to a com-

mand. 'A lively altercation ensued,' writes the historian. In the end, however, the dey, as was to be expected, had his way. The indignant captain, 'acting on the advice of his consul,' who, poor man, unwilling to risk decapitation, urged compliance, consented to convey the 'presents,' as they were called, to Constantinople.

Before sailing, further trouble arose over the colours that were to be flown during the trip, the dey insisting on his own flag occupying the place of honour. Captain Bainbridge, we are told, 'while yielding in appearance,' hoisted the Stars and Stripes directly the vessel was out of range of the batteries, and kept them flying until his return.

On arrival off the historic 'Castles' guarding the entrance to the Dardanelles, Captain Bainbridge, being under the American flag, and having no firman (permission to enter), 'felt some embarrassment,' we learn; for his country, having but recently come into existence, would be unknown at the Ottoman Porte, and the ship might be delayed many weeks while negotiations were being conducted. From this dilemma the captain relieved himself by the prompt expedient of a seaman.

The armament of the Turkish batteries, it must be explained, though numerous and formidable, throwing stone shot of 700 to 800 lb., was mounted on fixed carriages, and, therefore, only effective as long as the target remained within a very contracted field of fire. Captain Bainbridge, being aware of this, had recourse to a *ruse de guerre*, which did credit to his 'cuteness.' On approaching the batteries, he shortened sail, as if about to anchor; and when abreast of the most formidable work, saluted the Turkish flag. The salute was promptly returned. While the ship was enveloped in smoke, sail was quickly reset; and ere the Turks realised the trick that was being played—so unprepared were they for such a breach of good manners—the *George Washington* was speeding away towards the capital, and out of reach of their guns. Talk of Yankee cheek!

Telegraphs and wireless being then nonexistent, the vessel reached Constantinople long ere news of the escapade filtered through to headquarters. There the ship was boarded in the usual manner, and inquiries as to the flag she was flying were answered to the apparent satisfaction of the boarding-officer. Later, however, the official returned to say that his government had never heard of such a country as the United States of America, and requested a more explicit statement. The only explanation vouchsafed was to the effect that the vessel came from the 'New World,' with which the government had to be content.

Here the *George Washington* remained for eight weeks; and as the visitors, according to our authority, were treated with 'much of that

polished hospitality for which the Turkish government is justly esteemed,' we may take it that, in spite of their somewhat brusque introduction, Captain Bainbridge and his officers enjoyed a 'real good time.' That the Turks bore them no ill-will for 'forcing' the Dardanelles may be inferred from the fact that, on leaving, the ship was provided with a 'firman of protection from the Capitan Pasha.'

Amongst the state secrets pertaining to this first official visit of a warship from the 'New World' to the capital of the Turkish Empire—glossed over by the historian—is the explanation, given by the captain of the *George Washington*, of the circumstances under which the vessel made her debut at Constantinople—namely, as a bearer of tribute from a vassal state to the sultan. Such a 'Mission' was little calculated to impress the Turks with the importance, or even the 'independence,' of the 'New World' Power.

Captain Bainbridge's exploit at the Dardanelles would, naturally, cause a sensation when it got bruited about in his own country, for it implied ingenuity as well as courage. Moreover, in so young and small a navy as that of the United States, there would be many a lad eager to 'win his spurs' by following in Captain Bainbridge's footsteps. Much water, however, was destined to flow through the Bosphorus before the exploit was repeated.

Ten years later the lion was again 'bearded in his den,' this time, strange to relate, by a ship of the mercantile marine. Alas that no statement on the subject—nor even the name of the daring skipper who followed the precedent established by Captain Bainbridge—is forthcoming from the historian of the United States navy! Indeed, but for the chance discovery of a letter from the British representative at Constantinople reporting the occurrence, the incident would probably never have been rescued from the oblivion which had overtaken it.

In a despatch to the Prime-minister (Feb. 10, 1810), Sir R. Adair wrote: 'A large American trader, painted exactly like a frigate of twenty guns, passed through the Dardanelles under its own colours, and came right up to Constantinople. I cannot describe the degree of offence this proceeding has given to the Turkish Government.' And the writer went on to explain that America, having no treaty with the Porte, had no right even to frequent the ports of the Levant; 'but to pass the Dardanelles with a pennant flying at the main, and with all the parade of a ship of war, was an affront which, in their opinion, should be punished by the instant confiscation of ship and cargo.'

One can picture the grin that would adorn Captain Bainbridge's face on hearing of the escapade.

It may be well to explain, in proof of the

anomalous conditions under which United States trade with Turkish ports was conducted at this time, that, in spite of the 'Declaration of Independence' (thirty-four years earlier), American merchants still traded under the protection of the British flag, and with the connivance and approval of British consular officials; while citizens of the Republic, with a view to facilitating business, permitted themselves to be regarded by the Turkish Government as British subjects.

The reader will understand, now, why the British Representative at Constantinople considered it necessary to acquaint his own government with the above-described defiance of international etiquette on the part of a Yankee skipper. It is further interesting to note that, through our representative's interference, the 'affront' was satisfactorily explained, and the threatened 'confiscation' avoided. 'I suc-

ceeded, though not easily,' wrote Sir R. Adair, 'in preventing this act of violence.' And he wound up by asking for instructions as to whether the system of gratuitous 'protection,' hitherto accorded to American shipping, as well as to citizens of the United States residing on Turkish territory, was to be continued.

The hostilities which broke out two years later between Great Britain and the United States would naturally, one supposes, lead to the withdrawal of this 'protection' by Great Britain. There is reason to believe, however, that it still existed, notwithstanding the war, in the form 'licences to trade,' for many years, a circumstance which gives point to a remark of Sir R. Adair to the effect that, 'I do think we have a right to the thanks, at least, of the Americans for whatever we may do in their favour.' And with that expression of opinion most people will be inclined to agree.

EVERGREEN REPUTATIONS.

By H. M. FORBES.

HOWEVER interesting the lives of the illustrious, no whit less so is the study of fame itself. According to a renowned statesman, 'the world never knows its great men'; according to Bernard Shaw, Hall Caine, G. K. Chesterton (all of whom I have questioned on the subject), the number of great men who die wholly unrecognised is indisputably considerable. But, this interesting question apart, what about the reputation of the actual immortals? Why, for instance, is one name held in affectionate remembrance, while another—a worthier by far, as often as not—survives only as it were on sufferance?

The truth is, what keeps a reputation evergreen is not so much high talent, splendid services, an unimpeachable record, as that amazingly fascinating thing, a picturesque personality. This assertion in these days of biographical plays and pictures any producer would substantiate. Why is it that the public is so much more interested in Napoleon than in Lee, in Lincoln than in Daniel Webster, in Dr Johnson than in Charles Reade? Why do the masses never tire of hearing about Charles James Fox, about Charles XII. of Sweden, about Bonnie Prince Charlie? All for one identical reason—that already indicated. The hero of the people must not merely be a man of action, he must be something of an actor. To live in the heart of the multitude a great man must have some other claim to immortality than mere greatness. He must be unusual in some other sense. He must collect pieces of orange peel like Samuel Johnson; he must employ bank-notes as book-marks like De Quincey; he must stuff the carcasses of dead

birds with snow after the style of Francis Bacon; he must take to climbing church steeples like Clive; failing which, in the matter of personal magnetism, whatever else he may do, he can never hope to be one of the darlings of the gods.

The part played by love in the scheme of immortality is incalculable. Not for nothing was the adage coined—'All the world loves a lover.' The scholar loves Dante for one reason; the man in the street for another. It is the poet's passion for Beatrice, like Petrarch's for Laura, like Burns's for Highland Mary, that has fixed these great names in the minds of the educationally unredeemed. Where would Dean Swift be without his Stella, Garibaldi without his Anita, Byron without his Thyrza? It is her amazing adventures in the courts of love which keep evergreen the name of Mary Stuart. Without the youthful Dauphin, the ill-fated Chastelard, the weak-kneed Darnley, the audacious Bothwell, Mary's story would be stripped of half its fascination.

Amazing as it may seem, next to romance it is devilment which most fascinates and bewitches the multitudes! To the man in the street Fox is never so picturesque as when running up debts to well-nigh two hundred thousand, Byron as when his tame bear was causing uneasiness to the college authorities, O'Connell as when engaged in a desperate duel.

According to Macaulay, the great ladies of London society were once much fascinated by the devil-may-care tactics of a certain highwayman whose robberies were more than forgiven him on account of his gallantries. When he was at

long last captured and condemned to death, heaven and earth were moved to save him from the hangman's noose, some of the fair petitioners being the noblest in the land. The petition itself failing, the fair sought to allay their sorrow by doing homage to the remains as they rested in funeral splendour in a chamber which, for the melancholy occasion, had been superbly hung with trappings of woe!

But it was not only in the good old days that the desperado enjoyed a warm corner in the heart of the sentimental. Even to this day the name of Jonathan Wilde fascinates tens of thousands. When, a month or two ago, the writer pointed this out to Sir J. Forbes Robertson, and added that, compared with Jonathan Wilde, some even of the greatest men were regarded by the average individual with but little interest, the famous actor was anything but prepared to agree with him. If Sir Johnston would only look more closely into the question, however, perhaps he would be convinced of the truth of the argument despite himself. We have had John Wesley on the screen, and that production, though interesting, was certainly not overwhelmingly so; we have had Stonewall Jackson, Sherman, Bright, Gladstone, none of whom produced any deep or lasting impression on the public as a whole. Jonathan Wilde we have had alike on the stage and on the screen, and that gentleman has never failed to prove an unqualified success!

Let us examine the careers of one or two of those concerning whose lives the public never grow weary, and see in what exactly their fascination consists. Take Beaconsfield. A member of a then persecuted race, Disraeli's whole career reads like a glittering romance rather than an actual life-story. He fought his way into parliament when that institution was primarily the preserve of those born in the purple; in the course of a few years he produced a number of cocksure romances which were the talk of literary London, delivered a maiden speech which was the parliamentary failure of the decade, lampooned O'Connell as a coward, found time amidst a parliamentary career to marry a fortune, so tortured Peel by his pitiless invective that only with the utmost difficulty was that statesman prevented from sending him a challenge, formed a romantic attachment with a woman who ultimately left him £50,000, together with a request that she might be buried beside him, became Chancellor of the Exchequer, later Prime-minister, the universally recognised antagonist of the mighty Gladstone, won the devoted attachment of Queen Victoria, became the idol of the populace, and lastly assumed the proud title of Earl of Beaconsfield. Here is a career if ever there was one! A romance from real life that cannot but grip the popular imagination.

Take again a very different individual—Abraham Lincoln. There was nothing of the dandy about honest Abe, in all conscience, yet what could be more incredible than his amazing journey from penury to power, from hodden gray to the presidential chair! Born in a three-walled shanty in bleakest poverty, Lincoln became the spokesman of one of the wealthiest nations in the world; schooled by the brush-fire of the wilderness, he ruled at the height of his power a cabinet composed of some of the most cultured men in the American continent. In youth a gloomy dreamer, in manhood an impassioned lover of his fellow-men, Lincoln fascinates the mind no less by his homely adages than by his dominating personality. It is around this gawky colossus that the frenzied battles of the terrible Civil War seem to rage in unabating fury. Like the poetry of Shakespeare, his picturesque and stirring phraseology belongs to Time. Feared, hated, reviled, he was only beginning to be understood when an assassin's ball ended his existence, sealing with his blood the decision of the tented field. In the United States, I am told, there is hardly a home in which is not to be seen the picture of Abraham Lincoln. Small wonder!

As with men, so with women. The woman who entrances the crowd is the woman with a romantic story. Viewed wholly and simply from the standpoint of popularity, what chance has a personality such as Charlotte Brontë compared with Joan of Arc or with Flora Macdonald? It is not the Elizabeth Frys the public yearns to hear about, so much as the Charlotte Cordays, the Nell Gwynns. For the adventuress, whether in silk or in fustian, the public has a veritable passion. For sheer irresistibility few queens in all the world's history can hold the candle to Lady Hamilton.

Evergreen reputations, bless your heart! I dare swear it would be hard to find a more amazing study.

HILLS IN HEAVEN.

GOD grant there be hills in Heaven
For those who have fought their best,
For those who have struggled and striven
And look to the heights for rest.
God grant there be quiet places
And heaths where the hill-winds pass,
Where we bury our hot, shamed faces
In the cool, wet mountain grass.

The sea with her magic portals,
The vale with her plough-turned sod—
These whisper a while to mortals,
But the peaks talk on with God.
To the yeomen their fields be given;
And the captains—give them their sea!
But I pray there be hills in Heaven
To stand through Eternity.

WILL H. OGILVIE.

HOW SERGEANT MILLEFEUX WON THE CROSS.

By ALEXANDER BIRD.

PART I.

I.

THE Cross of the Legion of Honour—the gold cross with its red ribbon—ah, that was the dream we all had in our minds in the days of the great Emperor. Every time I went into a battle I used to say to myself, 'Now for the Cross!' But it never came to me in battle, though I have been in many battles. What is more, it did not come by the way of Success; it came by the bitter road of Failure. That is a strange thing. Listen, and I will tell you all about it.

The year 1814 was a black year for the Emperor, for it ended in his abdication and his banishment to Elba. But there was many a tough fight and many a brilliant victory before that came to pass. However, the year began as it meant to end, for we were defeated at La Rothière—if to lose a battle to three times your number can be called defeat. The army fell back to Troyes, and there we halted and sat staring at the Austrians, and the Austrians sat staring at us, with the river Seine flowing between us.

At first everything was in confusion. The soldiers were mostly young conscripts, and the lost battle and the retreat had told heavily on their spirits. And the weather was horrible—snow and sleet and cold, all the misery of a bad February. However, we got rest and time to pull ourselves together. The river, you see, sheltered us from the Austrians, and when they saw us on the other side they thought it best to leave us alone. After all, the Austrians are a very sensible people.

Well, as I said, there we were, with the whole Austrian army before us; we too weak to attack them, and the enemy's generals puzzling their heads as to how they were to get over the broad river and attack us. That was satisfactory so far—if we had not driven the Kaiserlicks out of France, at least we had brought them to a dead stop.

But, after a while, some ugly rumours began to run through the army. It was said that that villain Blücher had made up a second army of Prussians and Russians, and that he was marching, miles away on our left, along the river Marne to Paris. Of course, if that was so, there was nothing to stop him. The road to Paris would lie open before him, for the Emperor and all the rest of us were nailed to Troyes facing the Austrians.

Things were like this when one evening I was sitting in the parlour of the Rose d'Or drinking *vin sucré*, and playing *vingt-et-un* with

Sergeant Brun. I was unlucky at the cards that night, and I had lost my last sou—five francs altogether—when the door opened and Captain Videlle came into the room. 'Sergeant Millefeux,' said he, 'you are wanted. Come with me.'

'Yes, *mon capitaine*,' said I, and I followed him out of the room. We left the tavern, and as we went down the street, he turned to me and spoke.

'It is the Emperor,' said he, in a whisper. 'I fancy there is something in the air.'

II.

We marched along till we came to a large château just outside the town. A picket of the guards was on duty at the doorway. Just inside the door a young Hussar officer met us. The captain said a few words to him, and then he turned to me. 'Sergeant,' said he, 'follow Lieutenant Dupré, and he will take you to His Majesty.' I clicked my heels and saluted, and he went off, leaving me to the lieutenant.

Lieutenant Dupré had a very pleasant face, and his gay uniform suited him very well; but we of the Old Guard had a very proper contempt for those gaudy Hussars. However, he was an officer, and it does not do to say all you think; otherwise the world would stand still.

He led me up a noble staircase lighted with great silver candelabra, with tall candles throwing a soft light on the splendid carpet which covered the steps. At the head of the stairs we entered a long passage, at the end of which was a large door beautifully carved in oak. The lieutenant went up to the door and rapped with his knuckles; then he opened it, and we both entered.

It was a large room, and there was a cheerful fire blazing in a large open fireplace. Marshal Berthier sat writing at a large table. Berthier was the chief-of-staff, and it was said of him that when he wrote out Napoleon's instructions for a complicated manœuvre his words were so clear that you felt as if you were looking at a plan. This is what I have been told; I cannot say anything about it myself, of course. In any case, blows are more in my line than words. Standing before the fire with his coat-tails under his arms was the Emperor himself. He looked very thoughtful, and as we came into the room he fixed his eye on me.

'Sergeant Millefeux, sire,' said the lieutenant.

I stood up straight and saluted.

'Ah, Millefeux,' said the Emperor, 'it is you, is it? You are looking very well, Sergeant

Millefeux. You are beginning to grow quite stout.'

'It is because I have nothing to do, sire,' I replied. 'It's quite a week since the last battle.'

'Ah,' said he; 'and I hear you keep your hand in with duelling. Now, sergeant, that sort of thing must stop. It is no use for me to rake France for reinforcements if you spend all your time in putting them into hospital.'

Now, it was quite true that I had had a little affair with a certain captain of Dragoons, so I said nothing.

The Emperor stopped talking and looked at me more fixedly, and I could see he was thinking of something more important than a duel. Suddenly he took a step forward and grasped me by the arm. 'Sergeant Millefeux,' he said, 'would you like to win the Cross?'

His manner startled me, but when he mentioned the Cross, I could feel my eyes blazing. 'Sire!' I gasped; 'the Cross!'

'Ah,' said he, 'I thought that would suit you.' Then he left hold of my arm and resumed his position at the fire, with his coat-tails under his arms again. 'Sergeant,' said he, 'you are one of the most determined men in the army, and it is high time you had the Cross. Now, listen. I am going to send you on a dangerous journey. I give you fair warning; it is a very dangerous journey. Of course, if you are afraid you need not go.'

He stopped at that and looked at me very hard. And I looked at him. A sea of emotion choked me. Indignation, astonishment, went over me like a flood. *Moi*, Sergeant Millefeux of the Old Guard, afraid, and not wishing to go where I could get the Cross!

And then the humour of it seized me, and I burst out in peals of laughter. Yes, though it was the Emperor who stood before me, I could not help it. I laughed till I shook. And at that the Emperor started to laugh as well. And then the thing spread. I could hear the lieutenant in fits behind me, and even from the table there came a snigger from that dried-up fossil of a man, old Marshal Berthier.

Then it suddenly struck me what I was doing, and I became grave again. 'Pardon me, sire,' I said.

Napoleon took out his snuff-box and helped himself to a pinch of snuff. Then he offered the box to me. Yes, Napoleon Buonaparte offered me a pinch of snuff. And, though I was astonished, I had the sense to fall in with his humour, and took a pinch out of the Emperor's gold snuff-box quite calmly, as if it was the most ordinary thing in the world for an emperor to take snuff with a sergeant.

III.

'Now,' said Napoleon, 'we will get to business.—Lieutenant,' he continued, turning to the Hussar, 'bring those boots.'

Lieutenant Dupré went to a corner of the room and brought a pair of boots, which he placed before me.

'Put on those boots, Millefeux,' said the Emperor.

I need hardly say that I was astonished. But it seemed to be a night of surprises. So I took off my shoes and put on the boots, and a very fine pair of boots they were, brand-new, and they fitted me excellently.

When I had finished I stood up again, and the Emperor resumed. 'There is a despatch in the heel of your right boot, sergeant,' he said. 'It is a very important despatch, and I have chosen you to carry it because you are the most determined man in my army. I think I told you that before. Well, you will need all your determination, for to-morrow night you will be put across the river at midnight opposite the Forest of Troyes. The forest will be full of Austrian soldiers. You must get through them as best you can, but if you are attacked you must defend the despatch to the last gasp. You understand—to the last gasp. You must give up your life before the Austrians get the despatch. If you succeed in getting through the Austrians, you will arrive towards dawn at the edge of the forest. There you will wait till a man in Austrian uniform comes to you and says the one word 'France!' To him and to him alone you will give up the despatch. When you have done that your mission is finished, and you will have gained the Cross. Do you understand all that, *mon vieux*?'

'Perfectly, sire,' I replied.

'Well, that is all, Millefeux,' said the Emperor; 'and as it will be cold work waiting among the trees, Lieutenant Dupré will give you a bottle of wine from my own cellars to take with you.'

'Thanks, sire,' I replied. Then I saluted, and followed Lieutenant Dupré out of the room.

IV.

Next day I was taken miles up the river to where a boat was waiting in charge of two men. It was quite dark by this time, which was just as well, for no doubt there would be lynx eyes on the other side of the river.

I got into the boat immediately along with the two boatmen, and we pulled off. The boat glided noiselessly into the great blackness of the night. You couldn't see the water over the side, for there was not even a star to make a reflection. Of course, this was a good thing for us, but it made a dreary business of it all the same.

Presently the boat stopped, and the men whispered to me that we were at the other bank of the river. It was as well they told me, for I should never have thought it myself. However, I put out my hand, and, sure enough, I felt the soil of the river-bank. I rose up

carefully and slowly, and, feeling with my hands, I found the top of the bank at last. Then, raising a leg, in a second I found myself ashore. I did not stop to say '*bon soir*,' but began to walk straight forward till I knocked up against a tree. And so there I was, safely landed in the Forest of Troyes.

I stood still, listening intently, but nothing stirred. Then, with my musket held ready, I began to stumble along from tree to tree. The darkness in the forest was something to be felt; and the trees rustled, and the wind moaned drearily through them. And at any moment I might find a bayonet sticking in me or be shot dead by a bullet.

It was just as well that, as the Emperor had very justly remarked, I was the most determined man in the army. With the utmost caution I went steadily on, and just as the first light was appearing in the sky, I found myself clear of the trees and a strong wind blowing round me.

You will remember that what I had to do now was to wait at the edge of the forest till I should see a man in Austrian uniform coming along. On his uttering the word '*France*' I was to hand over the despatch to him.

Well, I fancied I might as well make myself comfortable in the meantime. I was hungry and cold, and I thought with great joy of the bottle of wine which the Emperor had given me. So I sat down with my back against the trunk of a tree, and got out a sandwich which I had brought with me; and after I had made an end of that, I pulled out the bottle of wine. Ah, what wine that was! After the first mouthful I felt I would have fought harder for the rest of that bottle than even for the precious despatch itself. And to think that the Emperor had a whole cellar of it, and could help himself to a bottle or two whenever he wished! Well, I have heard much of the troubles of crowned heads, but it is certain that they have compensations.

My thoughts were running on in this way when I began to feel a delightful drowsiness stealing over me; and then I remembered no more, for I was fast asleep.

V.

How long I slept I do not know, but when I came to myself there was still a dull drowsiness on me, so that I felt as if I was looking at things through a mist. I was no longer among the trees of the Forest of Troyes. I was in a large, comfortably furnished room. Right in front of me was a table at which several men were sitting, and when I had looked for a while, I was astonished to see that they were in Austrian uniform. At first I thought it was a dream, so I shut my eyes for a moment. When I opened them again I could see more clearly; the drowsiness was leaving me quickly, and I perceived that the men at the table were

Austrian officers. They were in splendid uniform, and were clearly of very high rank indeed.

Then suddenly I thought of the despatch, and a panic seized me. Whatever had happened? I turned my head, and then another wonder revealed itself. There, at the table among all those Austrians, was a French uniform—a Hussar's uniform, and the man who wore it was no other than the Emperor's secretary, Lieutenant Dupré.

I sat and gaped with astonishment. Looking down, I saw that I was seated in a large chair, and though my arms and legs were free, there was a broad belt round my waist, which confined me to the chair.

Then there was no longer any doubt in my mind. I was a prisoner. I had not defended my despatch to the bitter end. I had not struck a single blow for it. I had been taken in a drunken sleep. Oh, the bitterness of that moment!

Then a ray of hope shone in upon me. The despatch was cunningly hidden. No one would think of looking in the heel of my boot. I had but to keep the secret, and all might still be well.

At that moment one of the Austrian officers at the table addressed me. He seemed to be the leading man there, and I put him down as a general; and well I might, for, as I learned afterwards, it was Schwarzenberg himself. He spoke in excellent French, and in a very friendly tone. '*Sergeant Millefeux*,' said he, '*I am glad to see you are now recovered. I regret we have had to fasten you up, but it is because of your reputation as the bravest man in the French army. We were obliged to take precautions therefore, but hand over your despatches and you will be set free at once.*'

For answer I only stared at him as stupidly as I could. After waiting a minute he went on. '*You understand, don't you, sergeant?*' he asked. '*The despatch with which you were entrusted.*'

'Despatch?' I replied. '*What despatch is Your Excellency speaking of?*'

'Come, come,' said he impatiently; '*we know all about it, my friend. The Emperor Napoleon has given you a despatch to deliver to one of his agents, who was to meet you on the edge of the Forest of Troyes. Your bottle of wine was drugged, so that you slept very soundly till one of our pickets discovered you. We know all about it, you see, sergeant, and we were waiting for you all the time.*'

Then a sudden light broke in upon me, and I thought fast enough for a minute or two. The wine drugged—ah, that explained how a single bottle of wine had put a seasoned cask like Sergeant Millefeux into such a profound slumber!

(Continued on page 59.)

THE MALAY.

I.

'OH, he's a lazy beggar—not much use for anything.'

This reply will be the reward of any new-comer to Malaya who asks the old hand what the Malay is like.

As *mañana* to the Spaniard, so *tid' apa* to the Malay—'it doesn't matter.'

But—there are very few Europeans in Malaya who ever get into close contact with the Malay. The planter does not. He prefers Chinese or Tamils. The merchant does not. He also uses Chinese in his office, and the Malay rather despises commerce. The government servant, however, does, as a young man—and from him much may be learned.

If you take an encyclopædia and look up Malay, you will find—'A brown-skinned, straight-haired, round-headed people, of low or medium stature, living in all the islands between Madagascar and the Philippines, but centred chiefly in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra.' They will be described as a maritime people, of Mongoloid stock—devoid of literature or art—Mohammedan by religion. You will find the 'cursed Malayan kris' given as their 'most characteristic product,' and you will learn that they practise 'Amok.'

In all of which there is truth, but perhaps the whole truth is lacking.

Essentially the Malay is a *gentleman*. His whole outlook on life, his strong aristocratic prejudice, his polished courtesy, fondness for society, his respect for good manners, his disregard of sordid finance and penchant for gambling, all recall to one the views and tastes of a young patrician under George I., not those of a 'brown barbarian,' as he has been called. To one who knows him well, his chief characteristic is rather ingenuity than laziness. He himself has made it possible to obtain all his needs with a minimum of exertion. He lives on the richest soil in the world; his wants are few.

The Malay point of view was well expressed by a certain *Datoh*, or landowner of good birth. This *Datoh* owned some four hundred acres of very rich land on a river bank. Of this about five acres had been cleared. A little was under rice, some more under fruit trees—the rest occupied by the *Datoh's* house and those of his attendants. When questioned as to why he left the rest of his land under jungle, he replied as follows: 'Why should I clear more, Tuan? Here is my rice, here my fruit trees. My young men bring me fish from the rivers, and game from the jungle—enough, more than enough, for my household and my guest. Have you lacked aught beneath my roof? Why should I toil

for the money I do not want? Why involve myself with cares of rent, and tenants who would not pay when rents fell due? Allah, in his bounty, hath blessed me with all the desire of a man's heart. With children, with friends, with adherents; there is enough for all—why, then, should I covet more?' Why, indeed?

These children of the sun have brought the art of existing happily to a very high pitch, except in the big cities. There the greed for money exhibited by their more 'civilised' European and Chinese masters has corrupted their simple tastes.

The old days of piracy and murder have departed. The need to fight for home and land has gone, and the *parang* has superseded the kris, which is now no longer a weapon, but a symbol of birth. The *parang* is the Malay's best friend. It is a heavy curved sheath knife, from twelve to twenty inches long, with a razor edge. With it he can do—everything.

Using no other tool, he can build his house, clear his garden, plant his orchard, kill his game, and obtain the *rôtan* (rattan) cane which makes his fishing-lines and fish-traps. With it he fashions his *prahu* (canoe), clears his way through thick jungle, and, if need be, kills his enemy.

Given a *parang*, a silk 'sarong' or skirt for feast days, a cotton one for everyday wear, a Malay boy will quickly obtain the only other things he covets—a wife and a patch of land. What more could a philosopher and fatalist desire?

II.

Although nominally a Mohammedan, and in some respects a worthy follower of the Prophet, the Malay, *au fond*, remains a Pagan. His earth, water, and air spirits were propitiated by him, just as they are to-day, long before Mohammed saw the light. Islam is too stern a creed for his easy-going, laughter-loving nature, and therefore becomes much modified. His women-folk go unveiled, his attendance at the mosque is irregular; but the principal divagation from the law is that the wife can (and does) divorce her husband.

In the life of the up-country Kampong—and it were well to state here that this article deals only with the real Malay, not with the town-bred Europeanised native—the local *pawang*, or wise-man, plays a far more important rôle than the Iman, the priest of Islam. At births, marriages, even at circumcisions, it is the *pawang* who intercedes with the spirits of good and propitiates the evil ones. To him the hunter applies for information as to where the game lies—he knows the charm to be spoken over

the fishing-net or the new-born child. He is the resource of the disappointed lover, the barren wife—and the repository of the jungle lore of centuries, skilled in herbs, drugs, and poisons.

The Malay has little written history or literature, but is rich in a folklore more ingenious and delightful than anything found in *Uncle Remus*. It is not easy to get at. To ask a Malay for any particular story is to meet with a polite disclaimer. Questions are looked upon as bad manners. Whatever a man volunteers about himself should be received with polite interest, but to attempt to ascertain facts that he may not desire to give voluntarily—is not done. The seeker after folklore must be patient, and wait for his chance. It will come, probably after the evening meal on some shooting excursion. Go down to within earshot of the beaters—don't intrude into the circle round the fire—and listen. But in order to do so satisfactorily, no ordinary knowledge of the language will suffice. Malay conversation is allusive in the extreme, and constant reference is made to their proverbs. These are in the form of four-line verses, the whole point of which lies in the second two lines—never quoted in conversation, it being taken for granted that all persons present know the conclusion. One Malay will say to another :

'As a wild cat struggling
In a trap of cane'—

His friend knows the conclusion, which runs :

'Is a faithless woman
Discovered by her husband.'

But these lines are *not* quoted.

Such conversation is not easily followed. However, if the language difficulty has been overcome there are wonderful stories to be heard of birds, beasts, fishes, fairies, devils, trees, princesses, and sultans. Stories of the Creation ; of how the sea came into existence ; why the European has a white skin. It is curious, and perhaps of interest, to know that concerning this last problem exactly the same legend is current among the Malays as among the African negroes. They say that originally all men were black ; but once a hunting-party in the heart of the jungle, tired and very hot, decided to bathe in a small lake they had found, and, to their amazement, came out white. The change was approved of by their women-folk, who followed their example. They became Europeans. By this time the water was very muddy, but still the crowd came. The second batch didn't become pure white, but yellow—hence the Chinese. The next arrivals, by wallowing, became Malays ; and when they had finished there was only enough water left to turn the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet of the late-comers pink. They became Tamils.

III.

According to Malay tradition, the Nabi Sleman (King Solomon) is the lord of the animal creation. His Viceroy is the elephant. But the creature round whom most of these stories circulate is the *plandok*, or mouse-deer. He is invariably the clever fellow who scores off all the others. Mr G. Maxwell, in his delightful book, *In Malayan Forests*, has already translated a number of these legends in a manner that admits of no improvement. Still, one of them concerning the domestic cat may not be out of place here. The Malay cat has invariably a kink in the end of its tail, either at the very end, or about an inch from the tip. Hence the following legend :

Once upon a time a mighty Sultan dwelt in a beautiful palace on the banks of a great river.

The Sultan was blessed with many children, and among them a daughter of unrivalled beauty, on whom His Highness lavished all the gems of his treasury.

Each day the Princess went down to the river to bathe, at sunrise, mid-day, and sunset, and Mukh, her pet cat, went with her, for Mukh had an important duty to fulfil at the river side.

When Her Highness was ready to step into the water she would slip off her jewellery, and thread her rings on the cat's tail. The faithful Mukh would then stand on the bank, tail erect, until his mistress had finished her ablutions.

One day, when the cat was waiting, a small, red fish came to the top of the water and began to abuse him. The cat was a poor thing, said he. Couldn't even feed himself ! Had to rely on the leavings of human beings ; a slave, no free creature. Mukh boiled inwardly, but said nothing. Day after day these insults were repeated, and day after day this 'gamin' among fishes came closer to the bank and waxed more and more insulting. At last feline patience could stand it no longer. The cat made a spring—the fish paid the penalty—but the rings were gone.

The Princess came out, and looked at Mukh, now thoroughly ashamed of himself, but went home without saying a word.

Next morning they went down to bathe again. Fresh gems sparkled on the fingers of Her Highness. Was she not the favourite daughter of a puissant Sultan ? As usual, she pulled off the rings and threaded them on Mukh's tail—but then she held him fast and tied a tight knot on the end of his tail. And the knot has been there ever since.

IV.

These stories, and also their love songs, have a certain poetry and imaginative beauty of their own, but they are rude and unfinished. The proverbs are more highly polished, and would richly reward any one who had leisure to collect them. Their music is wild and plaintive, with

the long cadences that distinguish all oriental music (except Chinese, which resembles a brass band gone mad in an ironmonger's shop). In all realms of art the Malay is the enthusiastic amateur. His silver and brass have a distinctive and simple beauty of their own, but lack detail and finish, except perhaps the work of the Trengganu Malays, which is of finer quality.

As the foregoing has shown, the Malay is temperamentally unfit for commercial success. The Kelantan and Trengganu silk-weaving industries might have been greatly developed if the craftsmen employed had only attempted to cope with the orders they received. At Port Dickson a hat-weaving industry was begun. Straw and grass-woven hats were produced, and owing to their cheapness and beauty had a *succès fou* among the ladies of Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. Orders poured in, and the Government official who had fostered the industry began to congratulate himself. Suddenly the weavers struck. It was too much of a good thing. They didn't mind weaving a few hats for the mem-sahibs now and again, but if the mems imagined they were machines for making hats they were wrong. More they would not make. They had enough money now, and didn't want more till next year!

The silk industry, however, is being ruined by the introduction of cheap Japanese and European silks, and, still worse, by the substitution of aniline dyes for the old native vegetable ones. The old silks were of considerable artistic beauty; the modern ones are not to be compared with them.

As agriculturalists and horticulturists the Malays are reasonably successful—it would be difficult to be otherwise on so rich a soil—but here again the Malay has no commercial leanings. He produces to feed himself, not to sell his produce.

V.

It seems to be a common error to regard the Malay as a sullen savage, liable to fits of manslaughter. This is hopelessly wrong. 'Amok' is very seldom met with in Malays, and is much more common among the Moro tribes in the Philippine Islands. Generally it is the result of an unfortunate love affair. The rejected suitor will brood over his discomfiture until he works himself into a type of artificial frenzy. He then binds tight ligatures of bark or cane above the ankles, knees, elbows, and below the shoulders, in order that the circulation may be impeded, and one wound on one limb will not put him out of action. He then takes his weapon, kris or parang, and proceeds to the nearest market-place or public gathering, where he will kill mercilessly man, woman, or child crossing his path, until he in turn is killed.

The Malay is not criminal by nature. Murder and theft are far more common among the Chinese

population, and the registers of the Supreme Court will show a very small proportion of Malay murderers. Generally the offender is some princeling, and the crime of the order of *crime passionnel*. The great respect in which the old ruling caste are held makes it almost a matter of impossibility to obtain evidence enough to convict.

As a sportsman the Malay is admirable, both in the jungle after big game and in the lesser fields of 'sport.' Buffalo fights, ram fights, cock fighting, fish fights, quail fights, even cricket fights, all attract large crowds of enthusiastic sportsmen ready to bet on any issue. The only forms of European sport that appeal to them are Association football and horse racing. They play a very good game of 'soccer'—bare-footed—and the Malay Police side can give any European team in the country a run for its money.

In ordinary everyday life the Malay is a very pleasant person to deal with. He belongs to one of the few races with whom it is possible to joke and laugh freely without loss of dignity. Familiarity he resents as any other gentleman of good breeding resents it, but frankness and courtesy he appreciates. He is the soul of hospitality; nothing in his house is too good for the guest beneath his roof, and even if that guest were to behave like a boor and trample roughshod over his ideas of courtesy, he would never be aware that his host thought him rude.

Young Europeans fresh from home are liable to terrible errors of this kind; they praise the looks of their host's children in the child's presence, a heinous sin, or ask after the health of his women-folk. There was one case where a youth ate bacon at breakfast beneath the roof of a Datoh. He didn't know that the Datoh in question set his young men to build a new house half an hour after his guest had departed.

In personal character the Malays have much in common with the Burmans and the Javanese, though differing seriously in national traits.

If this slight, imperfect sketch has done anything towards giving the reader a truer view of a charming and friendly race, its object has been more than fulfilled.

THE FRAIL SOUL.

SHE might have lived in some safe sheltered nook

For many years, to gladden this old world

With quaint sweet wisdom and brave merry look.

In gentle rain her leaves might have uncured,

Like some fair rose, unveiling her pure heart;

Those fragile fingers would have penned a book,

A trumpet call to Poesy and Art—

If she had lived in some safe sheltered nook.

Alas, no lady's garden held this flower!

She blossomed in no watched and tended bower!

Tossed by the winds of Heaven, scorched by the

sun,

She withered ere her life was well begun.

Too frail to struggle on the mountain side,

She gave one breath of perfume sweet—and died!

D. E. STEVENSON.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

SHESHUAN loses little of the charm of mystery from the groping, unsure publicity directed to it in these present days. Instead, it seems that an increasing awe is added to the old distinction of this elusive place secreted in peculiar solitude in a cup-shaped hollow of North African hills. Notes and cabled news concerning Sheshuan are printed almost daily in the newspapers, informing us upon what is rumoured of the state of things at that strange region where black and barren pinnacles stand guard over one of the gentlest, most secluded spots that man has ever chosen for a dwelling place. Only hearsays are printed, and that sometimes at second or third tongue—for few except Spanish soldiers and Moors, with rights of habitation or privilege to visit, have ever been to Sheshuan. Years ago the world's chief mystery place seemed to be Lhassa of Thibet; but then a military party, risking something, adventured there, and in a certain sense we have done with Lhassa now, and its grand Dalai Lama has lost something of the prestige in mystery which he held among the Europeans far away, who, by grace of printer's type and ink and their flighty fancy, travel to the wonder places of the world. Upon Sheshuan, at the western border of the Riff in Spanish Morocco, the secret honours of Lhassa seemed in a manner to descend. Perhaps there is more credit, as one might say, to a city of mystery in holding itself inviolate when near to Europe—not more than fifty miles from a coast from which Gibraltar may be seen across the Mediterranean—than was due to some place tucked away in Asiatic uplands. And even though Spaniards and French have been for a long time past within the sound of guns, Sheshuan has stood immaculate in Moorish mediævalism, holding complete and self-contained a thin civilisation of its own, knowing not newspapers or telegraphs, or even books of any kind, its very chiefs not having heard of socialism or Soviets, content with its state, no yearning for what we call progress. Its people have been well fed and clothed according to their needs; its epicures have had their meats prepared in a manner to delight them; the inhabitants have been well housed and at least as clean as they

wished to be. Work and trade have been practised within a comfortable measure. The general garment of the Moors for rough and everyday wear is what is called the jilaba, made of rough, brown cloth, and in character something like a sack with wide sleeves and a hood for the worse weather. Moors in many parts of their country make these special cloths, but Sheshuan has always had a reputation of its own, its well-made stuff, in colour of a dotted mixture, being famed among the surrounding tribes. Another detail of Sheshuan manufacture attracting my attention has been the peculiar fans for cooling in hot weather and for whisking the flies away. Every North African town and community seems to have a special taste and utility of its own in this matter, which is more important than can be understood by those who have not dwelt in such lands in July. Where the palm thrives, as in Tunisia, and the people in the towns are skilled, there are natty things of plaited straw fastened flag-wise to a stick that has been delicately turned and smoothed in a primitive lathe, and sold for the equal of a couple of pennies. In Sheshuan are no palms, but there are flies, and the natives, to beat the nuisance, make their own fly-scatterers in the form of a diamond frame, perhaps five or six inches from point to point, across which coloured silks are threaded in a plain pattern of lines. It is like a sign of taste. Of course babuches, or yellow Moorish footwear, are made here as everywhere, and other simple essentials, and, in considering thus the resources of the place, the water must be mentioned, for it is famous in Morocco for its purity and pleasant touch upon the palate. Many times blessed is Sheshuan in this matter, for the gift of good water at any place in North Africa comes direct from the gods.

* * *

So, lonely and mysterious as it has been, Sheshuan has yet possessed much, and I have been touched with sympathy for it, on hearing mention of the possibilities of 'progress' being applied. For ten years or more—but very definitely for ten years—I have distrusted Progress in forms by which it is insidiously presented, for has not this vaunted Progress, with its discoveries and inventions so regularly

applied to the murderous arts and sciences of war, caused too much destruction and unhappiness? And now, when peace of a kind reigns in most civilised places, is not deceitful Progress being pressed to gather from the unknown some discoveries that will later lead to human butchery on a vaster scale than was conceived of in the late Great War? Should we not sometimes regard our telephones, the wireless business—all connected with advanced chemical and electric science—with a certain unfriendliness since, though innocent in themselves, they are the allies in science of the murdering things, and all are entered in the scheme of Progress, trusty and most valued henchman of the blood god Mars? So when people say that places like this Sheshuan would be better for a little 'progress,' and that such may be applied to them soon, I feel that there must be some stupidity and corruption of the soul to start such a notion. The fanatics of this Progress also would 'educate' the simple people there, so that in time they would produce new theories of government and liberty for themselves, and then they would ascend to that pinnacle of 'progress' and understanding indicated in 'the Strike.' The five or six thousand folk in Sheshuan, mostly of the Ajmas tribe, do not yet know what a strike is, and have not practised the idea in any form. And, despite various tribulations of a simple kind, the people are mainly happy, even very happy, and want none of our belauded Progress, with its wars, its civil strife, its torturing taxation, and the fear of life that it engenders. Give Spaniards credit for this, that for the four years they have exercised a delicate control over Sheshuan, they have interfered with hardly anything, have introduced nothing of Progress that was not in the full sense necessary and acceptable to the people, and have touched this secret Sheshuan lightly and tactfully with their civilised fingers. The telegraph has come to Sheshuan, also the electric light, and I have even seen a small cinema show in one of the narrow streets. One afternoon in the quarter where are all the little shops like cupboards I needed matches, and having bought some, found that, strangely, they had come from a famous manufactory in England! Nowhere else in Morocco had I discovered their like exactly.

* * *

The idea of the secret Sheshuan is this, that it was founded in 1471 by a number of Moors, led by Mulay Ali Ben Rached, many of whom had been driven from Andalusia in southern Spain, and were fearful that Christians would make raids and excursions from their base on the coast at Ceuta, and persecute them more. They sought for a place far from Ceuta which would allow them isolation, security, safety; and lo! when they discovered this spot, like a scooped-out hollow in the hills, a veritable cup,

it seemed to have been provided miraculously for them. It could not be seen from far or near, not until the traveller, raider, or whoever he might be, had come right upon it. Here in joy and hope they built this town, gave it much of an Andalusian model and character, raised up several mosques, built houses like those in which the Moors had dwelt in Spain, with a wide central plaza. They garnished it according to their fancy and delight; they placed in it all the comforts and conveniences they knew. Then they settled down to their peace and tranquillity. In the centuries that followed only one stranger, one infidel, is known definitely to have seen Sheshuan, and that was the Viscount Charles De Foucauld of France, who long ago adventured to its walls, disguised as a wandering begging Jew, and accompanied by a real Hebrew. He was enchanted by the luxuriousness of the gardens and orchards surrounding the town, but was afraid to attempt an entry. Stealthily he crept away. So none but the Moors saw the town within the walls until the 14th of October 1920, when, after a campaign of many weeks' duration over the mountains and along the passes from Tetuan, the Spanish General Berenguer reached the gates and demanded surrender, which was peacefully made. The occupation was necessary to the Spaniards in pursuit of the task laid upon them in Morocco, but they effected it with consideration and tact. At the time I was not far away, and a little later, when back in Tetuan, General Berenguer, the High Commissioner as he was, insisted that if I wished to see and know the daintiest place in all Morocco I must go there, and for his part he would allow me a military escort for the going. Circumstances hindered me at the time, but recently I gained the long desire. With two officers of the Spanish general staff I made the journey, with sundry adventures, through the hills from Tetuan. We came to the Zoco el Arbaa, a strongly fortified post, which has been in the midst of all the fighting between the Spaniards and the Riffain rebels lately; we skirted along the Wad Lau, and sometimes we looked up uneasily at the craggy peaks from which Moorish sharpshooters have been picking off their enemies in this war, and even then had begun to do so. At last, with Dar Akoba passed, Colonel Santiago whispered that I was almost at the gates and walls of Sheshuan, though still nothing but those savage hills was visible. And then we rose over the shoulder of a hill as a swimmer might be heaved above and past a wave, and there before us was Sheshuan, like a big white speckled bird resting peacefully in its nest. The Baja, named El Uafi—a Moor of much prestige and influence, who, as reward for great services the Spaniards had installed there as master of the town—came attired in a snowy burnous to the main gate to bid us welcome, and we entered in. From then, until the hour of departure

came, emotions flashed in me as they have hardly done when visiting any other place, however distant or inaccessible, however much renowned. Now, when the war between the Spaniards and the Riffains is being hotly pursued, there are continual reports that Sheshuan, which has been beleaguered, is in danger of falling. Some of the Moors covet it for their exclusive own again; they would gather it to its old isolation, its secrecy. A Spanish friend writes to me from Morocco: 'Only two or three of you British people have ever entered into this delightful Sheshuan, and if things go ill for us, it may well prove that of these you are the last, that in our time at least no other will be permitted to look upon this chaste sweet spot that we Spaniards have loved purely and have not defiled, that we should lose with sad and bitter heart. You, my friend, at least do understand.' Some premonition of such a possibility seemed to be touching lightly, suggestively, on a dreamy mind when in the heat of that afternoon I lay resting on my bed in the chamber offered me in the little palace, as they called it, reserved for the use of the High Commissioner when visiting Sheshuan. It had been the mansion of one of the native nobles of the place, and was yielded to Berenguer in appreciation of his nice consideration. It embraced a square patio, open to the deep-blue sky, one side in white-gold sunlight, the other in gentle shadow, swallows flashing from the ether, and almost fanning with their wings my face as I leant for a moment upon the rails of the surrounding gallery, from which doors led to the chambers. Through one such door I entered to a cool apartment where a writing-table was set out for me. One wall was made entirely of a wooden screen from floor to ceiling, panelled in Moorish style, painted in red, blue, green, and yellow. One of the panels was a door, just body width, and through it was my sleeping chamber, plain white, with an arch across the ceiling and a tiny window from which I might glance over orange trees nearly within my reach to the plaza beyond. The common stillness pervading when the heat of the Moroccan summer heightens in the afternoon seemed here intensified. Not a sign of movement; not a sound. Alone in this little chamber in the 'secret city' that for nearly five hundred years had stood far back from the rest of the world and its civilisation! This was surely the most delicious perfection of solitude and isolation. London then seemed farther from me than the sun, the moon, and the stars. Independence, the sense of freedom and tranquillity were delightful. I lay down on the little bed, thinking that I would surely like to live there always, just like that. Fading reveries thinned to silken fancies, and onto the edge of dreams. I thought I heard some notes of the song of a bird. Perhaps it was not a bird; perhaps there was no sound. It mattered nothing. . . .

El Uafi sent his servant to bid me to his house for a Moorish tea in the cool of late afternoon, and my companions were asked likewise to meet the officer commanding the Spanish garrison that was established outside the walls. El Uafi is delightful, and nothing less. He has the round, genial features of the high-class Moor, softly and closely bearded, with specially clear skin of a pale olive tint, and sharp black eyes. The type is common among the Moorish chiefs of great intelligence; but El Uafi exceeds type by a manner of peculiar benevolence. When Spaniards desire to indicate that one of their friends is a man of much human kindness and goodwill, such an one as we ourselves might call an exceptionally good fellow, they say that he is '*muy simpatico*.' El Uafi, then, is intensely '*simpatico*.' One of his ways of showing it is in bending forward slightly whenever in conversation with a friend, in the manner of a most appreciative man, intent on a perfect understanding and sympathy. In a full measure he is the father of the city, the kindly chief of Sheshuan. When he walks through the plaza and the narrow streets the children, and the old men too, will steal close up to him and, bending, kiss his hand. They know him as a disciplinarian, but just and generous, seeking always for the good of Sheshuan. At the same time he is deeply attached to the Spaniards, and believes in them. He has affection for General Berenguer. His ambition is to pay homage at the feet of King Alfonso, whom he has never seen, but for whom his distant adoration is only less than that for Allah the Most High. And now the news I have is that El Uafi has girded his soldier's things about him and gone up into the hills by Sheshuan to lend a hand in fighting. We took our Moorish tea that afternoon in a bower of orange and jasmine in his garden overlooking the plaza. Through an embrasure in the wall we could see all that happened in the heart of the town. The military band was assembled, and was playing softly some airs of Andalusia. Moors were lolling in the shade; some sat on the steps of the mosque on the far side; a few were sauntering through, and here and there a burdened ass was driven by. The pervading manner was softly languorous. On the floor at one end of the bower the Moorish tea-maker was squatted on a carpet with all the instruments of his high rites about him, glass vessels of red and green for tea and mint, massive silver trays, a tall samovar of silver likewise for heating water, and dainty gilded glasses. With a still and solemn look, as of one who was dealing with almost sacred things, the tea-maker passed his thin, white hands from one vessel to the next in the manner of a conjurer, or one designing an incantation, or making impositions of a charm. Then a cup was filled

with the minted tea, and a tall negro slave, a big-limbed giant, who might have come straight from a palace of Nubian kings, wrapt in a close white garment girded about the middle, passed to the guests the glasses of the confection, amber-coloured, sweetly-scented. A taste for such tea has to be acquired, but then it is delicious. The slave passed round to each of us as we needed it the silver maracha or sprinkler containing the azhar or orange-blossom water to sprinkle upon our hands or head, and to flavour the tea as well. One serving of the tea being sipped away, the watching slave upon the instant took the glass to be refilled. And once again, for it is the law of hospitality that three of them, not more, not less, shall be quaffed at a sitting. Many times and in many places I have taken these Moorish teas, but that in El Uafi's bower will be remembered longest of them all. The Baja sat in a corner, and we chattered in an easy pleasure. Then at a lull he rose, and calling me to him, placed in my hands a marvellous Moorish rifle, hundreds of years old, the prized weapon of some great chief of ancient Sheshuan. It is nearly six feet long. Its barrel is sheathed in decorated brass; its butt is based with a block of ivory and inlaid with mother-of-pearl and silver filigree. Lock and trigger are of cunning and ancient mechanism; the whole is a marvel of old Morocco. I supposed at first that it was intended I should only look and admire; but El Uafi made the signs of gift, and here is the relic by my writing-table, while he is in the hills.

* * *

When the sun was setting, the Baja, having placed upon my finger a silver ring wrought in Sheshuan, led me outside the walls to walk with him along a romantic path twined on a ledge above a deep chasm. Far down in the depths ran a silver stream, at the banks of which in the dimming light could be discerned some Sheshuan women in their snowy haiks washing things in the flowing water. So small they looked so far below, and white, and flitting here and there, that just like dainty birds they seemed, and faintly from the depths, to aid illusion, came the twittering of their voices, for it is just twittering always with these Moorish women. Rising sheer and high above us, rough and craggy, sharp at points, fierce but protective, was the Mago, Sheshuan's close guardian mountain, on whose slopes monkeys skip. Farther away, to the left of the big red sun, was the Miskrela mountain, on whose summit was a dominant military post of which, for its gallant and successful work, the Spanish officers speak with affection. Grandly majestic, nothing less, was this rapturous scene. Moments of contemplating silence, and then we moved along the ledge, and, turning a corner, beheld spread out on the path a rich carpet, on which the tea-maker was

seated, solemn, engaged already upon his rites, with the tall silver samovar, the trays and vessels, and gilded cups and all complete, all from the palace of the Baja! Some Spanish officers came to join us. We sat on the crags and stones as we sipped the tea again three times. A sense of a great grandeur came to us; we could speak only of fine and romantic things, and, as the short twilight was lapsing down to darkness, we picked our way back into the town, halting for a moment at the stables to admire the new breed of horses that is being fostered in Morocco, blend of the Arab and the Spanish. You will perceive that I have not appraised too high the social charm of my friend, El Uafi, Baja of Sheshuan.

* * *

Somewhere about midnight I was bidden to his home again. A party was assembled in his salon, a long narrow chamber, thickly carpeted, with Moorish cloths in colours and panel shapes upon the walls, and cushions on the floor around. In a gilt frame was hung a large portrait of the King; there was a picture of General Berenguer also. The Baja bade me sit in the chief place at the end of the room, and he came by me to gossip in his broken Spanish as again we took three cups of the minted tea, sprinkled the azhar, and smoked our cigarettes. He set before us a silver censer in which perfume chips from the East were smouldering, the fumes ascending to our nostrils with insidious appeal. At the other end of the chamber a native musician appeared, clad in white burnous, holding a violin. He sat down upon the carpet, stood the violin upright on the floor, its back to him, and thus, fingering the strings at arm's length and drawing the bow like a saw across in the manner common to these Moorish musicians, began a wailing tune like those we sometimes hear in Andalusia, long and sad, and the same all through, and strangely touching in its mournfulness. A variation followed, another musician came, and then a long solemn song or chant began and was carried on for several minutes. It was a song like those of the Andalusians, this one telling of the heroic march of General Berenguer to Sheshuan. Through its mystery and pathos, and perhaps, as some would say, its crudity, one could sense the theme; the hardships of the march, the struggling on and on through the Moorish wild, sorrows and pain, and even something of the love of country, for the pathetic strain suggested much of this. . . . About four in the morning, from sleep in bed I half awoke, drowsily, through sounds of some faint music, soft and a little sad again. It seemed at first to be a dreaming fancy. I awakened more, and the strains were clear, piped gently from a musette of the kind the Arabs play. For sureness I rose and, flinging wide the little window, looked and

listened out into the dark-blue, starlit night. The music rose from the garden softly and more softly, and then in a while it ceased. I returned to sleep again. Next day I told my friends, the Spanish officers, of the music in the night, and they smiled in kindly sympathy. My emotions had been overwrought, they said, and it was only in a dream I leaned listening at the casement. I asked El Uafi, and he said the same; but for one deciding second I caught a confessing glance in his smiling eyes, and I knew. Denials and denials, but it was a Moorish serenade by order of the Baja I had heard.

* * *

On the morning of departure I rose from my bed just before the sun came up for day, and, mounting to the flat roof of my little palace, waited. Stillness and tranquillity everywhere. A soft, limpid mist, with umbrous shadows, lay upon the plaza. Soon, as by the first tentative notes of a grand, romantic overture, the theme of the rising sun began, and movement started. In a shed not far away I could discern and hear the butchers at their quartering business, first of the day's workers in Sheshuan, a sign that for living we must eat. Then through the dissolving mist some of the faithful

were seen pacing through the plaza to the mosque, and mounting the steps thereof, and entering to beg from Allah his compassion and assistance. Light was gaining, and suddenly the risen sun shot its first beams over the high embattled walls, and touched with points of gleaming gold the topmost stones of the alcazaba, verily as if heavenly lamps were being set to shine. Then the minaret was sparkled up, and in a fast succession these glorious lamps of day were lit everywhere and dazzled over the lingering shades. Some minutes more, and the commanding sun was high, and all Sheshuan abounded with the brilliance of life and day. Such a sunrise I shall not see again. . . . So did I penetrate to the secrecy and the mystery of Sheshuan. Perhaps such thoughts and notes as these may explain something of the dim references to this strange place appearing constantly in our newspapers. At least, as from one who knows, has seen, and is of independent mind, let it be believed that the Spanish work in these parts is brave and good, and not by any means as it is otherwise represented by some who have prejudice, and through propaganda have interests that must be served.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER II.—*continued.*

THE figure that presently appeared before them was a small man, about fifty years of age, with a great breadth of shoulder and a massive face decorated with a wispish tawny beard. His mouth had the gravity and primness of an elder of the kirk, but his shrewd blue eyes were not grave. The son of a Tweeddale shepherd, who had emigrated years before to a Cheviot farm in Sutherland, he was in every line and feature the Lowlander, and his speech had still the broad intonation of the Borders. But all his life had been spent in the Highlands on this and that deer forest, and as a young stalker he had been picked out by Jim Tarras for his superior hill-craft. To Archie his chief recommendation was that he was a passionate naturalist, who was as eager to stalk a rare bird with a field-glass as to lead a rifle up to deer. Other traits will appear in the course of this narrative; but it may be noted here that he was a voracious reader, and in the long winter nights had amassed a store of varied knowledge, which was patently improving his master's mind. Archie was accustomed to quote Lithgow for most of his views on matters other than ornithology and war.

'Do you mind going over to that corner, Wattie, and shuffling these slips.—Now, John, you draw first.'

Mr Palliser-Yeates extracted a slip from

Lithgow's massive hand. 'Glenraden,' he cried. 'Whew! I'm for it this time.'

Leithen drew next. His slip read Strathlarrig.

'Thank God, I've got old Claybody,' said Lamancha. 'Unless you want him very badly, Ned?'

Leithen shook his head. 'I'm content. It would be a bad start to change the draw.'

'Sit down, Wattie,' said Archie. 'Here's a dram for you. We've summoned you to a consultation. I dare say you've been wonderin' what all this fuss about secrecy has meant. I'm goin' to tell you. You were with Mr Tarras, and you've often told me about his poachin'. Well, these three gentlemen want to have a try at the same game. They're tired of ordinary sport, and want something more excitin'. It wouldn't do, of course, for them to appear under their real names, so they've invented a *nom de guerre*—that's a bogus name, you know. They call themselves collectively, as you might say, John Macnab. John Macnab writes from London to three proprietors, same as Mr Tarras used to do, and proposes to take a deer or a salmon on their property within certain dates. There's a copy of the letter, and here are the replies that arrived to-night. Just you read 'em.'

Lithgow, without moving a muscle of his face, took the documents. He nodded approvingly

over the original letter. He smiled broadly at Colonel Raden's epistle, puzzled a little at Mr Bandicott's, and wrinkled his brows over that of the Edinburgh solicitors. Then he stared into the fire, and emitted short grunts which might equally well have been chuckles or groans.

'Well, what do you think of the chances?' asked Archie at length.

'Would the gentlemen be good shots?' asked Lithgow.

'Mr Palliser-Yeates, who has drawn Glenraden, is a very good shot,' Archie replied, 'and he has stalked on nearly every forest in Scotland. Lord Lamancha—Charles, you're pretty good, aren't you?'

'Fair,' was the answer. 'Good on my day.'

'And Sir Edward Leithen is a considerable artist on the river. Now, Wattie, you understand that they want to win—want to get the stags and the salmon—but it's absolute sheer naked necessity that, whether they win or lose, they mustn't be caught. John Macnab must remain John Macnab, an unknown blighter from London. You know who Lord Lamancha is, but perhaps you don't know that Sir Edward Leithen is a great lawyer, and Mr Palliser-Yeates is one of the biggest bankers in the country.'

'I ken all about the gentlemen,' said Lithgow gravely. 'I was readin' Mr Yeates's letter in the *Times* about the debt we was owin' America, and I mind fine Sir Edward's speeches in Parliament about the Irish constitution. I didna altogether agree with him.'

'Good for you, Wattie. You see, then, how desperately important it is that the thing shouldn't get out. Mr Tarras didn't much care if he was caught, but if John Macnab is uncovered there will be a high and holy row. Now you grasp the problem, and you've got to get busy and think it out. I don't want your views to-night, but I should like to have your notion of the chances in a general way. What's the bettin'? Twenty to one against?'

'Mair like a thousand,' said Lithgow grimly. 'It will be verra verra difficult. It will want a deal o' thinkin'.' Then he added, 'Maister Tarras was an awfu' grand shot. He would kill a runnin' beast at fower hundred yards—ay, he could make certain of it.'

'Good Lord, I'm not in that class!' Palliser-Yeates exclaimed.

'Ay, and he was more than a grand shot. He could creep up to a sleepin' beast in the dark and pit a knife in its throat. The savages in Africa had learnt him that. There was plenty o' times when him and me were out that it wasna possible to use the rifle.'

'We can't compete there,' said Lamancha dolefully.

'But I wad not say it was impossible,' Lithgow added more briskly. 'It will want a deal o' thinkin'. It might be done on Haripol—I wadna say but it might be done; but yon auld

man at Glenraden will be ill to get the better o'. And the Strathlarrig water is an easy water to watch. Ye'll be for only takin' shootable beasts, like Mr Tarras, and ye'll not be wantin' to cleek a fish? It might be not so hard to get a wee staggie or to sniggle a salmon in one of the deep pots.'

'No, we must play the game by the rules. We're not common poachers.'

'Then it will be verra verra difficult.'

'You understand,' put in Lamancha, 'that, though we count on your help, you yourself mustn't be suspected. It's as important for you as for us to avoid suspicion, for if they got you it would implicate your master, and that mustn't happen on any account.'

'I ken that. It will be verra verra difficult. I said the odds were a thousand to one, but I think ten thousand wad be liker the thing.'

'Well, go and sleep on it, and we'll see you in the mornin'. And tell your wife I don't want any boys comin' up to the house with fish. She must send elsewhere and buy 'em. Good-night, Wattie.'

When Lithgow had withdrawn, the four men sat silent and meditative in their chairs. One would rise now and then and knock out his pipe, but scarcely a word was spoken. It is to be presumed that the thoughts of each were on the task in hand, but Leithen's must have wandered. 'By the way, Archie,' he said, 'I saw an uncommon pretty girl on the road this afternoon, riding a yellow pony. Who could she be?'

'Lord knows!' said Archie. 'Probably one of the Raden girls. I haven't met 'em yet.'

When the clock struck eleven the host arose and ordered his guests to bed. 'I think my toothache is gone,' he said, switching off his turban and revealing a ruffled head and scarlet cheek. Then he muttered, 'A thousand to one! Ten thousand to one! It can't be done, you know. We've got to find some way of shortenin' the odds!'

CHAPTER III.—RECONNAISSANCE.

ROSY-FINGERED Dawn, when, attended with mild airs and a sky of Italian blue, she looked in at Crask next morning, found two members of the household already astir. Mr Palliser-Yeates, coerced by Wattie Lithgow, was starting with bitter self-condemnation to prospect what his guide called 'the yont side o' Glenraden.' A quarter of an hour later Lamancha, armed with a map and a telescope, departed alone for the crest of hill behind which lay the Haripol forest. After that peace fell on the place, and it was not till the hour of ten that Sir Edward Leithen descended for breakfast.

The glory of the morning had against his convictions made him cheerful. The place

smelt so good within and without, Mrs Lithgow's scones were so succulent, the bacon so crisp, and Archie, healed of the toothache, was so preposterous and mirthful a figure, that Leithen found a faint zest again in the contemplation of the future. When Archie advised him to get busy about the Larrig he did not complain, but accompanied his host to the gun-room, where he studied attentively on a large-scale map the three miles of the stream in the tenancy of Mr Bandicott.

It seemed to him that he had better equip himself for the part by some simple disguise; so, declining Archie's suggestion of a kilt, he returned to his bedroom to refit. Obviously the best line was the tourist. Accordingly he donned a white shirt and a stiff dress collar, with a tartan bow-tie contributed from Sime's wardrobe. Light brown boots in which he had travelled from London took the place of his nailed shoes, and his thick knickerbocker stockings bulged out above them. Sime's watch-chain, from which depended a football club medal, a vulgar green Homburg hat of Archie's, and a camera slung on his shoulders completed the equipment. His host surveyed him with approval.

'The Blackpool season is beginning,' he observed. 'You're the born tripper, my lad. Don't forget the picture-postcards.' A bicycle was found, and the late Attorney-General zig-zagged warily down the steep road to the Larrig bridge.

He entered the highway without seeing a human soul, and according to plan turned down the glen towards Inverlarrig. There, at the tiny post-office, he bought the regulation picture-postcards, and conversed in what he imagined to be the speech of Cockaigne with the aged post-mistress. He was eloquent on the beauties of the weather and the landscape, and not reticent as to his personal affairs. He was, he said, a seeker for beauty-spots, and had heard that the best were to be found in the demesne of Strathlarrig. 'It's private grund,' he was told, 'but there's Americans bidin' there, and they're kind folk and awfu' free with their siller. If ye ask at the lodge, they'll maybe let ye in to photograph.' The sight of an array of ginger-beer bottles inspired him to further camouflage, so he purchased two, which he stuck in his side-pockets.

A little east of the bridge of Larrig he came to the falls in the river, above which, he knew, began the Strathlarrig water. The first part was a canal-like stretch among bogs, which promised ill for fishing; but beyond a spit of rock the stream curled in towards the road edge, and ran in noble pools and swift streams under the shadow of great pines. This, Leithen knew from the map, was the Wood of Larrimore, a remnant of the ancient Caledonian forest. By the water's edge the covert was dark, but towards the roadside the trees thinned out, and

the ground was delicately carpeted with heather and thymy turf. There grazed an aged white pony, and a few yards off on the shaft of a dilapidated fish-cart sat a small boy.

Leithen, leaning his bicycle against a tree, prospected the murky pools with the air rather of an angler than a photographer, and in the process found his stiff shirt and collar a vexation. Also, the ginger-beer bottles bobbed unpleasantly at his side; so, catching sight of the boy, he beckoned him near. 'Do you like ginger-beer?' he asked, and in reply to a vigorous nod bestowed the pair of bottles. The child returned like a dog to the shelter of the cart, whence might have been presently heard the sound of gluttonous enjoyment. Leithen, having satisfied himself that no mortal could take a fish in that thicket, continued up-stream till he struck the wall of the Strathlarrig domain and a vast castellated lodge.

The lodge-keeper made no objection when he sought admittance, and he turned from the gravel drive towards the river, which now flowed through a rough natural park. For a fisherman it was the water of his dreams. The pools were long and shelving, with a strong stream at the head, and below precisely the right kind of boulders and outjutting banks to shelter fish. There were three of these pools—'The Duke's,' the 'Black Scour,' and 'Davie's Pot,' were the names Archie had given him—and beyond, almost under the windows of the house, 'Lady Maisie's,' conspicuous for its dwarf birches and the considerable waterfall above it. Here he made believe to take a photograph, though he had no idea how a camera worked, and he reflected dismally upon the magnitude of his task. The whole place was as bright and open as the Horse Guards Parade. The house commanded all four pools, which he knew to be the best, and even at midnight, with the owner unsuspecting, poaching would be nearly impossible. What would it be when the owner was warned, and legitimate methods of fishing were part of the contract?

After a glance at the house, which seemed to be deep in noontide slumber, he made his inconspicuous way past the end of a formal garden to a reach where the Larrig flowed wide and shallow over pebbles. Then came a belt of firs, and then a long tract of broken water—obviously not a place to hold salmon. He realised from his memory of the map that he must be near the end of the Strathlarrig beat, for the topmost mile was a series of unfishable linn. But presently he came to a noble pool. It lay in a meadow where the hay had just been cut, and was more like a bit of Tweed or Eden than a Highland stream. Its shores were low, and on the near side edged with fine gravel; the far bank was a green rise unspoiled by scrub; the current entered it with

a proud swirl, washed the high bank and spread itself out in a beautifully broken tail—so that every yard of it spelled fish. Leithen stared at it with appreciative eyes. The back of a moving monster showed in mid-stream, and automatically he raised his arm in an imaginary cast.

The next second he observed a man walking across the meadow towards him, and remembered his character. Directing his camera hastily at the butt-end of a black-faced sheep on the opposite shore, he appeared to be taking a careful photograph; after which he restored his camera to its case and turned to reconnoitre the stranger. This proved to be a middle-aged man in ancient tweed knickerbockers of an outrageous pattern known locally as the 'Strathlarrig tartan.' He was obviously a river-keeper, and was advancing with a resolute and minatory air.

Leithen took off his hat with a flourish. 'Ave I the honour, sir, to address the owner of this lovely spot?' he asked in what he hoped was the true accent of a tripper.

The keeper stopped short and regarded him sternly. 'What are ye daein' here?' he demanded.

'Picking up a few pictures, sir. I inquired at your lodge, and was told that I might presume upon your indulgence. Pardon me if I 'ave presumed too far. If I 'ad known that the proprietor was at 'and I would have sought 'im out and addressed my 'umble request to 'imself.'

The keeper was thawing under this humility. 'Ye're makin' a mistake. I'm no' the laird. The laird's awa' about India. But Mr Bandicott—that's him that's the tenant—has given strict orders that naeboddy's to gang near the watter. I wonder Mactavish at the lodge hadna mair sense.'

'I fear the blame is mine,' said the agreeable tourist. 'I only asked leave to enter the grounds, but the beauty of the scenery attracted me to the river. Never 'ave I seen a more exquisite spot.' He waved his arm towards the pool.

'It's no' that bad. But ye maun awa' out o' this. Ye'd better gang by the back road, for fear they see ye frae the hoose.'

Leithen followed him obediently, after presenting him with a cigarette, which he managed to extract without taking his case from his pocket. It should have been a fog, he reflected, and not one of Archie's special Egyptians. As they walked he conversed volubly.

'What's the name of the river?' he asked. 'Is it the Strathlarrig?'

'No. It's the Larrig, and that bit you like sae weel is the "Minister's Pool." There's no a pool like it in Scotland.'

'I believe you. There is not,' was the enthusiastic reply.

'I mean for fish. Ye'll no ken muckle aboot fishin'!'

'I've done a bit of anglin' at 'ome. What do you catch here? Jack and perch?'

'Jack and perch?' cried the keeper scornfully. 'Saumon, man. Saumon up to thirty pounds wecht.'

'Oh, of course, salmon. That must be a glorious sport. But a friend of mine, who has seen it done, told me it wasn't 'ard. He said that even I could catch a salmon.'

'Mair like a saumon wad catch you. Now, you haud down the back road, and ye'll come out aside the lodge gate. And dinna you come here again. The orders is strict, and if auld Angus was to get a grip o' ye, I wadna say what wad happen. Guid day to ye, and dinna stop till ye're out o' the gates.'

Leithen did as he was bid, circumnavigated the house, struck a farm track, and in time reached the high-road. It was a very doleful tourist who trod the wayside heather past the Wood of Larrigmore. Never had he seen a finer stretch of water or one so impenetrably defended. No bluff or ingenuity would avail an illicit angler on that open greensward, with every keeper mobilised and on guard. He thought less now of the idiocy of the whole proceeding than of the folly of plunging in the dark upon just that piece of river. There were many streams where Jim Tarras's feat might be achieved, but he had chosen the one stretch in all Scotland where it was starkly impossible.

(Continued on page 70.)

MEMORY'S LANE.

DOWN memory's lane the phantoms are creeping,
The pale sad shadows glide out of the past;
The failures, and all the lost illusions,
The high hopes of Youth lying broken and dumb,
That boundless faith, and that high endeavour,
Midst the dead flowers of passion—
Down memory's lane.

And now pass the sweet and gracious ghosts
Of pleasures long gone by—
Of love, and life, and laughter,
Of music, dance, and song;
All lovely things, all pleasant things,
Are stealing down that lane.

And see the little timid ghosts
Of the kind things never said,
The pale little spectres of kindly deeds
That we meant to do—and never did!
Poor little wistful baby ghosts,
Fluttering sadly down memory's lane.

Now look at the phantoms of horrible things—
Youth gradually dying, the fires burning low,
All loathsome things, all cruel things;
For raptures and ecstasy, ashes and dust;
And down that lane of memory,
All down the dreary years,
Three hateful words stand out,
The signboard of despair!

I read these three, and nothing more—
The Editor regrets . . .

AGNES E. W. BROWN.

ROYALTIES I HAVE KNOWN.

By Madame CHAN TOON.

I.

WHEN the late Queen Victoria commanded my fiancé to present me to her privately, at Windsor, I was too young to realise that I was about to find myself in the presence of one of the most remarkable women of her time, or perhaps of any time. Her Majesty was not only great—she stimulated greatness in others; a most uncommon faculty! . . . We were received on arrival by a venerable servant in plain black with shoulder-knots, and conducted up the wide, shallow, scarlet-carpeted staircase, with its gold banisters and velvet hand-rail, to the famous 'royal red' corridor. Here we found the Queen. She came forward to greet us, took my hand in hers, and said in a voice, so near music as to be music, 'You must not be afraid of me; I am not really formidable.'

'I thank you, ma'am,' was my reply with a deep curtsy; 'but surely it is love and not fear that Your Majesty usually inspires.'

The Queen smiled. She appeared pleased. 'You uphold the reputation of your country,' she remarked, with a gracious inclination of her fine head. I am Irish by birth.

Then she turned her attention to my fiancé, warmly congratulating him on his recent unique successes at the Middle Temple. She apparently knew all the details, her every word showing how very much abreast of the day was Britain's ruler. The Queen finally announced that she was going to speak to the Secretary of State about the matter.

While Her Majesty was thus engaged, I had an opportunity to observe her. She was by no means so stout as various disloyal cameras had represented. She was dressed in the plainest black. Her narrow Honiton lace collar was fastened by a miniature of the Prince Consort, rimmed by a triple row of white, pink, and black pearls. On her wedding finger one splendid diamond, set in onyx, blazed a myriad fires.

Her complexion was that of a young woman, the eyes clear as bluebells, but her hair was scarcely less snowy than the quite immaculate cap that crowned it.

'Come,' invited the Queen; 'I will show you some of my treasures, and then we'll have a Highland tea.'

Her Majesty led the way; we followed. The corridor was of great length, lined with china cabinets and pictures, and, I thought, so far as grouping of colour went, singularly ill arranged. For instance, the Queen drew our attention to a magnificent tea-set of Rose Du Barry, valued at £150,000, enshrined behind panels on a stand of ruby plush—the combina-

tion was an artistic crime! General Gordon's Bible—presented by his sister—held a very conspicuous place on a high pedestal, protected by glass.

No fewer than five portraits of Disraeli adorned the walls—not one of Mr Gladstone; while several fine Landseers, hung with judgment, greatly pleased the eye.

At the extreme end, somewhat in shadow, stood a life-size statue of herself and the Prince Consort in gold; a most imposing but not beautiful piece of work.

Double doors opened through to the bridal suite of the Crown Prince and Princess of Germany, with hangings of white satin patterned with orange blossom. From there the Queen took us to the Indian room, a noble apartment overlooking the Long Walk. Here were gathered some of the many gorgeous gifts that India had laid at the feet of the Empress.

There was a golden globe of the world, on which emeralds were used for the sea and other precious stones of every variety for the countries. One felt that geography might, under certain circumstances, become interesting. A chair, shaped like a throne, made of ivory inlaid with jade, and encrusted with turquoise and sapphires, had been a present from Tippoo Sahib. There were countless scabbards and sword-hilts, glittering with gems, charms, and enamels, Persian rugs, embossed boxes and bowls, and a life-size peacock that spread a jewelled tail when touched.

From this dazzling spot we passed into the green drawing-room, in which furniture, curtains, and ornaments, even to the candles in the mighty chandeliers, were expressed in green, from the delicate shade of a lettuce leaf to the deep tone of two immense malachite vases placed in the windows, that had come from the Czar.

II.

Her Majesty pressed an unseen button, and the high mantelpiece rolled slowly back, revealing a secret staircase leading to the terrace, which she told us she often used on Mondays, being able thus to see her people without being seen.

From the green we went into the white drawing-room, an amazingly beautiful apartment, whose only touch of colour was some flowering rose-hued azaleas, and so, finally, to the scarlet drawing-room. This, the Queen told us, had been the favourite of George IV., but she herself favoured it little, because the man who designed and made the furniture had committed suicide in consequence of the Regent failing to pay him.

A peep at the dining-room, with its table made from a fallen oak tree and its great punch-bowl formed like a monstrous crawfish, a glimpse at St George's Hall, and then the Queen said, 'I hope you both have an appetite,' and turning the handle of a door, ushered us into a very lofty but small octagon chamber panelled with portraits of her four daughters-in-law, its mullioned windows commanding a superb vista of Windsor Great Park.

Here at a round table tea was laid—and what a tea! Eggs and bacon, cold chicken, caviare, boar's head, hot bread, scones, jams and cakes of every description, China and Indian tea, fruits, and liqueurs.

Here the Dean of Windsor joined us, a most elegant and courtly person, with a merry, kindly eye.

A delightful meal followed, free from any trace of formality. We waited on ourselves, and our hostess ate more heartily than any one I have ever seen, while listening attentively to various homely pieces of parish news as they fell from the lips of her clerical guest.

The conversation turned on music. 'I confess that I am no expert,' exclaimed the Queen, 'but I can differentiate between melody and organised noise.'

'Your Majesty's taste is unerring,' said the dean gravely.

The Queen glanced at him and smiled. 'I know of what you are thinking,' she observed.

'I can assure you I am not, ma'am,' he told her, and his eyes began to twinkle.

The Queen shook with silent merriment for a second or so. 'I give you leave to relate the incident; my young friends can be trusted.'

The dean bowed. 'I must tell you,' he began, 'that the other evening at dinner, Her Majesty was graciously pleased to admire a certain tune that was played, and sent to the bandmaster to inquire its name. The answer came back, borne by a poppy-coloured footman, trembling all over.

'If it please Your Majesty, the title is "Come where the Booze is Cheaper."'

'It is not a pretty name, but it is really a pretty tune,' said the Queen.

Tea concluded, we made our adieux. In the carriage below we found a portrait of our royal hostess and a basket of fruit and flowers.

III.

The prestige of the Prince of Wales (afterwards Edward VII.) was indescribable, not only in England but abroad; to be in 'the Marlborough House set' was to have reached a social apex beyond any other.

The Princess of Wales played her part with a delightful mingling of beauty, dignity, and grace.

The first time I met Their Royal Highnesses was at a breakfast given by James M'Neill

Whistler at his quaint old house in Chelsea. The famous painter himself was notorious for his unpunctuality when invited anywhere, while his excuse was always the same—a drunken cabman, a jaded horse, and an old woman who stood to be run over. On this occasion, when the prince and princess arrived, all the guests were assembled except Lady Violet Greville. We proceeded to the dining-room without waiting. It must have been quite a quarter of an hour later before her ladyship entered, when, with an apologetic curtsy to the royalties, she said: 'I am confident everyone will pardon me, when I say that I got Mr Whistler's cab.' The only person who failed to appreciate the joke was the host.

The next occasion on which I saw the Prince to speak to was when, some years later, he came behind the scenes of the Haymarket Theatre to congratulate the brilliant author of *An Ideal Husband*, who was a great friend of ours. To appreciate the point of the Prince's remark, it is necessary to recall that in the last act one of the characters announces his intention of going round the world, and asks his hostess what he shall bring her back.

'Anything,' is her reply, 'except, I beg of you, an Indian shawl.'

This greatly tickled the fancy of a Victorian audience. . . . When His Royal Highness entered the greenroom, he expressed himself as being delighted with the whole play.

'It is too long, sir,' said its creator. 'I shall have to cut it.'

'Pray don't, Mr Wilde,' cried the Prince. 'Take out nothing—not even about the Indian shawl.'

The Duke of Clarence, when out in Burmah, was our guest. He was a most melancholy young man, over whom there seemed to brood a heavy shadow—as the near future unhappily proved, it was the shadow of coming death. He appeared bereft of interest in anything.

Dinners, dances, races, native entertainments failed in turn to evoke enthusiasm. This distressed the merry Burmese people, who were vastly curious about this grandson of the 'great white queen,' while it seemed a reflection on us as hosts.

However, the young prince laughed once, and right heartily. He had given a suit of clothes to an old Burman who had waylaid him and begged as a souvenir for some garment that he had worn. On the morning of the Duke's departure this person appeared, and making his way proudly through the crowd of officials assembled on the wharf, prostrated himself before His Royal Highness, wearing the coat of the suit on his legs, the waistcoat buttoned round his head, and the trousers in the form of a huge neck-tie!

The Duke was still smiling as the ship dropped down the Irrawaddy.

HOW SERGEANT MILLEFEUX WON THE CROSS.

PART II.

VI.

NOW, who could have drugged the wine? And how did an Austrian general know all the details of my mission? How came he to repeat the very words of the Emperor about my being the most determined man in the French army?

And then I turned my eyes to where Lieutenant Dupré sat side by side with the Kaiserslicks. He did not look like a prisoner; he sat there smiling at me quite at his ease, and—Heaven, what was that? What was that he had on the breast of his coat? The white cockade of the Bourbons!

I leaped up. The leather band held me tight to the chair, but for an instant I lifted chair and everything, and stood up on my feet. Next moment the weight of the chair dragged me down with a crash, but I shook my fist at that smiling Hussar.

'Traitor!' I shouted. 'Traitor! Traitor!' But the rascal did not turn a hair. He sat there still smiling.

'Keep tranquil, sergeant,' said he; 'it's no use getting excited. Take my advice,' he continued; 'Napoleon has got to the end of his tether. Any reasonable man can see that. And besides, France is sick of him and his eternal wars. France needs peace, and demands peace. And only the Bourbons can give her peace.' And he waved his hand and shouted, '*Vive le Roi!*'

'*Vive l'Empereur!*' I shouted in reply.

Then the Austrian chimed in, 'Now, Sergeant Millefeux, it is no use for you to fight against the impossible. Where is your despatch?'

'Find it!' I shouted; 'if you can.'

'Your Excellency,' interrupted the rascally lieutenant, 'perhaps I can help you in this matter also. Look in the heel of the sergeant's right boot.'

At this fresh infamy I shook with rage. But it was no use. A soldier pulled off my boot, and the lieutenant himself touched the spring that opened the hollow heel, pulled out the despatch, and handed it to the Austrian general.

'Villain!' I yelled—'villain and traitor that you are! I shall see you shot yet!'

But they paid no heed to me, for the Austrian general had spread out the despatch, and was devouring it with trembling eagerness.

At last he looked up. 'This is news indeed,' he said to the others. And he began to read: 'To the Commandants at Metz, Thionville, Verdun, Mayence. The Emperor is about to receive large reinforcements from the army in Spain.'

'He intends to attack the Austrian army

under Schwarzenberg in a few days with his whole force.

'He will drive the enemy towards the Rhine, and he will pick up the garrisons of the fortresses as he advances, and add them to the active army.'

'Have everything ready so that your troops can join the army as soon as it appears.'

'NAPOLEON.'

There was a movement along the table as they all got up and crowded round to discuss the despatch. After a while they gave their orders, and I was carried off to a large building, and shoved into a room, with a couple of soldiers posted at the door to keep me safe.

And there I was left to my thoughts; and bitter thoughts they were. I had failed, failed utterly. The Cross that I had considered as already on my breast was gone for ever. And worse than that—the despatch was in the hands of the enemy; information which might mean the ruin of the Emperor and France was in their hands. And I, who was to have defended it with my life, had slept at my post.

And then I thought of the traitor who was responsible for it all; the villain who had drugged my wine, who had revealed where the despatch was hidden; the traitor who had deserted and given the enemy all the information, even to the most private words of the Emperor.

VII.

I remained in prison for three weeks, and then suddenly, one morning, I heard the boom of cannon, and some time afterwards the door of my room was flung open, and there stood that very Captain of Dragoons whom I had winged in a duel, and behind him was a crowd of his men.

At sight of me he uttered a shout of joy and, rushing into the room, shook me heartily by the hand. 'Come on, sergeant,' said he, 'we have found you at last. *Ma foi*, but you are a lucky dog. The Emperor is asking for you every day. The whole army has had orders to look for you. And we are to bring you along to the Emperor as soon as we find you. So come along, you old firebrand!'

'Ah,' I said, 'is it you, *mon capitaine*? And how is your arm?'

He gave a grimace. 'It is all right now,' he said, 'but you nearly kept me out of the fun with that d—d pistol of yours.'

I followed him out of the building. One of his men brought me a horse, and as I know how to ride, we were soon trotting along to the Emperor's headquarters.

The whole French army seemed to be marching past us. Columns of infantry, files of guns, and cavalry everywhere. This sight would have given me joy at any other time, but my misfortunes weighed too heavily on me that morning.

'Halloa, sergeant,' said the captain after a while, 'why are you looking so sad? Don't you know what has happened? But, of course, you won't, shut up in that hole all this time.'

'What has happened?' I asked.

'Why, Montmirail has happened,' he replied—'the glorious battle of Montmirail. We have just cut up Blücher's army into twenty thousand pieces, and here we are now chasing the Kaiser-licks like a flock of sheep.'

VIII.

Before long we entered the town of Troyes, and the captain brought me to the same old château, and ushered me into the very same room where Napoleon had given me that unlucky despatch.

In front of the fire stood the Emperor, nursing his coat-tails just as before, and at the table sat Marshal Berthier writing; and then my hands clenched suddenly, for there also sat the traitor, Lieutenant Dupré, smiling as if nothing had happened.

As I stood and saluted I could see that the Emperor was in very high spirits. 'Ah,' said he, 'you have come back at last then, Sergeant Millefeux. But you are certainly not so stout as when I saw you last. Well, you had better have another pinch of snuff.' And he offered me his snuff-box, as he had done on that evening three weeks before. But I did not take the snuff this time.

'Sire,' I said in a choked voice, 'I am not worthy. I have failed. But there,' and I pointed as I spoke to the smiling lieutenant, 'there, sire, is the cause of my failure.'

And with my voice swelling with indignation I shouted: 'He is a traitor, sire; sold to the Bourbons. He drugged my wine and betrayed me to the Austrians. And with his own hand he pulled the despatch out of its hiding-place, which the Austrians would never have found out for themselves. Arrest him, sire, and have him shot, and then I care not what happens to me.'

The Emperor took a pinch of snuff with great deliberation, and looked at me with a humorous air. 'Not so fast, sergeant, not so fast,' said he; 'you have made a mistake. Our young friend here is no traitor, but a good soldier of France. And as for your despatch, well, I meant it to fall into the hands of the Austrians. It was all a ruse.'

And as I stood bewildered and astonished he took hold of my ear, as his custom was with his old soldiers, and gave it a slight pull. 'Ah,

Millefeux,' said he, 'your Emperor has still a few tricks up his sleeve.'

'But, sire,' I stammered, 'I saw him myself among the Austrian generals, and he was wearing the white cockade.'

'All part of the plan, my friend,' replied the Emperor. 'Come, I will tell you the whole plan of campaign, and then you will be content.'

IX.

'You see, that old rascal Blücher was marching on Paris, and there was nobody to stop him. That was the trouble. I was glued down here at Troyes by the Austrians. If I moved against Blücher, Schwarzenberg would follow close on my heels. And I could not attack Schwarzenberg, for the army was still too weak in numbers. Those reinforcements from Spain—well, I put them in the despatch for the benefit of Monsieur Schwarzenberg. But as a fact I had not got them—they were still a long way off.'

'What was to be done? To be able to attack Blücher I must get two or three marches start of Schwarzenberg.'

'So I drew up a false despatch. I wanted that despatch to fall into Schwarzenberg's hands, but I did not want him to smell a rat; I wanted him to believe that it was a real message. That is why I sent you with it, for I knew I could rely upon your fighting to the death in its defence. And that is why I did not tell you that it was a false message, for I could not ask even you to sacrifice yourself for a despatch that you knew was only a ruse. As it was, if you had fallen in with the Austrians, I knew you would convince them that it was a true message by giving your life for it. Schwarzenberg would never have imagined that a man would go that length for a false despatch.'

'On the other hand, it was just possible that you might win through all right, and then Schwarzenberg would never have got the despatch, and you might have been waiting still in the Forest of Troyes for that imaginary agent. So Lieutenant Dupré offered to desert to the enemy and give them all the news, and he drugged your wine so that they might capture you and the despatch quite naturally, and yet without your needing to get yourself killed. Schwarzenberg never suspected for a moment, and when he read the despatch he did just what I wanted him to do.'

'He took up a strong defensive position and refused to budge from it. Why, he had his whole army digging trenches!'

And the Emperor laughed happily at the recollection.

'The false information,' he continued, 'kept poor Monsieur Schwarzenberg fast in his entrenchments, and so I got what I wanted—a start of two or three marches, before he tumbled to what I was really after.'

'Ah, Millefeux, it was Blücher I was after,

and before Schwarzenberg understood, I was away across the country, from the Seine to the Marne, with my whole army, and I caught old Blücher in his flank march and tore him to pieces.'

And the Emperor took up a piece of note-paper and tore it into bits.

'The old fox!' he exclaimed; 'he thought I was safely nailed down at Troyes, and that he had nothing to do but waddle along the open road to Paris. Well, he thought wrong, and his army has ceased to exist. We dropped him through the map at Montmirail.'

And the Emperor turned and let the torn pieces of paper drop into the fire.

'After I had settled Blücher,' he continued, 'I was joined by the reinforcements from Spain, and so here we are driving Schwarzenberg in his turn.'

The Emperor paused and took a pinch of snuff with great gusto. Then he beckoned to Lieutenant Dupré, who came forthwith and stood at my side. The Emperor drew himself up to his full height. 'Sergeant Millefeux,' he said, in a loud voice, 'and Lieutenant Dupré—you have helped me to save France, and I bestow on you both the Cross of the Legion of Honour.'

Then he pinned the Cross on my breast, and he did the same for the lieutenant.

'Now,' said the Emperor with a smile, 'the Traitor and the Man who Failed can go and drink my health together in another bottle of that famous wine. And, lieutenant,' he added, 'no tampering with *this* bottle.'

And that, my friends, is how I won the Cross.

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

AN UP-TO-DATE GAS-COOKER.

THE outstanding feature of a gas-cooker that has lately been placed on the market is an automatic heat-controller for the oven. All the cook has to do is to set the dial of this instrument to a given number, according to the degree of heat required, after which the oven can be left unattended, with the certainty that it will be maintained at the correct temperature. The cooker also possesses other good points which, although they do not constitute radical departures from standard practice, help to minimise the worries of the cook. The gas-rings, for instance, are of a new type, in which the orifices whence the flames issue are covered by an upper plate, and therefore cannot be choked by spilled foods. Moreover, the taps controlling these rings have three definite positions, of which the first is full on, the second gives a 'simmering' flame, while the third reduces the heat to the minimum required for prolonged stewing. Especial attention has been given to the design of the bars in the hotplate. These are so formed that the flames from the burners do not waste their heat by impinging upon them, and the gas is completely burnt, thus ensuring the maximum of heat with the minimum consumption of gas. The bars lift out separately for cleaning purposes, and cannot be replaced incorrectly. A very efficient grill is provided, with burners that can be turned upwards for boiling if extra heat is required. In the oven there is only one row of burners instead of two; the drip-tin, instead of resting on the floor, pushes in and out on guides at the bottom of the oven; and there are no loose shelf-supports, the grids being carried on runners which are embossed on the smooth enamelled sides of the oven, thus greatly facilitating cleaning. At

a convenient height above the hotplate a double plate-rack is provided, the bottom of which is made of wire-mesh, so that small vessels, spoons, &c., will not fall through. The rack may be folded back when not in use.

In a more expensive type of cooker the oven, instead of being situated below the hotplate, is placed alongside it, so that the bottom of the oven is at the same level as the hotplate, while the top ranges with the top of the plate-rack. All stooping when dishes are lifted in or out is thus obviated. Immediately below the oven, but still at a considerable height above the ground, is a chamber provided with a separate burner, in which foods may be warmed up or kept warm.

A HUGE POST-OFFICE WIRELESS STATION.

Some idea of the size of the wireless station being erected by the post-office near Rugby will be gathered from the fact that the site covers 900 acres. The aerial, which may be used in one length or in two sections, is supported on no fewer than twelve masts, each of which rises to a height of 820 feet. From the layman's point of view these masts are the most interesting feature of the station. They are triangular lattice-work steel structures, measuring 10 feet across each face, and they are placed 1320 feet apart. No attempt is made to keep them upright by sinking them into the ground; in fact, the heel of each is fitted with a socket which rests upon a sphere, for the express purpose of allowing movement. The masts are held vertical by wire-rope stays in five sets of three each, one set being attached to the top, while the other four are fastened at intermediate points. These stays are anchored to massive blocks of concrete sunk into the ground at distances out from the mast of 200, 400, and 600 feet respectively, and

each stay is insulated from the ground by porcelain insulators so arranged that the pull serves to compress them instead of tending to tear them apart. The mast itself is also insulated at the heel by twelve porcelain insulators, under which is a granite block, 5 feet 6 inches deep, whereby the metal work of the mast is further insulated from that connected with the ground. Under this granite block is a wrought-steel pillar, which rests upon a big block of concrete reinforced with steel girders. Up each mast there is a lift which is capable of carrying three men and their tools. A steel ladder is also provided in case the lift should fail. The aerial between each two masts consists of eight wires in the form of an octagonal cage, measuring 12 feet across. The aerial is supported on a steel wire-rope, the end of which is run down each mast. At the bottom it is wound upon a winch which can be worked by hand or power, and which has a slipping device that limits the tension to 10 tons. A very large amount of power is required for transmitting from this station to India, Australia, and other distant parts of the world, the current available being equivalent to well over 2000 horse-power, although only about 800 horse-power will be used at one time.

It will come as a surprise to some of our readers that the valves with which they are familiar in listening-in sets are also used for transmission, but in this case they are so large that water has to be circulated round them to keep them cool. Fifty-four valves are employed, and the wave-length adopted is 18,000 metres. Current is obtained from the Leicestershire and Warwickshire Power Co., and converted into a suitable form for transmission by machines which have been built by The British Thomson-Houston Co. of Rugby. Illustrations and further particulars of this interesting wireless station will be found in *The Engineer*.

SAFE STARTING FOR CARS.

Backfires still occasionally take place when cars are started, with damage to the wrists of the operators. In motors with more than one cylinder this risk is entirely overcome by a device which short-circuits the ignition when the starting handle is being pushed down. It consists of a semicircular steel disc on the starting handle shaft and an insulated spring contact fitted to the chassis where the disc will rub against it while the handle is being pushed down. The spring contact is connected to the earth terminal on the dashboard or the magneto. When the handle has passed the bottom of its travel and is beginning to come up the disc leaves the contact and sparking can take place. It will be noted that the device does not actually prevent backfires, but it ensures that they can only occur when the

starting handle is being pulled up, when it merely slips out of the hand. This invention is very easily fixed to any car or lorry.

A CHAIR WITH MANY COMBINATIONS.

During the last few years much ingenuity has been expended in devising articles of furniture which can be used for several purposes. A recent addition to the list is what looks at first sight to be an ordinary arm-chair of the type which has a vertical, oak bar frame, with rectangular cushions for the seat and the back. A more careful scrutiny reveals a double set of bars at the sides and the back, while certain loose parts are supplied separately. The result is that this chair can be transformed in a few minutes into many other articles of furniture. It is a simple operation to provide the chair with either a side or a front table. An extra cushion with an extension piece produces a lounge chair with a leg rest. The same extension, with the extra cushion and the false sides opened out, forms the chair into a bed. A child's cot, with or without a canopy or a table, is easily constructed. Other possibilities are an occasional table and a dining-table. Both the frames and the cushions are of good quality and are well finished, the cushions being covered and stuffed with various materials to suit the requirements of customers. Another device on similar lines is one which can be converted from a comfortable settee to an equally comfortable double bed (and vice versa) in a very few minutes.

AN OIL-ENGINED LOCOMOTIVE FOR RUSSIA.

In an article in our issue for May 1924, 'The Locomotive of the Future,' it was suggested that the oil-engined locomotive was the coming type for the main lines of this country. To provide the enormous power required, what is known as the Diesel engine is the only one available. The chief difficulty is the starting of a heavy train, which takes several minutes. As stated in the article referred to, this has always been possible by using the engine to generate electricity for actuating powerful electric motors on the driving axles. An oil-engined locomotive working on this principle has lately been built at Stuttgart, in Germany, for Russia, where not only will the advantages over steam locomotives for this country be realised, but also the saving due to the low price of oil compared with that of coal. The weight of this locomotive with fuel and water on board is, according to *The Engineer*, 125 tons. With its six cylinders the engine develops 1200 horse-power when running at 450 revolutions a minute. It is coupled to a dynamo which supplies current to five geared, electric motors on as many axles, the driving wheels being 4 feet in diameter. The speed is about 30 miles an hour, and the locomotive is said to pull with a force of 15 tons.

Although the electric system overcomes the starting difficulty, the cost is so great that every effort will be made to find a less complicated solution. The friction clutch would become red-hot under the conditions, but a form of hydraulic clutch which is proving successful for big ships should be equally effective for locomotives. Then we have the Still oil engines, as described in the article previously referred to, which will start a heavy train on steam.

NO MORE STAINED HANDS.

In these days, when almost every one possesses a motor car or a motor bike, a large proportion of men and many women can and do keep their own motor vehicles in order. This entails dirtying the hands with a mixture of road dust and oil which shows for days, in spite of repeated washing. A substance is now available which, if smeared over the hands before a dirty job is undertaken, completely protects them. This substance looks like tooth paste, and it is sold in similar lead tubes. A length of about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch is squeezed out and rubbed well into the hands. After this has been done any kind of grease or even tar can be removed entirely by washing with ordinary soap and cold water. This protective cream is harmless to the most sensitive skin; in fact, it has antiseptic qualities, and is being increasingly used by ladies who do their own housework.

A NEW FORM OF OIL STOVE.

The number of oil stoves that have been placed on the market during the last few years is legion. Some are simply a source of trouble. The best known to us have been described in these columns from time to time. A type which has become very popular in Denmark, where it is manufactured, has lately been introduced into this country. In its simplest form it consists of a rectangular japanned steel box, in the middle of which is the burner. The lower part of the burner is a narrow trough in the form of a ring, in which is a circle of asbestos. A device in connection with the supply of paraffin from a reservoir maintains the liquid in the burner at a depth of $\frac{1}{8}$ th of an inch, or just enough to ensure a good supply for the asbestos ring. A series of concentric, perforated cylinders of thin sheet steel above the asbestos vaporise the paraffin and add the correct proportion of air, the result being an absolutely blue flame which gives off intense heat. The reservoir holds half a gallon, enough to feed the burner continuously for 15 hours. It is cylindrical in form, and is fixed outside the stove, where it is free from any risk of becoming heated. A spring valve in the bottom is pushed open so long as the reservoir remains in position, but closes when it is removed for the purpose of being filled, the oil in the bottom of the burner maintaining the flame during

this operation. The oil is shut off from the burner by a screw-down valve when the stove is to be extinguished. This stove is very powerful, the heat given off being equal to the average gas-ring when turned full on. The asbestos ring does not burn away; consequently the stove remains perfectly clean and requires no trimming. Moreover, one ring will give months of service, and when a new one is required, it can be fitted easily and quickly. As there is no pressure, the stove is perfectly silent. Safety is assured by the position of the reservoir, and by the necessity for its removal for filling. This stove is made with a single burner, or with two burners fed from one reservoir. An oven is provided if required.

AN EFFICIENT STEAMER AND BOILER.

We have recently had the opportunity of testing thoroughly the merits of a new and economical cooking utensil which has just been put on the market, and which has given eminently satisfactory results. It consists in essence of an aluminium saucepan, into the upper part of which fits a steamer made of the same material, so that, while one kind of food, say carrots or turnips, is being prepared in the lower part of the device, some other kind, say a stew, fish, or a pudding, may be being cooked in the upper part. The steamer is excellent, too, for the preparation of well-cooked porridge. The device is manufactured in two somewhat different forms and sizes. In one the saucepan has a diameter of 8 inches and a depth of 6, and is fitted with a strong tubular handle of the ordinary kind on one side, and a lifting handle of roughly semicircular shape on the other. The covered pannikin or steamer for use with this saucepan is $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter and 3 inches deep. In the second type the saucepan is 7 inches in diameter, has a depth of 6 inches, and has only one handle—of the straight, tubular kind. The corresponding steamer is $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter and 3 inches deep. A distinctively novel and useful feature of this device is that in both types the cover is fastened so securely to the body of the steamer that the steamer is lifted out by means of the cover. In this way the steamer and its contents are readily removed without the slightest interference with the contents of the saucepan. The lid, which is made to fit both steamer and saucepan, is easily detached from the steamer part for service on the saucepan when the other portion is not in use. The steamers, it may be added, may be bought separately, and are adapted for use with any saucepans of suitable diameter.

THE POSSIBLE DOOM OF HAYMAKING.

We are all familiar with the process of hay-making, which may be described as turning over the hay after it has been cut, so that the sun and the wind may dry it. If hay is

stacked before it is dry it will ferment and go mouldy, with the result that it becomes useless as a food for horses and cattle. It is even more important that crops of corn should be well dried before they are carted and stacked. Unfortunately, the weather is often so unsettled in this country as to render the drying process very difficult. In very wet seasons the mown crops have even been left to rot in the fields because they never became dry enough to stack. Artificial drying has been tried from time to time with varying results, but hitherto the high cost has always put such methods 'out of court.' Forcing air through stacks was tested by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1923, but drying in this way took so long that fermentation took place, mould frequently developed, and the cost was very high. This process, however, naturally led up to the use of hot air, a development which has been recently investigated by the Institute of Agricultural Engineering of Oxford University, of which Captain B. J. Owen is the director. According to a preliminary report issued a short time ago, this method of drying crops costs less than exposing them to the action of the sun and wind, and this in spite of the fuel and the labour required. To distribute the hot air evenly through it the stack is built round and over a central chamber, shaped like an upright cone. This central chamber consists of a strong wooden frame, covered with wire netting, through which the air passes freely. The form of the chamber varies for different crops, and the size is approximately $\frac{1}{10}$ that of the stack. A pipe from this chamber comes out on one side of the stack, where it is connected to the hot air supply. The most convenient source of heat has been found to be a series of pressure paraffin burners similar to those used in wickless stoves. The air is drawn over the heating elements and forced through the stack by a centrifugal fan, which is driven by a paraffin or electric motor. Grass when cut contains about 75 per cent. of moisture, of which anything up to 25 per cent. will dry out if the grass is left in the field (without being 'made') for twenty-four hours. When the weather is fine, this plan shortens the artificial drying operation, and it costs nothing. After the stack, which is circular, has been built, the heating and blowing apparatus is set to work, and the hot air blast is maintained for about eight hours. Corn may be carted immediately after cutting, but if mixed with an excessive amount of green matter it may with advantage be left in the field for a day. When comparing the respective costs of artificial drying and the natural process it must be remembered that the latter involves a good deal of labour. Actual figures for both methods were collected during last season and reduced to a tonnage basis. In a good season the cutting, carting, stacking, and drying of hay came to 11s. 6d. per ton for the artificial method, against

13s. 6d. for the natural process assisted by 'making.' The cost for cutting was, of course, the same in each case; carting and stacking were charged 1s. more for the artificial drying system, owing to the extra weight of the damp crops. It was in the drying that the saving was effected, the artificial plan costing only 1s. 6d., whereas 'making' cost 4s. 6d. In a wet season 'making' is estimated to cost double this amount. There is strong evidence, also, of improved value for both hay and corn crops due to the artificial drying, compared with that effected by sun and wind in the fields.

AN EXPANDING TABLE WITHOUT LOOSE LEAVES.

An expanding dining-table, which has been recently brought out, in which the extra leaves are housed within the table itself when they are out of use, seems likely to oust the extensible type that has loose leaves for insertion in the middle or at the ends. In operation the new table is exceedingly simple. It is only necessary to raise slightly, and then to pull out, first one end and then the other. Pulling out the old-fashioned dining-table is a two-handed job, whereas a very light pull extends the new type. There is a fixed bar or very narrow leaf at the middle of the table. As each end reaches its full extent an extra leaf rises into position between this bar and the table end. Neither fixing nor tool is required. Each end of the table can be extended in a few seconds, if not by a child, at least by the smallest of women. The leaves do not slide on each other, but on runners; hence there is no scratching of polished surfaces. An advantage of the system is that, as the extra leaves do not come on at the ends, as with some extensible tables, the ends can have rounded corners or oval ends. These tables are made in many styles, of various woods, and finished in different ways. Every variety is stocked by the makers in more than one size.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

PETER WAS SINGLE.

By J. FREDERICK TILSLEY, Author of *Cheerio*, &c.

PART I.

I.

'THANKS,' said Peter Golding.

He gave the lift-attendant a friendly nod, stepped briskly from the lift, and crossed the passage to a frosted-glass window which bore the one word 'Enquiry' in bold black letters.

'Of course,' thought Peter, 'I sha'n't get it—no such luck. Still, things might be worse—it's not as if I were married.' Thousands of young men were consoling themselves with the same reflection at precisely the same moment. Peter raised his hand and rapped quite briskly upon the frosted-glass window. The next moment he found himself looking into the eyes of a young girl. She was a very pretty girl, and Peter, although shy, gave her his best smile; he rather liked pretty girls! 'I came in answer to this,' he explained. Diving a wet hand into the breast-pocket of his sodden and steaming raincoat, he drew forth tenderly a sheet of folded paper. 'Rather late, aren't I?'

The girl accepted the letter and glanced briefly through it, her head moving gently from side to side as she skimmed over the type-written lines. She was about to turn to Peter again when some detail of the letter caught and held her attention. She started, and raised very wide eyes to his face. 'It says two-thirty,' she said in a low, startled voice. 'My word, you are late!'

Peter reddened, and felt for his watch; then he remembered that he had not possessed a watch for some time, and his colour deepened. 'Yes—I—er—missed the train, you know.'

The girl glanced over her shoulder, evidently consulting a clock, which was invisible from Peter's side of the window. 'It's turned three,' she informed him, and her words were accompanied by a glance which seemed to say, 'My poor young man, you'll have to brighten your ideas up if you are going to work here.'

Peter looked relieved. 'Good,' he said cheerfully; 'I thought it would be later than that.'

The girl laughed, as though this young man was something new in her experience. 'If you will please wait in the office at the end of this

passage, I will tell Mr Reginald you are here—yes, to your right.'

Peter raised his wet hat and turned to the right. A few steps brought him to the office indicated, and he tapped on the door, which was slightly open. Receiving no answer, he entered without further ceremony. The room was small but eminently business-like. The furniture consisted of a solid little table and two chairs. On the table were a telephone and the current numbers of several trade journals. Hanging above the table, within easy reach, were a telephone directory and a railway guide. Above these was the terse command, 'No smoking.' The space above the fireplace was completely covered by a map of the British Isles, coloured in a way that was new to him. Opposite this, and almost as large, was a framed advertisement of men's underwear.

'Seems to be a jolly big firm,' said Peter, speaking aloud. 'There must be hundreds work here. Wonder who on earth Mr Reginald is? Ah, of course, my letter was signed "R. E. Clawson." Naturally I sha'n't get the job—just my luck to be late. . . . Still, I'm not married, and that's something to be thankful for.' He sighed.

II.

Peter, born dreamer that he was, permitted his mind to wander back to a trivial incident which had happened only a few minutes previously. On his way up the flight of broad stone steps at the imposing entrance of Messrs Clawson's great warehouse Peter had come face to face with a girl who was coming down. She was a tall girl, with bright eyes and an unusually high colour. She had paused for a moment in order to unfold her umbrella. Peter had never seen a human face which expressed so much character and so much gentle dignity. There was another quality in that strange, beautiful face, some indefinable quality for which Peter could find no word, and Peter was rather good at describing things. It was a quality that seemed to be made of almost equal parts of quiet gaiety and a great sadness, a bravely smiling fatalism.

'I wonder what she was doing here?' thought Peter; 'I wonder if I shall ever see her again?'

There was a quick step outside, the door of the office was flung open suddenly, but without violence, and Peter found himself face to face with Mr Reginald.

Mr Reginald was a short, heavily-built man of something under fifty. He had cold, blue eyes and a mouth like a trap; he glared at Peter for a moment, and then closed the door much as one might close the door of a cell. 'You are late,' he said, in a tone which seemed to jar Peter's backbone.

'Ye-es,' answered Peter. 'I—I'm sorry—I missed my train.'

Mr Reginald tugged savagely at one spike of the iron-gray moustache which decorated his upper lip. 'Why did you miss your train? And do you usually miss your trains? These things are important, Mr Golding.'

'To be quite frank with you,' answered the startled Peter, 'I could not afford to travel by train, so I—I walked.' Blushing deeply, he thrust out one of his muddy boots for Mr Reginald's inspection. 'I've never done the walk before, and rather misjudged the time it would take—must be over six miles—and it rained all the way.'

'Seven and a half,' snapped Mr Reginald; 'you ought to have known that. I knew it, and I've never been in the place in my life. Better make a note of it—seven and a half, wet or fine. How long have you been out of work?'

'Well, you see, I have always been with my father.'

'What was your father?'

'An artist.'

'Oh!'

Mr Reginald uttered that 'Oh!' in much the same tone that he would have used to say 'guilty.'

'Father died two years ago, and I have been seeking some sort of a position ever since.'

'In that case I ought to have heard from you before this,' declared Mr Reginald. 'You can't be very enterprising, or you would have been here before now.' His voice rose suddenly. 'How is it I haven't heard from you before now? Where have you been?'

Peter grew pale. 'Well, I answered your advertisement the moment—'

'That particular one, yes—but what about the others? Wait!' Mr Reginald flung himself from the office, leaving the door wide open behind him.

'Phew! What a nice man,' murmured Peter in a shaky voice. 'Thank the Lord I'm single.' He gazed longingly at the door, half rose, and then fell back into his chair with a regretful sigh. He had heard of these sledge-hammer business men, and during periods of affluence had seen them on the stage and at the cinema;

but this was the first he had ever met in the flesh. Peter decided that he preferred his Napoleons of Commerce on the screen.

Mr Reginald appeared again with an expression of triumph on his face and two long slips of paper fluttering from his fingers. 'Those,' he announced in a tone which matched his expression, 'are the advertisements you did not answer. The wording is exactly the same in each case; they appeared in the same newspapers, and they concern the same job.'

Peter tried to count the advertisements pasted on the long slips, and decided there must be more than a dozen altogether. 'Some job, evidently,' he reflected with a sinking heart. '—Well, Mr Clawson,' he said aloud, 'it's like this: I've never been in a warehouse in my life—I told you that in my original application. It was only when I received no answers to my applications for positions I knew something about that I decided I might as well waste ink and paper on the others.'

Mr Reginald nodded thoughtfully. 'You write a very passable letter,' he admitted grudgingly, 'and good letter-writing is essential to the job. Are you married?'

'No, Mr Clawson; single.'

'Good. Drink?'

'Not intoxicants, anyhow.'

'Good. Smoke?'

'A little, Mr Clawson.'

'Pipe?'

'Cigarettes.'

Mr Reginald frowned. 'Instant dismissal for any one found smoking anything anywhere on these premises at any time. Now listen; I'm looking for an assistant-manager who isn't afraid to remove his jacket and work.' Head-managers, you know, are only human; they are subject to the same infirmities as other people; they fall sick occasionally, and when that happens it is necessary to have some one who is capable of slipping into their shoes and carrying on. For some reason or other we cannot find a suitable man for the hosiery department. The man who is there now is good in some ways, but he is not good enough; only the best is good enough for me. The man who takes this job on must have no doubts about himself, or he is lost. He has a lot of girls to deal with, and girls are queer creatures.'

'I'm not very self-confident,' admitted Peter.

'Then you are no use to us,' declared Mr Reginald decisively.

'Of course, I might cultivate it after a time,' suggested Peter hopefully.

'It would not have to be a long time,' answered the other, frowning heavily at the telephone. 'I don't quite know why, Golding, but I'm disposed to let you have a try at it.' He rose to his feet suddenly. 'Come on Monday—eight twenty-five—everybody here is at work by half-past. If you make good, we

shall be pleased to keep you. If you don't, you go in one month's time—no further notice required. Good-day, Golding!

III.

Peter Golding, unsuccessful artist and unsuccessful other things which have no direct connection with the present history, arrived at Messrs Clawson's huge (and, in its way, impressive) warehouse promptly at eight-fifteen the following Monday morning. The lift-attendant, now wearing a greasy suit of overalls in place of his smart uniform, was polishing the imposing brass name-plate on the side of the entrance. He eyed Peter compassionately, and greeted him politely. 'Mornin.' Comin' to work 'ere?'

Peter answered the greeting, and said that he was there for the purpose of starting work.

The other smiled sadly. 'They come and they go,' he observed cryptically. 'Taking Mr Sadler's place, I expect. I 'eard 'e was goin'. Very nice young feller, too—same style as yourself—in 'is ways, I mean.'

'He—he is still here, then, this Mr Sadler?' inquired Peter, suddenly feeling very uncomfortable.

'Oh yes; doesn't finish till the end of this week—very nice young feller.'

'What sort of a place is this?—I mean to work for?' asked Peter.

The lift-attendant became cautious immediately. 'Well, my work doesn't take me inside much, but, of course, I 'ear things; but you can't believe everything you 'ear, can you?'

Peter admitted the truth of this.

'It wouldn't be so bad if it wasn't for Mr Reginald,' went on the lift-attendant, forgetting for the moment to be cautious; 'an' they do say that Mr Reginald wouldn't be so bad if it wasn't for 'is wife. She's one of the lively sort—fond of going about an' what not. If she 'ad to work 'ere she wouldn't have much life left in 'er at the end of the day.'

'It's not much of a place, then, eh?'

'There might be worse places in the town, but I never 'eard of 'em, an' I don't know where they are. It's that there Mr Reginald—my word, 'e's a 'ot un. Mr Reginald— Look out, 'ere's old Hughes!' The lift-attendant turned his back on Peter and resumed his polishing with redoubled vigour.

Advancing towards them from the opposite side of the street was a short, middle-aged gentleman in a light overcoat and spats. He walked with jerky, nervous strides, and continually glanced over his shoulder in the apprehensive manner of one who is in continual dread of being overtaken by some imminent and unpleasant fate. Peter was soon to learn that Mr Hughes, never a very strong character at any time, had been systematically reduced to a mass of nerves by the continual bullying and

grumbling of Mr Reginald, and Peter was soon to experience the methods which had made the manager of the hosiery department something considerably less than a man.

'This young feller's waitin' to see you, Mr Hughes,' said the lift-attendant as the manager approached them. 'Come to take Mr Sadler's place, I believe.'

'Oh—er!' jerked the manager nervously. 'Well, look here,' he continued, watching Peter's boots intently, 'nobody below managers is permitted to use the front entrance. Only managers and THE FIRM use the front entrance; the workpeople go round to the back.'

Peter nodded. 'I'm sorry; I didn't know.'

Mr Hughes raised his eyes from Peter's boots to the top button of his overcoat. 'Better come this way now.' He turned to the lift-attendant suddenly. 'Take him up, and tell some one to show him to the hosiery department.'

IV.

A polite but worried-looking warehouseman led Peter up three flights of stairs, and then saying, 'Here we are,' disappeared.

Peter was in the hosiery department, the scene of his future activities. For as far as his eyes could reach in either direction stretched an interminable length of huge stock fixtures. Along the windowless wall was a long row of tables, which, although dwarfed into insignificance by the great fixtures, were really of quite a workman-like size. On each table was a wooden box containing a ball of string, a pair of heavy scissors, a large tin receptacle for pins, several piles of stock letters printed in imitation type under Messrs Clawson's well-known and business-like heading, a tape measure, and on most of the tables a neat pile of hosiery, covered with sheets of tissue paper. Hard and continual work had polished the table-tops to a smooth glossiness. There was something hard and polished and unfeeling about the whole place, thought Peter, with a sinking at the stomach; even the roof was made of glass, and the floor so hard and unyielding that it rang under the feet. Peter now observed that a young man of about his own age was approaching him, a serious-looking young man who wore glasses. He had appeared quite suddenly from behind one of the fixtures.

'Good morning,' he greeted pleasantly. 'I suppose you are the chap that's coming to take my place. Well, don't let it worry you in any way—you'll have quite enough to worry about without that. However, I don't finish till the week-end, and I shall be only too glad to help you all I can—my name's Sadler, you know.'

Peter breathed a sigh of relief. This inevitable meeting with Mr Sadler had haunted him like a nightmare since his talk with the lift-attendant. It was, he had felt, a meeting which

was bound to be unpleasant for every one concerned. Peter hated to think that he was stepping into another man's shoes. 'Have you got anywhere else to go to?' he asked awkwardly.

'Oh, rather—going back to my old firm. This is a vile hole, but the training you get makes you a valuable man in any warehouse. Now, we mustn't be seen standing about or we'll be snatched over the coals. Come and have a look round, and I'll give you some idea of what goes on in this place. Have you been in a home-trade house?'

'This is the first warehouse I've ever been in,' admitted Peter, flushing a little.

Young Mr Sadler made a compassionate noise in his throat. 'You are starting well, I must say. Now, the position is something like this: you have under you a jolly decent hard-working staff, even if they are girls. Well, your job is to keep 'em at it. Girls are queer, you know; they work like slaves for weeks, an' then something sort of comes over 'em—they remember they are human beings, and there's no doing

any good with 'em till the fit wears off. They come late, and make mistakes, and their tempers get uncertain. Well, you've got to keep 'em in order. If you can increase the output, well and good; but if the opposite happens, Heaven help you! To be perfectly frank, there are times when you'll have to bully 'em.'

Peter said 'Oh!' in a startled voice.

'Another part of your work will be looking after the stock, which requires constant supervision. All the girls under you are employed in getting orders out, and they work at terrific speed, executing the orders and sending them down to the packing room, complete with all necessary correspondence. Your business is to see that fresh stock is placed in the fixtures as rapidly as the old diminishes. You also have to attend to all complaints and all inquiries—that's the reason good letter-writing is so important. You will find Miss Slade invaluable. Ah, here's the staff arriving; it must be close on half-past—come along and I'll introduce you.'

(Continued on page 88.)

MEASURING GENIUS.

By WILLIAM DOUGLAS.

THE world in general is content to regard genius as a phenomenon that appears at rare intervals in defiance of, rather than in accordance with, natural laws. The fact of genius, its choice of the medium in which it expresses itself, and the form of that expression, are unquestioningly accepted as inevitable and inexplicable. The reading public, while it is eager to be amused or interested or thrilled, will not readily consent to think. So it prefers to look upon genius as something altogether miraculous, and loves such fine phrases as Wordsworth's 'light that never was on sea or land' and Carlyle's 'inspired gift of God.'

Most people are strangely gratified when there is striking contrast between the circumstances of genius and its performance. The greater the contrast, the greater the miracle. If a ploughman turn poet or a policeman paint pictures, the world applauds the prodigy. It would be disappointed if Bacon proved to be Shakespeare. This trick of contrasting opposites is as old as history. David of Israel and Jack the Giant Killer are heroes because they were, comparatively speaking, pygmies. Diogenes steps from his tub into the temple of fame. The average man is particularly delighted when the personality or history of a poet seems out of keeping with his poetry. He thinks of Chatterton as the 'marvellous boy' who starved in a garret. Marlowe is the tavern brawler who is killed in a drunken scuffle over a prostitute—by Will Shakespeare

himself, if we are to believe Miss Clemence Dane, who certainly knows better. Milton writes *Paradise Lost* and Homer *The Iliad*, each after he is blind. Dr Johnson is scrupulous, gluttonous, and a boor. Goldsmith is the 'inspired fool' who 'wrote like an angel but talked like poor Poll.' Shelley is an atheist, and Byron a blackguard.

Yet it is obvious that Shakespeare would have been no less a genius if he had been Lord Chancellor of England. Homer and Milton would not have written worse poetry even if they had had Argus's hundred eyes. Shelley, although he had turned Quaker, would still have 'dabbled his fingers in the day-fall, and littered the floor of heaven with his broken fancies.' Were Mr Chesterton thin as an eel and Mr Bernard Shaw gargantuan, their charm would be no less potent. The man in the street cannot be made to think so. Believing that the marvellous essential is rendered more marvellous by contrasting concomitant inessentials, he measures the first by its distance from the second—as if genius were not something above and beyond such accidentals; and he is encouraged in this false correlation of opposites by literary biographers, whose opinions he swallows as trustfully as he swallows innumerable patent medicines, their effects savouring of the miraculous because he is ignorant of the ingredients.

But he has other methods of judging genius. While he enjoys best what is simple and easily intelligible—the tritely true, the strongly

emotional, the obviously clever, and the broadly humorous, yet he distrusts his preference because he suspects simplicity. Thus for long he gave Wordsworth and 'Mark Rutherford' scanty recognition, and his opinion of Carlyle and Browning, after their insistence secured his attention, is not less because they are often unintelligible to him. The soaring imagination of Shelley and Francis Thompson, and the subtle psychology of Joseph Conrad, win admiration from some, at least, who hope to gain a reputation for a discernment to which they have small claim. With those who confuse artifice and art, the 'apparent profundity which is only lack of transparency' obtains credit for the very qualities that are wanting; and clever people like Mr Chesterton and Mr Bernard Shaw delight in exploiting such weakness by counterfeiting oracularness, and by deliberately pretending to be subtle and elusive.

Simplicity of subject and expression is so often regarded as a mark of mediocrity that the worth of a work is frequently measured in inverse proportion to its simplicity. Horace Walpole, who deemed himself no mean judge of literature, was disgusted, on the first night of *She Stoops to Conquer*, at the 'lowness' of the dialogue, and condemned the subject as common, the execution as commonplace, and the whole play as 'the lowest of all farces.' And there are still people who prefer Dr Johnson's little fishes that talked like whales to Dr Goldsmith's, which spoke in *propria persona*. It is not only Lord Morley's Nationalists who cannot 'realise that a big word is not the same as a big thing.'

The man of the world sometimes judges genius, particularly poetic genius, by comparing its mentality with his own, flattering himself considerably in the process. By this method of calculation, genius is measured in inverse ratio to its sanity. The man of the world does not make the comparison in respect of originality, inventive power, imagination, perception, receptivity, spiritual energy and enthusiasm; that were too exhausting a method—and the result might not be so flattering to his self-esteem. The standard of his measurement is common-sense, and he fondly misapplies Dryden's famous couplet:

Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide.

So he regards genius as a kind of mental disease, and credits the weaknesses of the long-haired types, familiar in caricatures, to poets like Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth.

As a matter of fact, these, the greatest masters of English poetry, are characterised by a practical sanity and commonsense that the man of the world might envy. Chaucer wrote his *Canterbury Tales* in the intervals of making out bills of lading and of attending to his duties as

ambassador, master of works, and member of parliament for Kent. Spenser was planning his *Faerie Queene* while he was secretary to the deputy-governor of Ireland. Shakespeare, successful actor-manager and merchant, was suing a certain Mr Philip Rogers of Stratford for the sum of thirty-five shillings and tenpence about the time he was writing *Macbeth*. It was while Milton was, prosaically enough, earning his living as a schoolmaster that he wrote his *Areopagitica*, 'the majestic classic of spiritual and intellectual freedom, with its outbursts of shattering vituperation, its inflammatory scorn, its boundless power, and overflow of passionate speech in all its keys of passion.' Wordsworth was so strong in reasoning power, so restrained in imagination, and so eminently practical in his theory of poetry that the reproach in his case, also, is wholly unjustifiable.

But Dryden is not alone among great writers in libelling genius. Macaulay, to take one instance more, elaborates the charge, and is himself guilty of another 'vulgar error' in quoting, as if it were Shakespeare's own view, the opinion of Duke Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* regarding the 'fine frenzy' of the poet:

How many cite Polonius to their sons
And call it Shakespeare!

Macaulay's *Essay on Milton* has all the enthusiasm of youth and all its courage and assurance. It is a masterpiece of detailed knowledge and clever rhetoric. Its generalisations are, however, often faulty. 'Perhaps,' he says, 'no person can be a poet or even enjoy poetry without a certain unsoundness of mind.' But this bold assumption leads only to the very mild conclusion that a child-like imagination is a necessary quality in an imaginative poet—an obvious platitude that none will deny.

No doubt there have been mad poets as there have been mad hatters. Some great men, like many little men, have been guilty of poverty, blindness, corpulence, smallpox, and self-indulgence and excess. A poet, however, is great not because of these things but in spite of them. Cowper was sometimes mad, but he was strikingly sane in his writings. Burns was no moral Hercules, but he is a giant in lyrical verse. Poe and Francis Thompson may have been weak enough to sink into the depths of indulgence, but they have the power that scales Olympus. And the world owes more to two such souls than it owes to a thousand others whose sanity and common-sense are the best they can boast of.

Some people would measure genius as they measure the efficiency of machinery, by ease and rapidity of production. They labour under the illusion that poets produce their masterpieces without effort. They love to read of poets who never blotted a line, who lisped in numbers for the numbers came. To such people he is no heaven-born poet who scorns delights

and lives laborious days, whose genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains. *Poeta nascitur non fit*; he must be able to toss off a sonnet with his 'night-cap' before stepping into bed. Sir Hudibras's methods are not so much to their minds as those of Squire Ralph:

Whose knowledge was not far behind
The knight's, but of another kind,
And he another way came by't;
Some call it gifts and some new light;
A liberal art that costs no pains
Of study, industry, or brains.

Gray's immortal elegy, which took eight years to complete, is, on this basis of measurement, not poetry. But Cecil's saying of Sir Walter Raleigh, 'I know he can toil terribly,' is true of genius in every sphere of activity. Shakespeare's knowledge is as wide as his range. He must have been an omnivorous reader, an observant and diligent student of men and affairs. Originality, imagination, comprehensiveness of soul, sensibility to impression, sincerity, sym-

pathy, emotion, eloquence, a just sense of proportion, and a delicate appreciation of musical sound, are some of the chief elements of genius; but all are useless without that boundless energy of mind, that self-denying tenacity of purpose, which exercises and cultivates them and transmutes capacity into imperishable work. A few writers like Rousseau may learn more from men than from books, more by meditating on their own experiences than by meditating on the experiences of others; but to produce work that will quicken the intellect, stir the emotions, and fire the imagination, they must not only think truly, feel deeply, and imagine nobly, they must 'toil terribly.'

A good measure of genius has been thus described by La Bruyère: 'Whenever,' he says, 'the perusal of a book elevates your mind and inspires you with noble and courageous sentiments, do not seek for any other measure to judge the work: that work is good and written by the hand of a master.'

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

By JOHN BUCHAN, Author of *John Burnet of Barns*, *Greenmantle*, &c.

CHAPTER III.—*continued.*

THE recipient of the ginger-beer was still sitting by the shafts of his cart. He seemed to be lunching, for with a gully-knife he was carving attentively a hunk of cheese and a loaf-end. As he looked up from his task, Leithen saw a child of perhaps twelve summers with a singularly alert and impudent eye, a much-freckled face, and a thatch of tow-coloured hair bleached almost white by the sun. His feet were bare, his trousers were those of a grown man, tucked up at the knees and hitched up almost under his armpits, and for a shirt he appeared to have a much-torn jersey. Weather had tanned his whole appearance into the blend of grays and browns which one sees on a hillside boulder. The boy nodded gravely to Leithen, and continued to munch.

Below the wood lay the quarter-mile where the Larrig wound sluggishly through a bog before precipitating itself into the chasm above the bridge of Larrig. Leithen left his bicycle by the roadside and crossed the waste of hag and tussocks to the water's edge. It looked a thankless place for the angler. The clear streams of the Larrig seemed to have taken on the colour of their banks, and to drowse dark and deep and sullen in one gigantic peat-hole. In spite of the rain of yesterday there was little current. The place looked oily, stagnant, and unfishable—a tract through which salmon, after mounting the fall, would hurry to the bright pools above.

Leithen sat down in a clump of heather and lit his pipe. Something might be done with a

worm after a spate, he considered, but any other lure was out of the question. The place had its merits for every purpose but taking salmon. It was a part of the Strathlarrig water outside the park pale, and it was so hopeless that it was not likely to be carefully patrolled. The high-road, it was true, ran near, but it was little frequented. If only. . . . He suddenly sat up, and gazed intently at a ripple on the dead surface. Surely that was a fish on the move. . . . He kept his eyes on the river, until he saw something else which made him rub them and fall into deep reflection. . . . He was roused by a voice at his shoulder.

'What for will they no' let me come up to Crask ony mair?' the voice demanded in a sort of tinkler's whine.

Leithen turned and found the boy of the ginger beer. 'Hullo! You oughtn't to do that, my son. You'll give people heart disease. What was it you asked?'

'What . . . for . . . will . . . they . . . no' . . . let . . . me come . . . up to Crask . . . ony mair?'

'I'm sure I don't know. What's Crask?'

'Ye ken it fine. It's the big hoose up the hill. I seen you come down frae it yoursel' this mornin'.'

Leithen was tempted to deny this allegation and assert the rôle of a tourist, but something in the extreme intelligence of the boy's face suggested that such a course might be dangerous. Instead, he said, 'Tell me your name, and what's your business at Crask?'

'My name's Benjamin Bogle, but I get Fish Benjie frae most folk. I've sell't haddies and flukes to Crask these twa months. But this mornin' I was tell't no' to come back, and when I speired what way, the auld wife shut the door on me.'

A recollection of Sir Archie's order the night before returned to Leithen's mind, and with it a great sense of insecurity. This argus-eyed child, hot with a grievance, had seen him descend from Crask, and was therefore in a position to give away the whole show. What chance was there for secrecy with this malevolent scout hanging around? 'Where do you live, Benjie?' he asked.

'I bide in my cairt. My father's in jyle, and my mother's lyin' badly in Muirtown. I sell fish to a' the gentry.'

'And you want to know why you can't sell them at Crask?'

'Ay, I wad like to ken that. The auld wife used to be a kind body and gie me jeely pieces. What's turned her into a draygon?'

Leithen was accustomed in the duties of his profession to quick decisions on tactics, and now he took one which was destined to be momentous. 'Benjie,' he said solemnly, 'there's a lot of things in the world that I don't understand, and it stands to reason that there must be more that you don't. I'm in a position in which I badly want somebody to help me. I like the look of you. You look a trusty fellow and a keen one. Is all your time taken up selling haddies?'

'Deed no'. Just twa hours in the mornin', and twa hours at nicht when I gang down to the cobbles at Inverlarrig. I've a heap o' time on my hands.'

'Good. I think I can promise that you can resume your trade at Crask. But first I want you to do a job for me. There's a bicycle lying by the roadside. Bring it up to Crask this evening between six and seven. Have you a watch?'

'No, but I can tell the time braw and siccar.'

'Go to the stables and wait for me there. I want to have a talk with you.' Leithen produced half-a-crown, on which the grubby paw of Fish Benjie instantly closed. 'And look here, Benjie—you haven't seen me here, or anybody like me; above all, you didn't see me come down from Crask this morning. If anybody asks you questions, you only saw a man on a bicycle on the road to Inverlarrig.'

The boy nodded; his solemn face flickered for a second with a goblin smile.

'Well, that's a bargain.' Leithen got up from his couch and turned down the river, making for the bridge of Larrig, where the highway crossed. He looked back once, and saw Fish Benjie wheeling the bicycle into the undergrowth of the wood. He was in two minds as to whether he had done wisely in placing himself in the hands of a small raga-

muffin who, for all he knew, might be hand-in-glove with the Strathlarrig keepers. But the recollection of Benjie's face reassured him. He did not look like a boy who would be the pet of any constituted authority; he had the air rather of the nomad against whom the orderly world waged war. There had been an impish honesty in his face, and Leithen, who had a weakness for disreputable urchins, felt that he had taken the right course. Besides, the young sleuth-hound had got on his trail, and there had been nothing for it but to make him an ally.

He crossed the bridge, avoided the Crask road, and struck uphill by a track which followed the ravine of a burn. As he walked his mind went back to a stretch on a Canadian river, a stretch of still, unruffled water warmed all day by a July sun. It had been as full as it could hold of salmon, but no artifice of his could stir them. Thither in the late afternoon had come an aged man from Boston, who fished with a light trout-rod and cast an artful line, and placed a curious little dry fly several feet above a fish's snout. Then, by certain strange manœuvres, he had drawn the fly under water. Leithen had looked on and marvelled while before sunset that ancient man hooked and landed seven good fish. . . . Somehow that bit of shining, sunflecked Canadian river reminded him of the unpromising stretch of the Larrig he had just been reconnoitring.

At a turn of the road he came upon his host, tramping homewards in the company of a most unprepossessing hound. I pause for an instant to introduce Mackenzie. He was a mongrel collie of the old Highland stock known as 'beardies,' and his touzled head, not unlike an extra-shaggy Dandie Dinmont's, was set upon a body of an immense length, girth, and muscle. His manners were atrocious to all except his master, and local report accused him of every canine vice except worrying sheep. He had been christened the 'Bluidy Mackenzie,' after a noted persecutor of the godly, by some one whose knowledge of history was greater than Sir Archie's, for the latter never understood the allusion. The name, however, remained his official one; commonly he was addressed as Mackenzie, but in moments of expansion he was referred to by his master as Old Bloody.

The said master seemed to be in a strange mood. He was dripping wet, having apparently fallen into the river, but his spirits soared, and he kept on smiling in a light-headed way. He scarcely listened to Leithen, who told him of his compact with Fish Benjie. 'I daresay it will be all right,' he observed idiotically. 'Is your idea to pass off one of his haddies as a young salmon on the guileless Bandicott?'

For an explanation of Sir Archie's conduct the chronicler must retrace his steps.

After Leithen's departure it had seemed good to him to take the air, so, summoning Mackenzie

from a dark lair in the yard, he made his way to the river—the beat below the bridge and beyond the high-road, which was on Crask ground. There it was a broad, brawling water, boulder-strewn and shallow, which an active man could cross dry-shod by natural stepping-stones. Sir Archie sat for a time on the near shore listening to the sand-pipers—birds which were his special favourites—and watching the whinchats on the hillside and the flashing white breasts of the water-ousels. Mackenzie lay beside him, an uneasy sphinx, tormented by a distant subtle odour of badger.

Presently Sir Archie arose and stepped out on a half-submerged boulder. He was getting very proud of the way he had learned to manage his game leg, and it occurred to him that here was a chance of testing his balance. If he could hop across on the stones to the other side he might regard himself as an able-bodied man. Balancing himself with his stick, as a rope-dancer uses his pole, he in due course reached the middle of the current. After that it was more difficult, for the stones were smaller and the stream more rapid, but with an occasional splash and flounder he landed safely, to be saluted with a shower of spray from Mackenzie, who had taken the deep-water route. 'Not so bad that, for a crock,' he told himself, as he lay full length in the sun watching the faint line of the Haripol hills over-topping the ridge of Crask.

Half-an-hour was spent in idleness, till the dawnings of hunger warned him to return. The crossing as seen from this side looked more formidable, for the first stones could be reached only by jumping a fairly broad stretch of current. Yet the jump was achieved, and with renewed confidence Sir Archie essayed the more solid boulders. All would have gone well had not he taken his eyes from the stones and observed, on the bank beyond, a girl's figure. She had been walking by the stream and had stopped to stare at the portent of his performance. Now, Sir Archie was aware that his style of jumping was not graceful, and he was discomposed by this sudden gallery. Nevertheless, the thing was so easy that he could scarcely have failed had it not been for the faithful Mackenzie. That animal had resolved to follow his master's footsteps, and was jumping steadily behind him. But, three boulders from the shore, they jumped simultaneously, and there was not standing-room for both. Sir Archie, already nervous, slipped, recovered himself, slipped again, and then, accompanied by Mackenzie, subsided noisily into three feet of water.

He waded ashore, to find himself faced by a girl in whose face concern struggled with amusement. He lifted a dripping hat, and grinned. 'Silly exhibition, wasn't it? All the fault of Mackenzie! Idiotic brute of a dog, not to remember my game leg!'

'You're horribly wet,' the girl said, 'but it

was sporting of you to try that crossing. What about dry clothes?'

'Oh, no trouble about that. I've only to get up to Crask.'

'You're Sir Archibald Roylance, aren't you? I'm Janet Raden. I've been with papa to call on you, but you're never at home.'

Sir Archie, having now got the water out of his eyes, was able to regard his interlocutor. He saw a slight girl with what seemed to him astonishingly bright hair, and very blue and candid eyes.

She appeared to be anxious about his dry clothes, for she led the way up the bank at a great pace, while he limped behind her. Suddenly she noticed the limp. 'Oh, please forgive me. I forgot about your leg. You had another smash, hadn't you, besides the one in the War—steeplechasing, wasn't it?'

'Yes, but it didn't signify. I'm all right again, and get about anywhere, but I'm a bit slow on the wing, you know.'

'You're keen about horses?'

'Love 'em.'

'So do I. Agatha—that's my sister—doesn't care a bit about them. She would like to live all the year at Glenraden, but—I'm ashamed to say it—I would rather have a foggy November in Warwickshire than August in Scotland. I simply dream of hunting.'

The ardent eyes and the young grace of the girl seemed marvellous things to Sir Archie. 'I expect you go uncommon well,' he murmured.

'No, only moderate. I only get scratch mounts. You see, I stay with my Aunt Barbara, and she's too old to hunt, and has nothing in her stables but camels. But this year——' She broke off as she caught sight of the pools forming round Sir Archie's boots. 'I mustn't keep you here talking. You be off home at once.'

'Don't worry about me. I'm wet for days on end when I'm watchin' birds in the spring. You were sayin' about this year?'

Her answer was a surprising question. 'Do you know anybody called John Macnab?'

Sir Archibald Roylance was a resourceful mountebank, and did not hesitate. 'Yes. The distiller, you mean? Dhuinewassel Whisky? I've seen his advertisements—"They drink Dhuinewassel, in cottage and castle." That chap?'

'No, no, somebody quite different. Listen, please, if you're not too wet, for I want you to help me. Papa has had the most extraordinary letter from somebody called John Macnab, saying he means to kill a stag in our forest between certain dates, and daring us to prevent him. He is going to hand over the beast to us if he gets it, and pay fifty pounds, but if he fails he is to pay a hundred pounds. Did you ever hear of such a thing?'

'Some infernal swindler,' said Archie darkly.

'No. He can't be. You see, the fifty pounds arrived this morning.'

'God bless my soul!'

'Yes. In Bank of England notes, posted from London. Papa at first wanted to tell him to go to—well, where papa tells people he doesn't like to go. But I thought the offer so sporting that I persuaded him to take up the challenge. Indeed, I wrote the reply myself. Mr Macnab said that the money was to go to a charity, so Agatha is having the fifty pounds for her native weaving and dyeing—she's frightfully keen about that. But, if we win the other fifty pounds, papa says the best charity he can think of is to prevent me from breaking my neck on hirelings, and I'm to have it to buy a hunter. So I'm very anxious to find out about Mr John Macnab.'

'Probably some rich Colonial who hasn't learned manners.'

'I don't think so. His manners are very good, to judge by his letter. I think he is a gentleman, but, perhaps, a little mad. We simply *must* beat him, for I've got to have that fifty pounds. And—and I want you to help me.'

'Oh well, you know—I mean to say—I'm not much of a fellow—'

'You're very clever, and you've done all kinds of things. I feel that if you advised us we should win easily, for I'm sure you had far harder jobs in the War.'

To have a pretty young woman lauding his abilities and appealing with shining eyes for his aid was a new experience in Sir Archie's life. It was so delectable an experience that he almost forgot its awful complications. When he remembered them he flushed and stammered. 'Really, I'd love to, but I shouldn't be any earthly good. I'm an old crock, you see. . . . But you needn't worry—your Glenraden gillies will make short work of this bandit. . . . By Jove, I hope you get your hunter, Miss Raden. You've got to have it somehow. Tell you what, if I've any bright idea I'll let you know.'

'Thank you so much. And may I consult you if I'm in difficulties?'

'Yes, of course. . . . I mean to say, no. . . . Hang it, I don't know, for I don't like interfering with your father's challenge.'

'That means you will. Now, you mustn't wait another moment. Good-bye. Will you come over to lunch at Glenraden?' Then she broke off and stared at him. 'I forgot. Haven't you smallpox?'

'What! Smallpox? Oh, I see! Has old Mother Claybody been putting that about?'

'She came to tea yesterday, twittering with terror, and warned us all not to go within a mile of Crask.'

Sir Archie laughed somewhat hollowly. 'I had a bad toothache and my head tied up, and I daresay I said something silly, but I never thought she would take it for gospel. You see

for yourself that I've nothing the matter with me.'

'You'll soon have pneumonia the matter with you, unless you hurry home. Good-bye. We'll expect you to lunch the day after to-morrow.' And with a wave of her hand she was gone.

The extraordinary fact about Sir Archie was that he was not depressed by the new tangle which encumbered him; on the contrary, he was in the best of spirits. He hobbled gaily up the by-road to Crask, listened to Leithen, when he met him, with less than half an ear, and was happy with his own thoughts. I am at a loss to know how to describe the first shattering impact of youth and beauty on a susceptible mind. The old plan was to borrow the language of the world's poetry, the new seems to be to have recourse to the difficult jargon of psychologists and physicians; but neither, I fear, would suit Sir Archie's case. He did not think of nymphs and goddesses or of linnets in spring; still less did he plunge into the depths of a subconscious self which he was not aware of possessing. The unromantic epithet which rose to his lips was 'jolly.' This was for certain the jolliest girl he had ever met—regular young sportswoman, and amazingly good-lookin', and he was dashed if she wouldn't get her hunter.

For a delirious ten minutes, which carried him to the edge of the Crask lawn, he pictured his resourcefulness placed at her service, her triumphant success, and her bright-eyed gratitude. Then he suddenly remembered that alliance with Miss Janet Raden was treachery to his three guests. The aid she had asked for could be given only at the expense of John Macnab.

Sir Archie was in the miserable position of having a leg in both camps, of having unhappily received the confidences of both sides, and, whatever he did, he must make a mess of it. He could not desert his friends, so he must fail the lady; wherefore there could be no luncheon for him the day after to-morrow, since another five minutes' talk with her would entangle him beyond hope. There was nothing for it but to have a return of small-pox. He groaned aloud. 'A twinge of that beastly toothache!' he explained in reply to his companion's inquiry.

(Continued on page 83.)

TO-MORROW.

TIME brings us countless gifts,
But *one* he has withheld;
One who each morning lifts
Her tent, as though compelled
To shun the grasp of mortal hands.
Oh, longed-for, loved To-morrows!
Each poor heart understands
Vain yearning, chief of sorrows!

Shall we not capture her,
This fair maid, fleeing ever?
In vain our eager pulses stir—
Old Time says sternly, 'Never!'

MRS M. BUCHANAN.

MALTA. THE KEY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.

By ALBERT G. MACKINNON,

Author of *Malta, the Nurse of the Mediterranean; Hospital Jock, &c.*

I.

SIZE is not essential to a key. In fact the smaller it is the better. Its usefulness depends on its fitting the lock. Malta possesses to perfection the quality of smallness. Twenty miles by eight holds together a compact little island, which at short notice can be turned into a solid fortress, and some of the greatest men and races have realised that it guarded the western door of Europe.

Napoleon and Nelson differed on this. The former recognised it as a key, and greedily seized it. His eyes were on Egypt, and his ambition was to make the Mediterranean a French lake. Nelson felt that Britain's safety lay in the Empire of the Sea, and he shifted the pivot point to the Atlantic. Later he changed his view of Malta, and called it 'the strongest place in Europe.'

In these days circumstances have arisen which make the Mediterranean once more a bigger strategic centre than the larger ocean, and Malta comes again under focus, for the flag that flies over this island stretches from Gibraltar to Port Said.

What gives Malta this pre-eminence amongst all its sister islands? Geography and harbours. It is in the very centre of the Mediterranean. It is the last visible vestige of that belt of land which once joined Europe to Africa, and divided the Mediterranean into two seas. On it have been dug up the fossilised skeletons of animals which could only have lived on the big continents, and these bones trace for us to-day a sketch of ancient geography.

Its ruins prove that it was a key position in prehistoric times. The Gigantia, Hagiar Kim, Mnajdra, and the other temples which are being unearthed, take us back to the beginning of things, and show us Malta as the 'Holy Island' of southern Europe. Possibly these structures began as tombs where the spirits of the dead were honoured. Then they developed into centres of star worship, and with the arrival of the Phœnicians were changed into Baal temples. Certain it is that many secrets of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages lie buried on this island awaiting the spade of the excavator.

II.

Of the Mediterranean race which preceded the Phœnicians we catch only an imperfect shadow. Of all their doings, their religion, petrified into those stone monuments, alone remains to testify to their existence. To those devotees of a rude faith Malta was sacred ground.

The Phœnicians were perhaps the first to discover Malta as a key to the West. These

adventurers of the Bronze Age had, with the spirit of a Columbus, pushed their galleys ever farther westwards until they discovered the tin of Cornwall, which made bronze implements possible. On the track of their ships lay this little island with its safe harbours. No wonder they grasped its importance, and bequeathed to it as the reward of their occupancy the greatest gift one nation can give another—a language. Where they got it is largely hid in mystery; possibly it is closely allied to ancient Syriac. A recent book proves its resemblance to Persian, and gives several hundred words which are identical in both languages. Two things mark the antiquity of the Maltese language. The first is the fact that it has changed so little. This is the more extraordinary when one remembers how many nations with different tongues held Malta under their sway. When we think how English has changed from the days of Chaucer, and recall the fact that Maltese is the same as it was 3000 years ago, we are amazed at this living link with the past. Of course it has acquired foreign words, but these form a surprisingly small fraction of its speech.

The second fact that anchors, as it were, Maltese to its moorings, is that the roots of its words are the three guiding letters which never change. This is the hall-mark of the East.

Carthage was the next great nation to see that Malta was the key to the West, and from about 550 B.C. to 216 B.C. it used this island as a base for its European expansion. Of course the Carthagians were in a fashion brothers to the Maltese. They may not, therefore, have come by conquest but by mutual consent, for Malta had always to pay this penalty for its smallness, that it could not stand alone. With the fall of the great cities of Phœnicia it had to lean on another prop, and Carthage was the natural one.

Joshua did more for the world than he thought when he knocked down the walls of Jericho and disturbed the old Canaanites in their nest. They had to push out and forage elsewhere, and they did that to some purpose when their colony became a greater power than even the motherland. A big brother may sometimes be a bit of a bully, but the youngster will take from him what he would not tolerate from another. Malta recalls the glory of Carthage as if she shared in it, and the self-government of those days has formed a plank in the recent argument for Home Rule. Still, if history be read aright, the Maltese were not unhappy when the consul, Titus Sempronius, freed them from the bullying of their big brother. He had simply a walk-over. It looked as if Malta had had

enough of relatives, and preferred strangers. For 600 years it had a taste of Roman imperialism, and viewed the eagle from between its talons. Cicero throws Malta into the limelight in his attack on Verres, the absent governor, whose hands, however, were longer than his feet and stretched to the coffers of Malta, while his feet remained on the shore of Sicily. Cicero's laugh breaks through his words when he says: 'I do not ask now whence you got those 400 jars of honey, or such quantities of Maltese cloth, or fifty cushions for sofas, but what could you want with so many Maltese garments? as if you were going to dress all your friends' wives!' Poor Verres, he had been caught in the act of looting by a clever critic and a friend of the Maltese, for Cicero liked Malta, and pictured it as a good place to grow old in—only he did not get the chance. Cicero goes up in my estimation for having discovered what Englishmen have yet failed to do, that Malta as a health resort is hard to beat. It would at least have been a healthier spot for him than Rome. Had Cicero lived up to his words and sought a retreat beneath the shades of the Boschetto gardens, perhaps in that romantic grotto whose age is as much a puzzle as that of the Sphinx, the literature of the world would have been enriched and the burden of the modern school-boy augmented.

III.

Malta changed masters again, and for the worse, when Theodosius, the surviving son of Constantine, divided the Roman Empire finally into two parts, one for each of his sons, and Malta was brought under Byzantine rule. The strange thing about Malta is that though its roots are in the East its branches stretch towards the West. Asia, the continent of its birth, like a cruel mother, was the source of its greatest dangers, while Europe, though alien in race and tongue, became its benefactress.

Five hundred years is a good slice of the world's history, and too big a bit of Byzantine dominance for Malta to digest. She was sick of it long before relief came. There was no Home Rule in those days; therefore, when the Arabs, getting heady with success, realised that Malta must be their stepping-stone to European empire, they found it under their feet. Though Malta was Christian it welcomed its Moslem cousin, and, according to most accounts, the Arab proved a gentleman, at least of those times.

When the Normans' turn came for World-Power, Malta was quite ready to receive its new master in Count Roger, whose bloodless and brilliant entry in to the island has formed the subject of many a brush; though the kneeling crowd of suppliants must not be mistaken for Maltese. They were really the Greek slaves of the Arab rulers, who solicited liberty not in vain.

The blows that went to the shaping of present-

day Malta were many and hard, and had the human material been brittle, the Maltese race would have been broken up ages ago. But it clung with tenacity to three things—its island, its language, and its church.

The Knights of St John of Jerusalem were the masters that cast the greatest glamour of romance over this island, which they made their home from 1530 to 1798. In their day it indeed became the key of the Mediterranean, and on its bastions the power of Turkey broke in vain. All Europe pealed its bells in frantic joy over the victory. But it was a case, I fear, of 'Me and Betty killed the bear.' The Christian nations whose safety trembled in the balance were content to see the heroic little island bleed white in their defence. I know the 'Knights' deserve the glory, those wounded warriors who with drawn swords sat in chairs in the breach at St Elmo and died rather than give way. In that glamour the heroism and skill of the native are apt to be overlooked. Yet let me relate just one little incident to show how the Maltese saved the day. And to see them plunging about like porpoises in the harbour one does not wonder at their success.

The Turk, after Fort St Elmo was captured, prepared a great assault on the spur of St Michael. For this purpose he transported by land eighty galleys from the Marsamuscetto over the heights of Sceberras to the Grand Harbour. To counter this De Vallette selected a band of Maltese swimmers, who underneath the water built a stockade right across that part of the inlet. When at last the Turkish commander had with great difficulty launched his ships in the opposite harbour he was enraged to find that all his labour had been in vain, that his boats were prisoners behind a stockade they could not pass. At once he gave orders to all who could swim to go out and cut down this barrier. De Valette saw their move and held in hand a body of picked Maltese swimmers. As soon as the Moslems had got well out from the shore he unleashed this force. With daggers between their teeth they plunged into the waves. The more clumsy Moslems had no chance; the agile Maltese dived below his victim and struck him the fatal blow from underneath. The harbour was soon red with Moslem blood, and hardly one of the Turks was allowed to reach the shore. This daring deed certainly saved Malta, and for that matter Europe itself. Yet how little gratitude Christendom has shown to the swimmers of Malta!

IV.

Napoleon, as we have already said, saw that Malta was the key position of the East, and spared no pains to capture it and hold it for two years, until the British, in conjunction with the Maltese, compelled the French to surrender in 1800.

The Maltese hailed the advent of the British with joy, and gave vent to furious indignation when Britain, reluctant to take on more responsibilities, suggested restoring the island to the Knights of St John. At that time the Mediterranean was not the sea route to the East, and the importance of a naval base on that highway was not sufficiently realised. Sir Alexander Ball, R.N., the first British Governor, however, soon awoke to the importance of the island. The very fact that Britain lay outside the Mediterranean became the secret of Malta's prosperity. All the great Powers with interests in the Mediterranean were in possession of good bases for their fleet on that sea. France had Toulon; Italy, Spezia and Naples; Austria, Pola and Sebenico; Spain, Cartagena; Britain had none. Hence millions of money began to flow into this little island as gradually its dock-yard grew. What Britain has done for Malta can be seen from the study of cold figures.

In 1804, when Captain Otway, R.N., arrived in Malta and began to push things on, he

demanding the services of 170 men for the dock-yard, while to-day over 10,000 are employed. Then the total weekly pay amounted to £95, now it reaches £14,000. No wonder the other day ten thousand Maltese assembled to express their loyalty to the British crown, and to disown their Premier for his pro-Italian speeches. The bread is buttered too thickly by our navy!

As a stepping-off ground for our troops in time of emergency, and as 'The Nurse of the Mediterranean' in days of war, Malta has played its part in the British Empire; and as once more the Mediterranean supersedes the Atlantic as the strategic centre of the seas, it resumes its important rôle as one of the principal keys of empire.

But the great charm of this picturesque island, which Lord Granville called, the other day, the most beautiful place he had seen, is the sapphire of the waves which wash its shores. It is the Mecca of swimmers; for surely nowhere else does the sea stretch out such soft, warm, glistening arms to clasp the diver from its rocks.

THE WILL OF ALA ABDUL

By RAYMOND COULSON, Author of *The Towers of Yaghistan*.

I.

DURRANT, toiling in the baked air of a Peshawar June, received this letter:

'DURRANT,—If you can take your leave in Kashmir, will you meet me by the Black Pavilion in the Shalimar Bagh of my good ancestor Jehangir in the first week of September? I cannot say precisely when I shall get through, but if Allah wills I shall be there in the first week of September.

'I expect I shall be a sick man, Durrant, when I arrive—if I arrive. I pray that I may see you before I go to the peace of God.—Your friend,
ALA ABDUL MOHAMMED KHAN.'

Durrant felt the paper, smelt it, examined the postmarks. It was a shiny gray paper, perfumed faintly with the smell of Central-Asian travel—the smell of sheepskins and wood-smoke and burning dung. The letter was dated from Samarkand, but had been posted in Constantinople. If Ala Abdul was coming through from Samarkand to Kashmir, he would travel by the trade route across the Karakoram and the Zoji-La Pass. Durrant pondered. Ala Abdul would have given the letter to a friend going through to Europe to post in the first safe place. It had travelled all across the chaos of Russian Turkestan, been posted in Constantinople, come south again through the Red Sea, and now reached him here on the Frontier of India. A journey like the journeys of Ala Abdul. He must be pretty bad, pretty sure of

death, to write like that—'a sick man, when I arrive—if I arrive.' That Karakoram route, with its eighteen-thousand-foot pass, was a queer journey for a sick man. The sort of thing Ala Abdul would do in order that he might meet his friend, and die in the most beautiful place in the world.

By the same mail was a letter from his cousin Ethel Durrant, dated from Stokehayes. Ethel nearly always was at Stokehayes. He never saw the name on a postmark without a thrill of longing for that red house of three-hundred-year-old brick, set with its chestnuts and beeches among the home meadows, environed with the crooning of doves and indifferent to the march of time.

Ethel wrote:

'DEAR JACKO,—I wish I could send you a breath of Stokehayes air. Every Spring it seems more beautiful. I have been trying to write it for you, but found I couldn't, so I tore it all up, and this week's letter will be short if I am to catch the mail.

'We had Sir Philip Richardson here for the week-end. He talked about you. He says that with the Intelligence work you've done and are able to do, it's absolute nonsense your mugging along as a regimental officer. He was talking about your journey last year after Haji Sufdur Ali and the Friends of the Morning. Intelligence thinks great shakes of you. Why don't you drop the regiment and go bang for the Indian Political side?

'By the way, do you ever hear anything of poor Ala Abdul? I often wonder where he can be wandering. I have a feeling that he is not well, and is in great distress.—Yours, ETHEL'

Durrant sat for a long time with the letter in his hand. 'Poor Ala Abdul'—it was the sort of phrase she might have used unconsciously had she known that Ala Abdul loved her. But he would never have said anything of that to her, any more than he would have said anything of it to Durrant. Durrant had guessed it long ago, though he was not usually subtle in these matters. Assuredly she must know. She was so wise, that girl, the head of his family, dreaming there among the portraits of his ancestors and hers, who had shed their blood for Stokehayes all up and down the world, and been cast away and buried in most of its far ends. She knew so much, that serene, tall cousin of his. She was so wise.

He got up, shook himself vigorously, and called the bearer to bring his bath. It did not do any good for him to be dreaming about Ethel. It did not do any good. So often, so often he had to tell himself that. She was the owner of Stokehayes and the head of the family, of which he was but a little cadet.

II.

Durrant talked to his colonel that night, and put in his leave application next morning. As to this there was no difficulty. Durrant had a record and a character worth much gold, not merely with divisional generals, but even with the exalted of Simla, and his confidential *dossier* bore notes and comments that some would have given their souls for. So there was no difficulty about his leave.

There are several ways into Kashmir, but, happily, all are long, and none is a railway. You may go by way of Abbottabad, where the Gurkha regiments have their home among roses, or through Poonch with its many toilsome hills and ravines, or by way of Rawalpindi. The Pindi route was most convenient for Durrant. There he left the train and took the two-hundred-mile road that winds through great hills, with sheer cliffs rising on the one hand, and on the other sheer precipices falling five hundred feet to the churned and tortured water of Jhelum River. The road goes thus to the gorge that is the narrow gate of the valley of Kashmir, and there the country the gods made in a moment when they forgot that man is cursed opens on each hand, and the road runs under the snows, across the green levels of the valley floor to Srinagar, set among its many waterways.

At Srinagar Durrant hired a large doonga-houseboat. Ala Abdul would need repose. He hired many cushions, and soft silken hangings of Kashmir embroidery. Ala Abdul loved all beautiful things. Durrant had arrived on 30th

August. On the afternoon of the next day he set out, with the servants' living-boat and the little light paddle-boat trailing behind, through the water-gate that leads by way of orchards and floating gardens, and many flowered meadows, to the Dal Lake and the Shalimar Bagh. At sunset they were passing under the *Takht-I-Sulaiman*—the Throne of Solomon—that towers a thousand feet above the lake and drops through pine trees, and grass, and sheer rock to the water.

That night, camped among willow trees where the lapping of the water and the rustle of the leaves were the only sounds, and where presently the moon came over the great mass of Mahadeo, and shone on the snows of Haramoukh, and turned the lake to silver, Durrant sat all alone in the front of his houseboat, wondering where his friend could then be.

At sunrise they moved off again, the boatman paddling almost silently across the lake, that was covered with the great Kashmir lotuses. Durrant lay in his couch watching the pink lotus flowers drift by, and the dragon-flies playing among them, and here and there the spearers of fish already at work in their little boats. At noon they reached the Shalimar, that old Moghul garden set on its terrace above the lake, on the most beautiful site in the world, and Durrant's servants spread his meal on the grass beside the pavilion of black marble, and there he waited.

III.

He waited for a week in the Shalimar. The days passed. They did not matter. He had still another five weeks' leave. Sooner or later, he knew, Ala Abdul would come, if he was still upon this earth. So he waited and dreamed in the garden that the Great Moghul, the Emperor Jehangir, made three hundred years ago for dreaming in. While Durrant's ancestors were building Stokehayes, Ala Abdul's ancestor Jehangir was making the Shalimar.

On the seventh day, as he sat writing home to Stokehayes, Durrant heard a shuffling of feet on the path, and looking up, saw his friend approaching, supported on the arm and shoulder of a tall Kashmiri. Below were coolies and a litter, from which evidently he had just stepped. Gravely, in sonorous Persian, the friends saluted each other. The descendant of Jehangir, the modern, Westernised, Oxford-educated, sceptical, metaphysical son of Asiatic princes, was a tall, frail man. The long Persian travelling-robcs he wore increased his tallness and aspect of fragility. The big turban seemed to weigh on his head. His face, darkened with only the faintest creamy tint of brown, had all the aristocratic beauty of the high-caste Northern Mohammedan—the fine arched nose with the sensitive curve to the nostril, the high cheek-bones and large dark eyes under level brows. He was a cousin to the Amir of Afghanistan,

but, his family having once taken the wrong side in the sanguinary politics of that country, had had to leave it—a matter which had never troubled him much, for he was related to half Persia, and had large estates there.

Behind Ala Abdul came a little train of men, one carrying a large, rolled rug, one cushions, one a big hubble-bubble pipe with its reservoir of rose-water and long flexible stem. Ala Abdul would not sit down, but stood, supported by his Kashmiri. 'Wait, Durrant,' he said, smiling faintly; 'we will rest like lords.'

The man with the rug was cutting away its wrappings. With a jerk he unrolled it to the sunshine, and Durrant gasped at the splendour of crimson and blue spread there under the trees. Never before had he seen such a rug. It was a Bokhara rug, a variant of the familiar pattern new to him, executed with a staggering beauty of design, colour, and fineness.

'It was made in Samarkand for Jehangir,' said Ala Abdul. 'Men went blind in making it, and it was long in the making; and by the time it was finished Jehangir was shut away and his grandson ruled. So the rug remained in Samarkand, and there it stayed till I brought it away. I brought it for Ethel, Durrant.'

IV.

The cushions were piled, the hubble-bubble pipe was arranged beside them, and when all was ready they seated themselves.

'You are ill?' said Durrant.

'I am dying, Durrant.' He spoke indifferently. 'I shall carry this body for a week—perhaps two. It does not matter. I am already free.' His cheeks, indeed, were hollowed. In his weary eyes there was a glow like charcoal that has burned all night. From time to time he coughed, and as he placed his hand across his mouth, Durrant saw that it was wasted and almost transparent. 'I am nearly free now,' he said. 'There is only one more duty to do, and I shall be free.' He pulled at the pipe, then reclined and watched the perfumed smoke drift away under the lilac trees. 'I have to lay a task upon you, Durrant. Perhaps I may be sending you to your death. Who knows? The shuttle of fate has woven the pattern so. The task comes naturally to you, and your duty will make you go.'

'Can't shirk a job,' said Durrant curtly. 'What is it?'

'Only one more little move in this long game your people play. You must go up into Chinese Turkestan. There is a man in Yarkand to whom you must speak a word.'

Durrant glanced at him swiftly. He knew that the branch of Intelligence for which he worked had its own man in Yarkand—its very special man, known as G.21 on the files that are locked away in steel safes.

Ala Abdul saw the glance and again smiled

faintly. 'Yes, Durrant, I also have been in Yarkand,' he said. 'I saw G.21 lying out on a dunghheap, with his throat cut, and dogs worrying his flesh.'

'Fawcett gone!' Durrant stared at the fountains spraying their white against the shadowed marble of the pavilion. 'But how did you—how much do you know, Ala Abdul?'

'Listen, Durrant. When I left England for the last time, when I came away from Stoke-hayes, I laid this journey upon myself. I have seen much, Durrant, in the Caucasus and Persia and Turkestan. I have been to Moscow and seen Dzerjinsky. That man is like the Devil walking loose on the earth. I have been in the torture-chambers of the Black Sea *Cheka*. Aie, they did some queer things with me there.' He laughed contemptuously, and shook back the sleeve from his wrist, so that Durrant saw a great scar where the skin had been flayed away. 'They began on me the torture of the Gloves, and I began to talk. I told them much, all of it perfectly correct, so that they could check it, but poisoned with just the one drop of lying that put the whole thing wrong. They are not very subtle, those Northern Tartars. I had my lie already thought out for them before they began. I have talked much with their big men, Durrant. There are those, as you know, who think they are going to move all Turkestan down upon you, and raise all India behind your defensive line. And that must not be, Durrant. The civilisation of the Western peoples must not crash, because in our age it is among them that the living spirit moves. In a thousand places you peoples of the West are putting in your rivets to hold the world stable, and the game shifts and shifts, and still you work, you little indomitable ants. And now, here comes the task for you, a word to be spoken in the ear of a man in Yarkand, just one more little rivet to be placed.'

'Tell me about it,' said Durrant. 'Tell me how you come to be in the game. I did not know that, Ala Abdul.'

'I am not in it. Not officially at all. But I know much. I know of your journey last year, as a Punjabi fakir, after Haji Sufdur Ali and the Friends of the Morning.' Ala Abdul stopped to cough, and his whole body became racked with an anguish of coughing. When it was over he lay panting, exhausted, his forehead beaded with sweat. 'Aie, aie,' he gasped, 'the fogs and cold, wet airs of your home-country began it, Durrant, and the cellars of the Black Sea *Cheka* have finished it. I am frail, frail. I am too high bred. I am a terminal product, Durrant.'

V.

Durrant repacked the cushions, and presently Ala Abdul lay again at ease. 'Now, listen,' he said. 'You know—you know how it is with me—about Ethel?'

'Yes,' said Durrant. He shrank from the thought that he was going to discuss this. Ala Abdul was his friend. Durrant could talk to him with bared heart and mind unreserved about any subject on earth—except just this one subject. Always he had cursed the day when his friend had met Ethel, and been dragged from his serenity by an unconquerable and hopeless desire.

But Ala Abdul was as sensitive as a reed balanced in the wind. 'All right,' he said. 'I know, Durrant, I know. You do not think of us as black men, as *hubshis*, as negroes. But still there is the line of race. I know, I always knew it was impossible.' Again he smiled his remote and ironic smile, in which was already the calm of death. 'She the daughter of a great house. Impossible! And I also, Durrant, am the son of a great house. Impossible! I never said anything to Ethel, I never would have said anything; and had I spoken or not spoken, there would have been no hope. Always I knew that. She has a great heart, and was willing to be my friend—no more. But now, Durrant, when I came away from Stokehayes for the last time, I tried to think of some honourable gift that I might send her that would also be hard for me to get; and I thought of the rug of my ancestor Jehangir. We have always known it was there in Samarkand, in the family of the man who made it for us, and there has never been another rug made like it. And I thought that I would go and get it for Ethel, because there has never been another rug made like it, and as things are in Bokhara and all Turkestan, it would be very hard to get. So I made my journey, and it led me into the *Chelka*, and to Moscow, and over many thousands of troubled miles. But now, here is the rug. You must give it to Ethel for me. And it leads you, too, on a journey which may take you to death, but which you cannot avoid, because you are the man fitted for the task.'

'How soon must I go? Must I leave you, Ala Abdul?'

'No. If you will stay, there is time yet, before snow closes the Karakoram Pass, for you to see me out of this world. You have a boat? Let us get music, and float down Jhelum River, and be at peace for a time.'

Ala Abdul was carried to the boat and made comfortable on a divan. They crossed the lake, and amid much excited yelling of boatmen, shot like an arrow down through the Dal Gate, and so to the main river.

VI.

At Srinagar Durrant found a letter from Ethel:

'DEAR JACKO,—Here are three mails gone and no letter from you. If you are on one of your journeys you might have let me know. I pray

God all is well with you. I feel you and Ala Abdul are together, and danger threatens you both. Do write. ETHEL.'

He replied briefly, stating Ala Abdul's condition, and assuring her all was well with himself. And then, freed from the entanglements of life, they floated together down the river, and, as quietly as the boat moved, Ala Abdul floated out of life. For five days that last stage of Ala Abdul's journey lasted. Each evening, when the sun had set and the boat was moored for the night, they talked much, while away in the stern the musicians Durrant had brought on board played softly, and sang songs of love and the beauty of women and flowers.

One evening, just after the sun had set, they lay motionless on the wide and brimming river where it opens into the Wular lake. There was no ripple on the gray water. They seemed to float on another sky, in which the tall Chinara trees stood up dreamily; the meadows and orchards spread away and became lost in the expanse of water, that extends so smooth to the looming mass of the great mountains towering up through forests to the snows.

'Do you sometimes feel, Durrant,' said Ala Abdul, 'that in perfect beauty there is a perilousness, an imminent threat that it must dissolve and pass, like the rainbow on a bubble about to break?' He paused to listen to a bulbul that trilled among the willows. 'Ah, Durrant,' he said, 'perhaps if I had stayed in my own country, instead of learning all your Western lore, I should before now have been killed in battle, or poisoned in the Council Chamber, or have made myself ruler of a province, instead of just fading, fading, fading out in futility.'

Suddenly he remembered the code that he had tried to make his own. 'Sorry,' he said. 'Didn't mean to grouse. But it is true. You crude new Western peoples, there is something in you that is too strong for us. At the first touch of your West, the empire of my fathers crumbled and collapsed like rotten wood. Why, then, do I seek to support your power? It is because I must. We need you, and your strong and steady hand. The whole world leans on you, on you Western peoples, because the spirit of life is in you now. Once it was with us, but now on the plains of Persia the wind blows dead and rotting dust, and the spirit moves on, Westward, to the newer peoples.

'Perhaps there may come a day when it will leap the Pacific from America into China, and start the cycle again. But not in our age.' He smiled dreamily. 'Or is it just that my heart turns to the West? I think not. I think the truth is larger than that. . . . I can scarcely see you, Durrant . . . but listen. About Ethel. You knew what was in my heart. I also know

what is in yours. But with you there is no bar of race.'

'It is equally impossible,' said Durrant.

'I know. You think Stokehayes is poor, and needs much money, and Ethel must marry a rich man, or it will go to a Jew. All this I knew when I began my journey. Now I am a rich man. I am the last of my father's line. I sold my estates in Persia, Durrant. It does not matter. I am the last of my father's line. All that wealth is safe in England now, Durrant, and you will find my Will at the Alliance Bank of Simla, and it leaves everything to you, except the rug, which you must give for me to Ethel.'

'But, Ala Abdul——'

Ala Abdul reclined with his arms folded across his chest and his eyes closed. 'All will be well,' he said.

'But, Ala Abdul——'

Ala Abdul was already far away, but faintly from his lips came the phrase of princes: 'Peace; it is my will.'

VII.

Far into the night, as the driven coolies toiled upstream towing the *Doonga* toward Srinagar, Durrant, a hurricane lamp at his elbow, sat beside the body of his friend, enciphering a message to headquarters. Across his grief was struck a pulsating streak of fear, but he would not stop to think. His mouth was dry, his heart sagged in his chest, but he would not stop to think, and went laboriously on with his cipher. Before, he had never been afraid of any task, but now, but now—he might go home to Ethel.

Steadfastly he kept that thought away. By dawn he was at the telegraph office and had his message on the wires. Only when it had passed from his hands, and the sleepy-eyed telegraph-babu, dragged from his bed and grumbling at the difficult, meaningless groups of letters, was tapping it over, did Durrant feel the weight off his heart, and his fear gone, and peace in his soul. He was committed. He could not retreat now, but must take that journey. Simla, he knew, would select him for the task. He was the inevitable man.

But Simla is slow to move. For five days he had to wait, fretting out his soul until the order came releasing him for special duty. And at last he started.

Of that journey little may be told. The document, known to a very few as the Durrant Report, is not yet public property, nor are the things that Ala Abdul had told Durrant as they drifted down the river. But Durrant's task was, in brief, 'to speak a word in the ear of a man in Yarkand.' He had to turn that man, who hovered and swung between two courses, into the path that led to peace, and away from the path that led to chaos.

Durrant reached Yarkand and spoke his word. For a fortnight, with the knife ever at his throat, he wrestled and fought in subtle argument amid the gins and snares. At last there came an evening when he stepped out, dizzy with fatigue, into the clean air, from that chamber where the fate of thousands had been argued. He had won. Things would go the way of peace.

VIII.

A furtive, horn-spectacled Chinaman beckoned him into a narrow alley between mud walls. Unhesitatingly he followed. If this was his death that they calculated now, let it come. He could not resist.

But it was not death.

In a darkened room he was handed a sealed packet addressed to himself. It contained an engrossed document and a letter from Ala Abdul.

'MY FRIEND (he read),—Forgive me, Durrant, but it is not really a trick I have played on you, because after what I shall have told you, I know it will be possible for you to take only one course. Before you get this, you will have found that your journey here was necessary. The word you have come to speak had to be spoken, and I pray to Allah that you have won your fight for peace.

'But if you had not taken this journey, if you had gone straight to the Alliance Bank, you would have found there a copy of my Will, it is true, but only the unsigned draft of it. The true completed Will is here with this. To the last, you see, I am Oriental; I must have my little twist of fantasy.

'Forgive me—I have not doubted you. It was only for Ethel. Ethel's man must be tried and firm as steel. May all be well with you. For it is written "Those who seek pleasure find misery, but the strong follow the path of duty and are happy."—Your friend,

ALA ABDUL MOHAMMED KHAN.'

Two days after Durrant had got back to India and presented his report, he was sent for at headquarters. 'Young-fellow-my-lad,' said the chief, 'you may regard yourself as definitely shunted into the Political. We don't use razors to cut up Punjabis on recruits' parade. And if this thing turns out as big as it looks—if it turns out as big as it looks—'pon my soul, it ought to mean something big for you too.'

'Thanks, sir,' said Durrant; 'but what I particularly hanker after at this moment is six months' home leave.'

'Good boy. Your leave will take a week or two to come through, but meanwhile—well, meanwhile I don't see what's to hinder you from catching to-night's mail for Bombay, and the next boat home.'

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

JOHN O' GROAT'S.

By N. M. GUNN.

I.

THERE is a strange fascination for man in the idea of a place which is the end of things. Is not the whole history of world-exploration a history of the human desire to 'compass the ends of the earth'? And not only in the physical realm but in the poetic, too. 'Beyond the horizon's brim' lies the garden of the Hesperides, or the more magical (to a Gael, anyway) *Tir nan Og*, land of the ever-young; 'marvellous land, full of music, where the hair is primrose yellow and the body white as snow . . . and the hue of the foxglove is on every cheek.' So to the scientist, mathematician, philosopher—a reaching out to an end, an ultimate. Without as much, how stagnant, sterile, life would be!

Yet so constantly a 'striving and a striving and an ending in nothing' does the ambition prove itself, so often does the end turn to ashes or, at best, be recognised but as the first step in an endless aspiring, that unless man were fronted by some incalculable destiny, surely he would have grown tired of the game long, long ago; grown tired and cynical, and died.

World-old reflections, perhaps, that yet have a certain warmth of life when, for the first time, on a clear sunny day, you top the last ridge of Caithness county and look down on the land of John o' Groat's. In that first glimpse there is something of the magic of at least transient fulfilment, as though desire did at last manage to taste of its own dream. There is the last rim of the mainland, and beyond it the blue, blue sea, and set in the sea surely the Isles of the Blest! Truly a touch of enchantment rendered breathless by a faint incredulity. You turn your back, hoping the human, if mostly foolish, hope that the 'first fine rapture' may be recaptured in a second glimpse—suddenly to find that this gray flat land of Caithness you have been driving through, treeless, stone-diked, or fenced with great slate flags, has magically developed a mysterious charm, a breadth of atmosphere, a wonder of its own, that appeals as old tales of the clans and the Norsemen appeal, as sagas and poems of Ossian. For the prospect is now unquestionably on the grand scale, compelling, magnificent. Indeed,

it may well be that from no other spot in these islands can such a sense of illimitable horizons be obtained. A bare four hundred feet above sea level, yet the whole county stretches from your feet like a single moor, till a limit is set to it by Morven, that lodestar of Caithness fishermen, and the Sutherland peaks standing against the horizon like little cones. Southward the eye sweeps the whole extent of the Moray Firth, and imagines it can trace very faintly the dim outlines of the Moray hills on the other side. A complete history of the Moray Firth as a fertile fishing ground, embracing the habits, customs, and dress of the numberless generations of fishermen who have inhabited its creeks and harbours, would, I often think, be as fascinating and romantic a history as could well be written. Eastward the Moray Firth widens, merges, and gets lost in the North Sea, and in a moment the eye is baffled by the meeting of sea and sky in that faint line that is like the closing of mysterious lips. Then, suddenly turning back again, turning northwards, behold the blue waters once more, and the islands of the Orkneys and Stroma isle set in the blue waters!

It is difficult to refrain from phantasy should one happen to look on the Pentland Firth on a day of flying wind and sun. Even on the calmest day the waters are always in turmoil, sweeping their restless tidal way at anything from six to ten miles an hour, west or east, to the raging 'Men of Mey' or to the devouring 'Boars of Duncansby,' those tumultuous collisions of cross currents; but with sun behind one and the wind blowing, how intensely blue the colour, how white the tossing manes of the sea-horses, glistening, gleaming! It becomes easy to see how myth and legend found beginnings, how folk-lore and strange traditions thrived, and, what perhaps appeals more, how beginnings had necessarily to be born out of the stuff of heroism. Lives spent between those surging waters and this gray land had to be cast in a strong mould, and the bards' tales of their heroes, mythical or otherwise, had to be of a nature that inspired to deeds of endurance and courage and daring.

The thought sends the eye of its own accord across the Pentland, seeking nor-west for the

Brough of Birsay, which lies a little to the north of that visible headland of Hoy, standing so starkly there, face to the west. Somewhere off the fatal brough one night in June 1916, in a storm-ridden sea, the *Hampshire* went down. . . . The bards and the skalds, in the old sense, are dead, perhaps, but the old wonder and fear are still native to the heart, and who knows what 'myth' the historian of a thousand years hence may have to 'explain away'?

So one looks at the islands more curiously. Midway in the channel is the bare but picturesque-looking island of Stroma. It is not one of the Orkney group, and comes under the jurisdiction of the parish of Canisbay, in which John o' Groat's is situated. For any one with a whole day to spend, a row or a sail across (weather being suitable—which, alas! is the exception), and an exploration of the manifold points of interest, make a memorable excursion. Bearing about nor'-east, Skerry Lighthouse flashes in the sun like a white marble column, looking a very fairylike guard this fair day for the 'Stormy Pentland.' Then, stretching right and left, bounding the horizon in front, are the southern Orkneys. Rock-bound they look, raising their walls out of the water not unlike gargantuan battleships, anchored with that gray immobility that suggests titan power. A certain entrance is pointed out to you, the entrance to Scapa Flow. Scapa Flow, the *Hampshire*. . . . Suddenly you realise the sheer ancient and modern national importance of this 'end of things.' Galley and Dreadnought, Viking and War Minister: History repeats herself, however dressed for the occasion; the line of endeavour is continuous, and the heroic soul is still the heroic soul.

II.

The famous traditional John o' Groat's House is now nothing but a green mound, and to the present generation the name images little beyond white gleaming sands, where one hunts endless hours for the beautiful 'John o' Groat's buckies,' and the modern hotel with its 'every convenience,' from garage to wine cellar. There is a room in this hotel, which, on your remarking as to its somewhat curious shape, will possibly be the means of calling forth the story of the strange building of that house which is now the green mound, the house that has succeeded in giving its interesting name in perpetuity to this end of the world. The story, or tradition, as I have heard it, varies in the telling, but the generally accepted version is that given, I understand, by Dr Morison in his *Old Statistical Account of Canisbay*. It is a very human story, not without its parallel in more famous corners of world history. Stated briefly, it runs somewhat like this:

Three brothers, natives of Holland, Malcolm, Gavin, and John de Groat, came from the south of Scotland to Caithness during the reign of

James IV., with a letter from that Scottish monarch recommending them to the countenance and protection of his loving subjects in the county. They obtained lands in the parish of Canisbay, either by purchase or royal charter, and in the course of time so thrived that there came to be eight different proprietors of the name of Groat. To commemorate the date of their arrival in the county they established an annual feast, and on one such festive occasion the inevitable dispute arose on the all-important question of precedence. (Highland enough, these Dutchmen! though not possessing, it appears, the perfect aplomb of the chieftain who, in somewhat similar circumstances, dismissed the matter with the magnificent gesture: 'Wherever the Macpherson sits, that's the head of the table!'). John de Groat, now far on in years, settled what looked like the development of an ugly dispute by the cunningest interference and advice. In a voice full of the wisdom and toleration of the aged, he pointed out how well off they were in matters of worldly gear in this the land of their adoption; how fratricidal strife would leave them open to the attack of their enemies and would inevitably be their undoing; and how, if they would but behave themselves on the present occasion and go quietly home, he would guarantee them a satisfactory solution of the difficulty at the next meeting (for he was wise enough to know that advice alone rarely achieves human ends).

Having so persuaded them, the worthy John forthwith set about the erection of a house that would have eight walls, eight windows, and eight doors; and when in due course the octagonal house was completed, he placed inside it an oak table with eight sides. At the next meeting each entered by his own door and sat at an unquestionable head of the table; and so enchanted were they all with this most equitable arrangement that the old harmony was restored. Thus, like the Arthurian Round Table, came into existence John o' Groat's House (though it would seem, indeed, the wily Dutchman could have given points to the illustrious knights!).

One other explanation of the name may be given. It is certainly an ingenious one, and mentioned by Robert Mackay in his *History of the House of Mackay* as being traditional, though Calder, the Caithness historian, has been unable to find, he states, any such tradition in the county. Here it is:

John, a ferryman plying between Orkney and Caithness, had frequent disputes with his passengers about the fare, till in the end the magistrates took up the matter and fixed the charge at fourpence, or one *groat*, per head. Thereafter the ferryman was called Johnny Groat, and thus became the ancestor of the whole Groat family.

For devastating simplicity it certainly takes some beating, and if a libel on the house of

Groat—or, in other words, a manufactured 'tradition'—it all goes to show that the ways of the heathen Chinese in that which is 'child-like and bland' were not unknown to some derisive clansman bent on putting 'interloping foreigners' in their place!

One further and naively irresistible thing about this old house was recorded by the late 'Cairnduna' in one of his interesting northern articles to the *John o' Groat's Journal*, as having been extracted by him from the inside cover of the visitors' book 'kept at an old-world hospice at Huna.' Below a representation of the arms of the Groat family is the date 1839 and some writing, from which the following: 'It is stated in Chambers's *Picture of Scotland*, 3rd edition, volume 2, page 306, that the foundations or ruins of John o' Groat's House, which is perhaps the most celebrated in the whole world, are still to be seen.'

In history of a more or less northern importance the vicinity of John o' Groat's has been necessarily embroiled to a very great extent. Every small ferry in the Highlands has its own local history and traditions, but John o' Groat's represented the landing-spot on the mainland for the Norse Earls of Orkney—was, so to speak, an international ferry. According to a remote tradition it was in striving to reach this spot that the Picts were lost in the Pentland Firth, after having been first driven to the Orkneys by the victorious Scots, and then back again by the Orcadians; whence arose the name itself—Pictland or Pentland Firth. But two historical happenings of a much wider appeal may be mentioned; and for appropriate quotations reference has been made to that admirable *History of Caithness* by Calder (first published, 1861).

The first throws a certain very interesting light on what might be called the brighter side of soldiering under Cromwell, or, to quote Calder, 'Cromwell's soldiers are represented in history as rigid sectaries of the most austere cast, to whom everything in the shape of amusement, and especially on the Lord's day, was a

heinous sin and an abomination, but it would seem that such of them at least as came to John o' Groat's were not so very strict.'

He arrives at this conclusion after quoting some entries from the old session record of Canisbay, which would point to an occupation by Cromwellian troops on three separate occasions. The first on 29th March 1652: 'No session holden by reason the Inglishe were quartered in the bounds; the congregation was few in number, and ther was not a sederunt of elders, nather was ther any delinquents.' Again on 2nd May 1652: 'Ther not being a sederunt, by reason of a party of Englishe horsemen being in our fields, whilk made the congregation fewer in number, and severall of the elders to be absent.' And finally, that which gives to so much reading between the lines, on 30th December 1655: 'Adam Seaton convict of drinking on the Sabbath, and having masking plays in his house for the Inglishe men, he was ordained to make publick confession of his fault next Sabbath.'

The second instance, which will appeal to students of Scottish history, and perhaps particularly to sympathisers, poetic or otherwise, with the Jacobite cause, has to do with the gallant Montrose. When he crossed over from Orkney with a body of men, it was in the vicinity of John o' Groat's that he landed on that last fateful attempt of his to win a throne for a Stuart. Three flags he unfurled—two for the king, and one of his own, with the motto which so significantly sums up the character of the man—'*Nil Medium*.' Or, to translate it into his own quatrain:

He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
That dares not put it to the touch
To gain or lose it all.

Montrose lost it all at Carbisdale in the spring of 1650, and fled the stricken field, only to meet his end at the hands of his enemies at the Cross in the High Street of Edinburgh, in a manner surely brutal and heathenish enough to accord ill with their sauctimonious professions.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER III.—continued.

WHEN the party met in the smoking-room that night after dinner two very weary men occupied the deepest arm-chairs. Lamancha was struggling with sleep; Palliser-Yeates was limp with fatigue, far too weary to be sleepy. 'I've had the devil of a day,' said the latter. 'Wattie took me at a racing gallop about thirty miles over bogs and crags. Lord! I'm stiff and footsore. I believe I crawled more than ten miles, and I've no skin left on my knees. But we spied the deuce of a lot of ground, and

I see my way to the rudiments of a plan. You start off, Charles, while I collect my thoughts.'

But Lamancha was supine. 'I'm too drunk with sleep to talk,' he said. 'I prospected all the south side of Haripol—all this side of the Reascuill, you know. I got a good spy from Sgurr Mór, and I tried to get up Sgurr Dearg, but stuck on the rocks. That's a fearsome mountain, if you like. Didn't see a blessed soul all day—no rifles out—but I heard a shot from the Machray ground. I got my glasses on to

several fair beasts. It struck me that the best plan would be to try the corrie between Sgurr Mór and Sgurr Dearg—there's a beallach at the head to get a stag through, and the place is rather tucked away from the rest of the forest. That's as far as I've got at present. I want to sleep.'

Palliser-Yeates was in a very different mood. With an ordnance map spread out on his knees he expounded the result of his researches, waving his pipe excitedly. 'It's a stiff problem, but there's just the ghost of a chance. Wattie admitted that on the way home. Look here, you fellows—Glenraden is divided, like Gaul, into three parts. There's the Home beat—all the low ground of the Raden glen, and the little hills behind the house. Then there's the Carnbeg beat to the east, which is the best, I fancy—very rough going, not very high, and with peat roads and tracks where you could shift a beast. Last, there's Carnmore, miles from anywhere, with all the highest tops, and as steep as Torridon. It would be the devil of a business, if I got a stag there, to move it. Wattie and I went round the whole marches, mostly on our bellies. No, we weren't seen—Wattie took care of that. What a noble *shikari* the old chap is!'

'Well, what's your conclusion?' Leithen asked.

Palliser-Yeates shook his head. 'That's just where I'm stumped. Try to put yourself in old Raden's place. He has only one stalker and two gillies for the whole forest, for he's very short-handed, and, as a matter of fact, he stalks his beasts himself. He'll consider where John Macnab is likeliest to have his try, and he'll naturally decide on the Carnmore beat, for that's by far the most secluded. You may take it from me that he has only enough men to watch one beat properly. But he'll reflect that John Macnab has to get his stag away, and he'll wonder how he'll manage it on Carnmore, for there's only one bad track up from Inverlarrig. Therefore he'll conjecture that John Macnab may be more likely to try Carnbeg, though it's a bit more public. . . . You see, his decision isn't any easier than mine. . . . On the whole I'm inclined to think he'll plump for Carnmore, for he must regard John Macnab as a fairly desperate fellow, who will aim first at killing his stag in peace, and will trust to Providence for the rest. So at the moment I favour Carnbeg.'

Leithen wrinkled his brow. 'There are three of us,' he said. 'That gives us a chance of a little finesse. What about letting Charles or me make a demonstration against Carnmore, while you wait at Carnbeg?'

'Good idea! I thought of that too.'

'You'd better assume Colonel Raden to be in very full possession of his wits,' Leithen continued. 'The single bluff won't do—he'll see through it. He'll think that John Macnab

is the same wary kind of old bird as himself. I found out in the War that it didn't do to underrate your opponent's brains. He's pretty certain to expect a feint, and not to be taken in. I'm for the double bluff.'

'Meaning?'

'Meaning that you feint in one place, so that your opponent believes it to be a feint, and pays no attention, and then you sail in and get to work in that very place.'

Palliser-Yeates whistled. 'That wants thinking over. . . . How about yourself?'

'I've studied the river, and you never in your life saw such a hopeless proposition. All the good pools are as open as the Serpentine. Wattie stated the odds correctly.'

'Nothing doing there?'

'Nothing, unless I take steps to shorten the odds. So I've taken in a partner.'

The others stared, and even Lamancha woke up.

'Yes. I interviewed him in the stable before dinner. It's the little ragamuffin who sells fish—Fish Benjie is the name he goes by. Archie, I hope you don't mind, but I told him to resume his morning visits. They're my best chance for consultations.'

'You're takin' a pretty big risk, Ned,' said his host. 'D'you mean to say you've let that boy into the secret?'

'I've told him everything. It was the only way, for he had begun to suspect. I admit it's a gamble, but I believe I can trust the child. I think I know a sportsman when I see him.'

Archie still shook his head. 'There's something else I may as well tell you. I met one of the Raden girls to-day—the younger; she was on the bank when I fell into the Larrig. She asked me point blank if I knew anybody called John Macnab.'

Lamancha was wide awake. 'What did you say?' he asked sharply.

'Oh, lied, of course. Said I supposed she meant the distiller. Then she told me the whole story—said she had written the letter her father signed. She's mad keen to win the extra fifty quid, for it means a hunter for her this winter down in Warwickshire. Yes, and she asked me to help. I talked a lot of rot about my game leg and that sort of thing, but I sort of promised to go and lunch at Glenraden the day after to-morrow.'

'That's impossible,' said Lamancha.

'I know it is, but there's only one way out of it. I've got to have smallpox again.'

'You've got to go to bed and stay there for a month,' said Palliser-Yeates severely. 'Now, look here, Archie. We simply can't have you getting mixed up with the enemy, especially the enemy women. You're much too susceptible, and far too great an ass.'

'Of course not,' said Sir Archie, with a touch of protest in his voice. 'I see that well enough,

but it's a black look-out for me. I wish to Heaven you fellows had chosen to take your cure somewhere else. I'm simply wreckin' all my political career. I had a letter from my agent to-night, and I should be tourin' the constituency instead of playin' the goat here. All I've got to say is that you've a dashed lot more than old Raden against you. You've got that girl, crazy about her hunter, and any one can see that she's as clever as paint.'

But the laird of Crask was not thinking of Miss Janet Raden's wits as he went meditatively to bed. He was wondering why her eyes were so blue, and as he ascended the stairs he thought he had discovered the reason. Her hair was spun-gold, but she had dark eyelashes.

CHAPTER IV.—FISH BENJIE.

ON the roads of the north of Scotland, any time after the last snow-wreaths have melted behind the dikes, you will meet a peculiar kind of tinkler. They are not the copper-nosed scarecrows of the Lowlands, sullen and cringing, attended by sad infants in ramshackle perambulators. Nor are they in any sense gypsies, for they have not the Romany speech or colouring. They travel the roads with an establishment, usually a covered cart and one or more lean horses, and you may find their encampments any day by any burnside. Of a rainy night you can see their queer little tents, shaped like a segment of a sausage, with a fire hissing at the door, and the horses cropping the roadside grass; of a fine morning the women will be washing their duds on the loch shore, and their young fighting like ferrets among the shingle. You will meet with them in the backstreets of the little towns, and at the back-doors of wayside inns, but mostly in sheltered hollows of the moor, or green nooks among the birches, for they are artists in choosing camping-grounds. They are children of Esau, who combine a dozen crafts—tinkering, fish-hawking, besom-making, and the like—with their natural trades of horse-couping and poaching. At once brazen and obsequious, they beg rather as an art than a necessity; they will whine to a keeper with pockets full of pheasants' eggs, and seek permission to camp from a laird with a melting tale of hardships, while one of his salmon lies hidden in the bracken on their cart floor. The men are an upstanding race, keen-eyed, resourceful, with humour in their cunning; the women, till the life bears too hardly on them, are handsome and soft-spoken; and the children are healthy as trout, and burned and weathered like imps of the desert. Their speech is neither Lowland nor Highland, but a sing-song Scots of their own; and if they show the Celt in their secret ways, there is a hint of Norse blood in the tawny hair and blue eyes so common among them.

Ebenezer Bogle was born into the life, and for fifty-five years travelled the roads from the Reay country to the Mearns, and from John o' Groat's to the sea-lochs of Appin. Sickness overtook him one October when camped in the Black Isle, and, feeling the hand of death on him, he sent for two people. One was the nearest Free Kirk minister—for Ebenezer was theologically of the old school; the other was a banker from Muirtown. What he said to the minister I do not know; but what the banker said to him may be gathered from the fact that he informed his wife before he died that in the Muirtown bank there lay to his credit a sum of nearly three thousand pounds. Ebenezer had been a sober and careful man, and a genius at horse-couping. He had bought the little rough shelties of the North and the Isles, and sold them at Lowland fairs; he had dabbled in black cattle; he had done a big trade in sheep-skins when a snowstorm decimated the Sutherland flocks; and he had engaged, perhaps, in less reputable ventures, which might be forbidden by the law of the land, but were not contrary, so he believed, to the Bible. Year by year his bank balance had mounted, for he spent little, and now he had a fortune to bequeath. He made no will; all went to his wife, with the understanding that it would be kept intact for his son; and in this confidence Ebenezer closed his eyes.

The wife did not change her habit of life. The son Benjamin accompanied her as before in the long rounds between May and October, and in the winter abode in the fishing quarter of Muirtown, and intermittently attended school. Presently his mother took a second husband, a Catholic Macdonald from the West, for the road is a cheerless occupation for a lone woman. Her new man was a merry soul—very little like the provident Ebenezer—much addicted to the bottle, and a lover of all things but legitimate trade. But he respected the dead man's wishes, and made no attempt to touch the hoard in the Muirtown bank; he was kind, too, to the boy, and taught him many things that are not provided for in the educational system of Scotland. From him Benjie learned how to take a nesting grouse, how to snare a dozen things, from hares to roebuck, how to sniggle salmon in the clear pools, and how to poach a hind when the deer came down in hard weather to the meadows. He learned how to tell the hour by the sun and to find his way by the stars, and what weather was foretold by the starlings packing at night-fall, or crows sitting with their backs to the wind, or a badger coming home after daylight. The boy knew how to make cunning whistles from ash and rowan with which to imitate a snipe's bleat, or the call of an otter, and he knew how at all times and in all weathers to fend for himself and find food and shelter. A tough little nomad he became under this tutelage, knowing

no boys' games, with scarcely an acquaintance of his age, but able to deal on equal terms with every fisherman, gillie and tinkler north of the Highland line.

It chanced that in the spring of this year Mrs Bogle had fallen ill for the first time in her life. It was influenza, and, being neglected, was followed by pneumonia, so that when May came she was in no condition to take the road. By ill luck her husband had been involved in a drunken row, when he had assaulted two of his companions with such violence and success that he was sent for six months to prison. In these circumstances there was nothing for it but that Benjie should set out alone with the cart, and it is a proof of the stoutheartedness of the family tradition that his mother never questioned the propriety of this arrangement. He departed with her blessing, and weekly despatched to her a much-blotted scrawl describing his doings. There was something of his father's hard fibre in the child, for he was a keen bargainer and as wary as a fox against cajolery. He met friends of his family who let him camp beside them, and with their young he did battle, when they

dared to threaten his dignity. Benjie fought in no orthodox way, but like a weasel, using every weapon of tooth and claw. In his sobbing furies he was unconquerable, and was soon left in peace. Presently he found that he preferred to camp alone, and with his old cart and horse he made his way up and down the long glens of the West to the Larrig. There, he remembered, the fish trade had been profitable in past years, so he sat himself down by the roadside to act as middleman between the fishing-cobles of Inverlarrig and the kitchens of the shooting lodges. It would be untrue to say that this was his only means of livelihood, and I fear that the contents of Benjie's pot, as it bubbled of an evening in the Wood of Larrigmore, would not have borne inspection by any keeper who chanced to pass. The weekly scrawls went regularly to his now convalescent mother, and once a parcel arrived for him at the Inverlarrig post-office, containing a gigantic new shirt, which he used as a blanket. For the rest he lived as Robinson Crusoe lived, on the countryside around him, seeking and receiving no news of the outer world.

(Continued on page 102.)

THE 'APOSTLE OF THE COCONUT.'

By THOMAS J. McMAHON, F.R.G.S.

I.

THE wonderful properties of the coconut are proverbial. Natives of the South Sea Islands are known to subsist almost entirely on its flesh and milk. In German New Guinea, now administered by Australia under the powers of a mandate, there recently died an educated European—an Austrian—who declared that the coconut is the proper and only food of man, and spent the last twenty years of his life in an endeavour to convert the world to this belief.

A very charming and interesting character was Auguste Engelhardt, the 'Apostle of the Coconut.' This remarkable man lived on his own beautiful little tropic isle of Kabakon, one of the Duke of York group of German New Guinea.

The 'Apostle' propounded the new and weird doctrine that living on the coconut as food, and coconut milk as drink, was the one and only possible road that led to the sure calming of the nerves, the certain curing of all diseases, especially of the mind, and the banishment of all the evil passions from the heart of mankind. He persisted that the coconut was the rational diet of man, as research, he maintained, proved it to have been the original food of man, the daily menu of Adam and Eve.

Auguste Engelhardt would tell you that a coconut diet would most effectually drive out from the heart of man all vile ambitions, those

particularly that led to strife, argument, and devastating war. Prior to the late war the 'Apostle' had many hundreds of disciples in many countries of the world. In America he had over four hundred, with whom he maintained a regular correspondence. For the benefit of his disciples he published in America an attractively got-up little monthly journal, entitled the *Naturopath*, where he expounded his strange doctrine.

On his little island, his kingdom, for he ruled supreme, he was the merriest and kindest of men; in short, a most attractive person, a gentleman to the tips of his long, elegant fingers. As a host he was perfectly charming. He was so earnest in his teachings, so full of detail in his explanations—with every argument that he offered he had a hundred incidents or facts to support it—one almost became convinced and converted under his gentle and persuasive appeals to give his 'noble' teachings a trial. He would say to you, 'Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are,' a strange, uncanny method of reading character. The 'Apostle' maintained that 'it is what you eat that makes you either happy or sad, God-like or human, good or bad.' His doctrine was, the human passions were devils stowed away in the system, to come into action, or remain quiescent, according to the class of food eaten. Meat foods, he maintained, fired the blood, while vegetable and other foods are usually so

unnaturally cooked and dished that they are responsible for the many unsatisfactory defects of the character and habits of man.

The 'Apostle' called himself a 'Naturopath,' one who directs the way in the matter of foods so as to acquire a care-free future, a healthy state of nerves, a clear brain, and a mind above the distress of death. This almost spiritual state could be brought about by a diet of coconut; indeed, he characterised the coconut as the most 'spiritualising of edibles.'

II.

Kabakon, where lived the 'Apostle' in a simple, sublime, and un sinful life, in happiness and contentment, is a coral isle some five miles in circumference, luxuriantly covered with thousands of coconut palms. It is in the midst of a garden of delightful isles, surmounted by the most clear and sparkling of tropic waters, in the depths of which one can see the wonders of coral-land, every shade of pink, red, green, and gold, mingling with the marine vegetation, delightful beyond description, through which dart fish of the most gorgeous colours. Here on this beautiful isle, in the shade of giant oaks with great spreading branches intertwining, for all the world like pictures of the Druid groves of ancient Britain, with the music of the rustling palms mingling with the deeper notes of the waves upon the coral shores, lived in perfect peace the 'Apostle.' The isle is a scene of perpetual spring, and in this nature's garden the 'Apostle' had his home, his great library, and his playground, about which he roamed, like the natives that attended him, merely in a *lava-lava* or loin-cloth, bare-headed, and bare-footed. On festive occasions, such as the visits of friends or tourists, this dress was augmented by a wristlet watch and a walking-stick.

Engelhardt was a student of Wurtemberg. He was a singularly handsome man. What his age was it was hard to guess; he might have been thirty-five, but must have been much more. He had long golden hair, well groomed. His face and body, from constant exposure to the sun and open air—for, being a sun-worshipper, he was never indoors—were almost black. Every morning at six, as the sun rose, and every evening at six, as the sun set, he took a bath, and then his native servant would massage his body, and brush his hair, until he shone with health and cleanliness. He never suffered from malaria, or any other tropical fever, but his death was due to a tropic cancer, from a scratch on the right ankle.

Though he never spoke of his early life or student days, he never contradicted a report of a duel with a fellow-student, and a love affair with a lovely Austrian countess. It was hinted pretty freely (but the 'Apostle' steadfastly declined to answer any inquiries) that he was concerned in the tragedy of the Crown Prince

Rudolf of Austria. There was no doubt some incident had happened in his early life which compelled him to fly from his native land, and so he went to German New Guinea, and to his beautiful isle of Kabakon, seeking whatever peace, comfort, and happiness life could yet allow him. He found all three in the doctrine of the coconut, and his strict attention to a coconut diet.

III.

Engelhardt spoke English not only fluently, but with a style that denoted the ardent student of Shakespeare, which, indeed, he was. He possessed a most cultured voice, and his gestures were those of the most graceful actor. His library was admittedly one of the largest and most varied of the Southern Hemisphere. He spoke four languages—German, French, Italian, and English—and he had innumerable books and magazines of these nations.

His sleeping apartment was a thatched native hut, without furniture. In the centre of the hut was his bed—of nothing but clean, dry sand—with four bed-posts to carry a curtain to keep away the irritating mosquitoes. He never used either pillow or rug, but covered himself with palm leaves on the cool evenings. He went to bed punctually at nine every night, but rose at three, and read and studied until daylight. While living in this simple style himself, he maintained a sumptuously furnished mansion for his guests. These he treated to much comfort, and had every food luxury that wealth could procure, for he was a very wealthy man, his coconut plantations bringing him in thousands of pounds yearly. Every room of this mansion, a great wooden building of ten rooms, had the walls most beautifully painted with scenes of Austria. To carry out this work he had an artist brought from Austria, to whom he paid a lordly sum.

Engelhardt would never attempt to force his doctrine upon anyone, not even his native servants, though they ate great quantities of coconut. If they wanted *bullamacow* (tinned meats) he would readily provide that food. He greeted guests by offering wines, but would be delighted if they accepted the milk from a freshly cut coconut, under all circumstances a most refreshing drink. He was willing to admit it took time, patience, and a trial of the digestive organs to acquire the coconut diet. But persistence in cultivating the diet was, after all, but acquiring restraint on one's appetite, and this was leading to the better and more spiritual life. The habit of coconut diet once acquired, there was a prompt response in healthfulness, and even joyousness, and a remarkable clearness of the brain. The health of brain brought health of body; under such conditions life could be nothing but contentment and happiness.

A rather interesting item of the diet was a number of recipes held by the 'Apostle' for

making dishes out of coconut. There were no fewer than twenty different salads, many of which could be eaten with relish by any one. The greatest delicacy the 'Apostle' could offer a guest, one which any guest could thoroughly enjoy, was a salad made from the heart of a coconut palm. This was a very costly dish, as it meant the destruction of a coconut palm, every palm on Kabakon being worth seventy pounds.

To the last of his days the 'Apostle' per-

sisted in his coconut diet, but these days were saddened by the fact that the War destroyed his influence among many of his disciples. His magazine had long ceased, his correspondence had dwindled to very few letters, and many of his friends, British as well as Germans, had either died or left German New Guinea. Sad at heart, he was to the last, however, as brave as ever in defending his doctrine of the coconut, the 'spiritual' food to make men god-like.

PETER WAS SINGLE.

PART II.

v.

PETER was very favourably impressed with his 'staff.' They were, without exception, decently dressed, well-educated girls, and they were very anxious to put the new assistant-manager at his ease and make him feel completely at home. Peter decided that the oldest was not more than twenty-five, while the youngest must have been under seventeen, a pretty little girl who fell in love with him then and there, frantically and obviously.

'Very decent lot,' said Mr Sadler, when the last introduction had been made. 'I don't approve of women in warehouses myself, but I shall miss these people just the same. I wonder if Miss Slade is turning in to-day?'

'Who is Miss Slade?' asked Peter curiously, but even as he spoke he felt quite sure that he knew who Miss Slade was.

'Oh, Miss Slade is a fine girl,' said Mr Sadler warmly. 'She—she—well, I've never met a girl like her. Only, she's had a lot of time off lately—ill, you know. She looks after the special orders, and it's very trying work. I don't mind admitting to you that it would take a really smart man to do her work. She's one of those girls that other girls like; the staff think the world of her. So did the firm at one time, before she started being ill and letting her work get behind—they don't believe she is ill really, you know, because she always looks so remarkably well, and because she's always so cheerful—' He broke off in some confusion as Mr Reginald appeared suddenly from behind a fixture.

Mr Reginald came towards the two young men with his hands clasped behind him, and a suspicious light in his eyes. 'Have you been giving Golding an idea of your duties, Sadler?'

'Yes, Mr Reginald.'

Mr Reginald nodded. 'Better take full advantage of Sadler's knowledge, Golding,' he observed grimly. 'He leaves us at the weekend, and then you'll have to stand on your own feet.—Miss Slade come?'

'No, Mr Reginald.'

Mr Reginald frowned. 'Where's Hughes?'

At this moment Mr Hughes was observed scuttling hurriedly down the narrow passage towards them. Peter had a curious feeling that the manager was possessed of some extra sense which warned him immediately he incurred the displeasure of Mr Reginald. Surely no autocrat since first the world began was ever feared as Mr Reginald was feared by this man, who visibly and violently trembled at the most casual mention of that dread name. Apprehension and fear showed in every line of the manager's putty face, and in every movement of his lumpy figure, as he shambled fussily up to them.

'Where have you been until now, Hughes? What have you been doing all this time? It's nine o'clock practically, and half the staff standing aimlessly about. This will have to stop, Hughes. You hear me? This will have to stop!' Mr Reginald's voice was harsh and menacing, but his eyes, fixed unblinkingly on the face of the unfortunate Hughes, had a peculiar gloating light in them. Quite obviously Mr Reginald gloried in his power, and took full advantage of it on every possible occasion. He considered that the more closely his unhappy manager resembled a jelly-fish, the better it was for business, for Hughes was of that invertebrate type which is quite incapable of asserting authority until his own position is threatened. Mr Reginald was not a bully from choice; he was merely a perfect business man whose religion was profits. To gain his ends, Mr Reginald was just as ready to fawn as to bully. Peter, pink with shame that a man many years his senior, and occupying a position of responsibility, should be spoken to in such a way in the presence of girls young enough to be his daughters, felt an unaccustomed longing to do something extremely violent—in short, to kick Mr Reginald hard and often.

vi

'If that's the way he speaks to the manager, what happens when the under-manager annoys him?' Peter asked of Mr Sadler later in the day.

'That depends on the under-manager,' explained Mr Sadler, looking up from a pile of complaints with a harassed air. 'If you take his bullying quietly, and work hard, he'll let you down light, and you'll keep the job; but if you show fight, you'll have to go. Mr Reginald will not tolerate any male employee who has enough courage to call his soul his own. He's not such a bad sort really, but he's discovered that men in a permanent state of apprehension work harder than men who feel secure. Consequently he makes a regular practice of black-guarding you in front of every one about once or twice a month, whether you deserve it or not. There's no personal feeling in it really; it's just part of the system, you know.'

'There's one thing,' observed Peter with gloomy satisfaction—'I'm not married.'

'Me neither, thank goodness!' answered the other.

Both young men sighed.

The following morning Peter made the acquaintance of Miss Slade, and for some strange reason, for which he did not attempt to account, felt highly elated when this particular member of his staff proved to be none other than the girl he had met leaving the building on the occasion of his first visit. Miss Slade was a fine rosy-cheeked girl, with a pleasant mouth but curiously sad eyes. She was quite as tall as Peter, and much straighter, and appeared so well and cheerful that it was difficult to imagine what strange sickness could be serious enough to keep such an obviously purposeful girl away from her work, and yet leave so little trace on her outward appearance.

'I have seen you before, I think, Mr Golding,' said the girl in a low, quiet voice. 'You were coming in—'

Peter nodded. 'Yes, and you were going out. I—I didn't know you were ill. I hope you are better.'

The expression of pain which flitted across the girl's face both hurt and surprised him.

VII.

Although Peter worked like a slave, he had too much of his vagabond artist father in him to make a successful under-manager. In the running of a department there were so many details which, although of paramount importance, were so dull and uninteresting that they refused to remain long behind Peter's dreaming eyes, and he made many blunders which, to the trained warehouseman, seemed childish and inexcusable. On the other hand, Peter had ideas which the shrewd Mr Reginald was quick to appreciate. During the first week of his reign he suggested to Mr Hughes a new system of packing, which not only had the merit of simplifying the work, but also saved many hours of work in the course of a week, and earned the manager's undying admiration. His

system of fixture-head ticketing also facilitated the work of the department considerably. All the same, Peter was not a success.

The huge machine, of which he had lately become a more or less important cog, shaped and moulded him, by a process which was both rapid and painful, to meet its requirements up to a certain point, but beyond this point his imagination made further progress impossible. Yet, even though Peter was not a successful under-manager, his energy and readiness to tackle anything and everything which came to hand made him a very useful young man to have about.

At the conclusion of his first week, Peter had two interviews with his superiors. The first, with Mr Hughes, was both instructive and entertaining. The second, with Mr Reginald, was instructive only. Mr Hughes attracted Peter's attention by the simple process of crooking his finger at him and winking mysteriously; he then led the way to a quiet corner of the warehouse.

'Want me, Mr Hughes?' asked Peter, coming up behind.

'Ye—s,' answered the manager, turning but not facing him. 'It's like this. I thought I'd better give you a bit of advice which will come in handy when Mr Sadler's gone. For one thing, you're too friendly with the girls—it doesn't do to be too friendly with girls. They take advantage, see? Besides, you can't tell 'em off the same when you're friendly with 'em—all except Miss Brown, and that's only because she comes in handy for telling things about the others. It's always very handy to have some one like Miss Brown about.'

'I don't care very much for Miss Brown myself,' said Peter in a clear voice.

'She's very handy,' repeated Mr Hughes, his eyes wandering shiftily. 'You want to look after her—give her the easiest orders, and cover up her mistakes a little.'

Later in the day Mr Reginald sent for Peter, and when the latter entered the private office he was immediately invited to take a seat, which, had he but known it, was a very special favour.

'You know, Golding,' Mr Reginald began, with an edge to his voice, 'I can't make you out at all. You are certainly possessed of more than average brains, you're energetic, and obviously doing your best to please, but somehow—'

'I know what you mean exactly,' interrupted Peter brightly, 'and you're quite right. I've been like that all my life.'

'Well, you'd better stop being like that if you intend to remain here,' observed Mr Reginald, the edge of his voice becoming more pronounced. 'I've no doubt that you present a very interesting psychological study, but I'm not in business to study psychology for its own sake. Now, there's another thing: you are far

too friendly with those girls. You'll have to harden yourself; to be quite frank, you'll have to learn to bully 'em occasionally. Make no mistake, I sha'n't hesitate to bully you if things go wrong.'

'There's no need for bullying,' said Peter; 'they're good conscientious workers—educated people who know the difference between right and wrong.'

Mr Reginald smiled mirthlessly. 'The woman who knows the difference between right and wrong has yet to be born, and the woman who can resist the temptation to take advantage of an indulgent husband or an easy-going boss never lived. I want to see you pick on the first sign of slackness, or the first mistake that's made, and turn the department inside out for a few minutes. No swearing at 'em, mind you. I won't tolerate bad language.'

Peter blushed to the roots of his hair. 'I'd never dream of such a thing,' he exclaimed with horror.

'I'm glad to hear it,' answered Mr Reginald. 'Women know they haven't much to fear from a swearing man, and you'll have to show them that you mean to be respected. Of course they'll shed tears, but they'll think all the more of you—women really enjoy being bullied, you know—and weeping.'

VIII.

Peter left the private office with a dull flush of resentment under his eyes. 'The business-like brute,' thought Peter. 'He never bullies the girls himself, but he doesn't hesitate to bully us into bullying 'em—I'll see him fried on both sides first. Thank goodness, I've no wife depending on me!'

Nevertheless, as time went on and the strangeness of his position wore off, Peter was bound to admit that, up to a point, Mr Reginald was right. Certain of the girls did show a disposition to take advantage of his leniency. A faint but very definite suggestion of slackness began to creep into the work of his department, which Peter tried to rectify by working the harder himself; but the slackness only became more pronounced. It was at times such as these that Peter sought the assistance of Miss Slade. The two had become firm friends, and Peter was apt to lean on her superior business acumen rather too heavily for his own good, which troubled the girl greatly. She did her best to make him stand more firmly on his own feet, but there were certain phases of warehouse work which Peter seemed quite unable to grasp, and on at least two occasions disaster had been averted only by the narrowest margin.

Helen Slade understood Peter Golding. She saw the artist and dreamer, and read in his shy dark eyes all the gentle courage and all the wistful kindness of his boy's heart. Peter was of an infinitely higher type than Mr Reginald.

He had the humility of the philosopher and the vision of the artist; for himself he asked but little of life—the right to serve his friends and accept the smile of understanding as good and sufficient reward.

Towards the end of Peter's second week at Clawson's, Miss Slade and he met in the narrow street which runs the full length of the warehouse. The meeting occurred at fifteen minutes past eight o'clock on a cold bright morning. Peter had just squared his shoulders with the idea of counter-balancing somewhat that sinking feeling with which approach to his daily toil invariably oppressed him. Miss Slade, who had not yet observed him, was on the opposite pavement. He noticed wistfully how well the girl looked, and how proudly she carried herself. She had the bright eyes and heightened colour of one who has just travelled in the open at a great pace. 'Some fellow has brought her along in his car,' he thought with a sudden pang. For young ladies employed at Clawson's to arrive splendidly (if somewhat self-consciously) in automobiles owned and driven by affluent male friends was by no means an unusual occurrence. 'She's sure to know lots of fellows who own cars—lucky brutes!' At this moment the girl turned slightly and their eyes met. Blushing deeply, Peter raised his hat. Peter was on the warehouse side of the street, and without the least hesitation Miss Slade crossed over to his side. That was one of her traits which compelled Peter's admiration—the frankness of her friendship. Modest, and quite as shy as himself in some respects, she made no attempt to disguise her partiality. Helen Slade was incapable of simpering; her voice was clear and steady, her gaze fearless and friendly.

'Good morning, Mr Golding,' she greeted him with slightly heightened colour. 'Isn't it glorious for walking? It seems a shame to go indoors. How I would like to keep on walking and walking!'

Peter nodded. 'It's a shame that you can't,' he answered almost savagely. 'It isn't right that girls should have to work in dusty warehouses.'

Miss Slade laughed and then sighed.

'I don't mind the warehouse so much really, if it wasn't for——' She broke off in some confusion, and then began again: 'I think it's a matter of temperament. I am quite sure that you find the warehouse far more irksome than I do; you—you do not seem cut out for warehouse work.'

'I'm beginning to think I'm not cut for any sort of useful work,' answered Peter pessimistically. 'I expect I'm a bit of a thick-head, really.'

'Oh, please don't misunderstand me,' she said quickly. 'I only meant that——'

'Quite—oh quite,' interrupted Peter, anxious only to save her from embarrassment. 'I know what you mean, but all the same. . . .'

Peter's pause lasted until they reached the entrance of the building. Several other early arrivals, male employees belonging to other departments, were loitering in the doorway, smoking and reading the sporting columns of the various dailies, determined not to start work a moment earlier than was absolutely necessary. Some of the loiterers smiled knowingly as the pair passed them; others did not glance up from their papers; but all wished Miss Slade and her escort a mechanical good morning.

'You know,' said Peter, as they began to ascend the stone steps (there was no lift at the employees' entrance), 'warehouse work really does seem to suit you. You seem to have a sort of an instinct for it, and although you've worked overtime every day this week you look fit and well as——.' He was interrupted by a harsh little cry from his companion, an exclamation that was at once a cry of despair and a pitiful protest. He half turned and looked at her in amazement. Helen Slade had gone white to the lips.

IX.

The first thing Peter did on the following Monday morning was to call the staff together and inform them that all was not well with the department; that not only was work getting behind, but serious mistakes, due to carelessness for the most part, were becoming more frequent every day; a deplorable state of affairs which would have to cease immediately, or—or—well, anyhow it would have to cease. In spite of the fact that Peter's voice was uneven and a little gaspy, there was a determined look about his mouth and chin which greatly impressed the staff. He concluded by saying that he hated to have to say such things to them, but pointed out that matters were most obviously not as they should be. He hoped that the staff would put its back into the job of removing all cause for complaint, and that they would not think he was grumbling or anything of that sort.

The staff liked Peter, and it is quite possible that one or two were a little conscience-stricken. They assured him of their hearty co-operation, and from that moment work in the hosiery department went with a swing which caused Mr Hughes to rub his eyes and stare. Then he went down into the private office and shortly reappeared with Mr Reginald, who beamed on Peter in a friendly fashion and went away, nodding his head wisely.

'The question is,' reflected Peter, 'how long is it going to last? How long can they keep up this pace?' He knew in his heart of hearts that girls ought not to be expected to work at such a speed for long, and an attempt to do so would probably result in infinite harm to themselves.

On Tuesday morning Mr Hughes called Peter

to his desk and informed him that the number of orders executed on Monday had broken all previous records for the department, and predicted that, as a consequence, THE FIRM would be in an exceptionally good humour. Mr Hughes was so elated that he almost looked Peter straight in the eyes. Peter, too, forgot his misgivings long enough to feel rather pleased with himself as he passed on the information to Miss Slade.

The girl congratulated him gravely, but looked troubled. 'They will expect you to keep it up,' she said quickly.

'That's impossible,' Peter answered promptly. 'They can't break records every day without breaking something more important. The great thing is that I've found a better method of keeping up a good standard than by constant bullying. Human beings are pretty reasonable if you treat them as reasonable human beings. I'm beginning to feel more sure of myself, you know—confident and all the rest of it. Do—do you know what I should like to do to celebrate that broken record?'

Miss Slade shook her head without looking at him. Peter was glad of this, for he felt quite sure that if she once looked at him, he would never have the courage to continue. He glanced cautiously round to make quite sure there was no one in their immediate vicinity, and then said in a hoarse whisper, 'I would like you and me to—to spend an evening together—g-go to some place of amusement, you know; er—will you?'

She looked up at him with her frank, sad smile. 'I should like to very much indeed.'

Peter, greatly relieved, breathed heavily. 'Then shall we say—Friday?' he asked eagerly.

'No! No! not Friday! not Friday!' she answered in a low, vehement voice. 'Let it be to-morrow or Thursday—yes, Thursday—please say Thursday!' She looked at him appealingly, and with that look half admitted her secret.

'Why, certainly,' he stammered; 'Thursday by all means—it's awfully good of you to come at all.' His heart was singing 'she cares! she cares!—she cares a little anyhow—she told me so—she *looked* it. To think that such a wonderful girl should care even a little for a clumsy, blundering creature like me.'

For the rest of the day the under-manager worked like ten men; he felt that he had something to work for now, and he was grimly determined to make a success of his job. It never once occurred to him that there might be a special significance in Miss Slade's desire to accompany him on any evening except Friday. He considered that the strangeness of her manner was sufficiently accounted for by the disturbing effect of the silent avowal which had passed between them.

(Continued on page 107.)

THE ICEBERG PERIL.

By P. T. McGRATH.

I.

TRANSATLANTIC shipping is imperilled by the presence of icebergs in the shipping track. In the path of the greyhounds of the sea, the great, swift-moving steamships, which are carrying almost their maximum of passengers at these seasons, there is one danger which all mariners fear. Captains can take the bridge in the face of a storm, stand for hours upon an icy deck, or be lashed to a stanchion on the bridge, with the feeling that it is but a question of time when the huge boat will cease rolling under the violence of the waters and will be safe. The most severe storms scarcely disturb the gigantic liners which to-day cross the ocean under full steam pressure. There is a greater danger, however,—one so grave and so much feared that some years ago the big companies issued an order changing the route across the Atlantic many miles to the south of the track which had been followed so long.

This is the season of the year when icebergs tear themselves loose from the fields of the frozen north, and are caught by currents and trade winds and sent southward across the track of many passenger ships and freighters. Off the coast of Newfoundland, many a ship has suffered in recent years, with a portion of her bow shattered as a tin cup might be broken against a rock. To the south of this point there is almost the same degree of danger, but the list of accidents is smaller because of the vigilance exercised by the officers of ships which are carrying thousands of lives.

It has been said that old mariners can 'smell' an iceberg ten miles away. This may not be true literally, but it is a fact that the presence of a great mass of ice is noticed through a change in the temperature. The captain, when near iceberg areas, keeps a sharp eye on the thermometer for a sudden fall, and at once slows down if such be noted. Recently an iceberg was reported as having been sighted in a latitude which brought it directly in the path of the Atlantic liners. It was one thousand feet long and one hundred feet in height.

In May and June the limits of the ice-drift may extend as far south on the Atlantic as latitude 39° 30' N. in longitude 42° W., and as far south as latitude 39° N. in longitude 44° W. But it is only in seasons when icebergs are exceptionally large and numerous that they get so far south. During June 1885 bergs were in unusually great numbers, and a few drifted south on the 47th meridian to within forty-five miles of its intersection with the 40th parallel. But after June, owing to the increased

strength of the warm current, the ice limit in this region recedes well to the northward.

The forerunners of the bergs are the melting floes which sweep down from Labrador after the New Year, carrying in their midst, like ships on the ocean, countless towering masses of dazzling purity. As the spring advances they become more numerous, and in the early summer their numbers are largest and they are detached from any ice floe, though they defy the sun until they reach the Gulf Stream. In one week, in April 1903, more than eighty steamers arriving at American ports gave data to the Hydrographic Office of bergs they had seen, and in July one steamer arriving at St John's reported passing 118 of them. Off Belle Isle Strait about the same time nine were counted in a day's run by a little mail boat that plies to Labrador. The larger ones grind along the Newfoundland coast, and melt, topple over, break into several pieces, and float away south, to become a menace to Atlantic liners and to cargo carriers hurrying along the ocean lane.

The Grand Banks is the worst area. There bergs are found enshrouded in the fog that nearly always veils the region through the comingling of the heated Gulf Stream and the frigid Labrador current, and in this murky atmosphere fishing vessels, tramp steamers, and passenger boats alike come upon them with disastrous results. Not a few of the sea's mysteries in the disappearance of big steamers, like the *Naronic*, or the *Huronian*, or of small trawling smacks, are certainly due to this cause, and it is only the special Providence that seems to wait upon sailors which prevents the total of these catastrophes from being far greater.

II.

The year 1923 was almost unexampled in the abundance of these crystal islands, and the early period in the season at which they showed themselves in such numbers. Towards the end of January their advance guard was sighted off the Newfoundland coast, and every week they became larger and more numerous. During March and April these ramparts adrift were a constant menace to the big liners, which, trying to make fast passages, had to risk more chances than mere freighters, so that more than one greyhound came within an ace of meeting her end thereby. As early as 20th March 1908, the steamship *Savoie*, on arriving at New York, reported sighting an icefield 200 miles long floating directly in the path of incoming steamboats.

As an instance of the magnitude of this iceberg peril in recent years there may be mentioned

the case of the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.*, which on 9th April 1911 counted thirty-two large bergs within the range of vision. The *Teutonic* the next day sighted thirty-nine, and the *Caronia* two days later passed forty-six. The *Toronto* in the same week counted seventy-two between sunrise and sunset; the *Majestic* saw fifty-five about the same time; the *Chemnitz* dodged among eighty or more of them; and the *Minneapolis* brought a report of sixty-three.

All these icy masses which infest the North Atlantic steamer-track have their origin in the frigid Greenland fiords, where mighty glaciers, real solid Niagaras, are formed from the vast ice-cap which covers that remote Arctic region and move resistlessly on to the sea, where each summer they 'calve' or give off enormous fragments, which, dividing and sub-dividing again and again and again, become the bergs so much dreaded by the springtime voyager. These northern monarchs are borne down in stately procession from the dreaded Baffin Bay on the Labrador current, which sweeps past the eastern coast of Newfoundland, across the Grand Banks and into the Gulf Stream, where they gradually disappear under the influence of the increasingly powerful rays of a more vertical sun and the higher temperature of the surface water.

The most extraordinary narrative in the annals of absolutely authentic adventure is that of the escape of the crew of the exploring steamer *Polaris*, who, on 15th October 1873, went adrift on a mass of ice, twenty-seven persons in all, in northern Greenland waters, and, after being 195 days on this strange raft, were picked up, safe and unharmed, by the Newfoundland sealing steamer *Tigress*, 30th April 1873, having drifted southward eighteen hundred miles and escaped countless and almost incredible dangers.

During their long journey down past Labrador and Newfoundland the bergs do not remain of the same shape as when first broken off from the parent glacier or sundered again by internal fractures or grounding on reefs, but frequently turn a somersault to accommodate themselves to the changed centre of gravity of the berg. Admiral Markham, in his exploring cruise in Melville Bay, in 1887, counted between seven hundred and eight hundred bergs, all under way for sunnier climes, and some of them exceedingly large. One of them he estimated to have been six hundred feet high and eighteen hundred long. The tallest berg ever reported about the liner track was one observed by the steamship *Mineola* in June 1890, which was seven hundred feet from water-line to summit; while the *Hafis*, in May 1892, sighted one which was over six hundred feet high. Bergs three to four hundred feet high and one thousand to fifteen hundred feet long are by no means uncommon along the Newfoundland coast, but they usually ground on the Grand Banks, are

buffeted by storms, and split themselves into many lesser fragments. These bergs are not dangerous in clear weather, because they can easily be made out when long distances away, and can therefore be avoided; but from April till October the Grand Banks are almost always veiled in fog, and it is then that the menace of these ghostly wanderers most oppresses liner captains and mariners generally. Only the vigilance now enforced prevents terrible disasters, and even as it is many stout cargo boats are sent to the bottom every year from this cause.

The *Arizona*, in 1879, then the queen of the flyers, tore away her bow and came near sinking by striking a large iceberg off Cape Race in November, when most shipmasters thought the ocean was at last free of these pests. But now that the United States Hydrographic Office has taken to recording all the reports about these pallid wayfarers of the waters, it is known that they are to be found there every week of the year. The *Arizona* put into St John's, had her bows rebuilt of wood, and made her way to New York after taking two hundred tons of ice out of her forepeak, where it had forced itself in the collision.

Ten years previously, in August, the steamer *Vicksburg* was sunk by collision with a berg in the same region, when sixty-five persons perished; and in 1863 the *Canadian* was also sent to the bottom, with a loss of forty-five persons. The next July an emigrant vessel from Ireland to Montreal perished there by ramming a berg, and of one hundred and sixty-two persons aboard her only four escaped. Another terrible tragedy occurred in May 1897, when the French fishing schooner *Vaillant* plumped into a frozen wall on the Grand Banks, and seventy perished. Another fishing schooner picked up four survivors out of twelve who got away in two boats. They had barely been able to keep themselves alive, being adrift six days and nights without food or water, and suffering dreadfully from frost-burn because of being unsheltered and only partly clad.

III.

Newfoundland mariners are always on the alert for bergs, because they are never absent from these waters, and even the vigilance and expertness of the hardy fisherfolk do not prevent many a fatality. The barque *Nellie* left St John's one May morning two or three years ago, and before nightfall the two solitary survivors of her crew of ten were taken off a spar by a fishing smack, the vessel and the other eight having gone down through the ship tilting against a berg in a sudden fog. The schooner *Albatross*, with a crew of twenty-two sealmen, was never heard of after she sailed in March 1903, and the general impression is that she struck a berg and went down. In April 1904, the steamer *Grand Lake*, while engaged in the

seal fishery, with two hundred men aboard, rammed a big berg on the Banks and narrowly escaped foundering, getting back to St John's with all her crew busily engaged pumping and bailing her out. A like mishap befell the *Newfoundland*, which was employed in the same hunt in April 1898, and her plight was even worse, for her sides were crushed by a floe as she tried to escape, and she reached port in almost a sinking condition.

Sometimes even the staunch and specially-built vessels engaged in the Newfoundland seal fishery are unable to withstand the contact with floes or bergs, and within the last ten years the *Wolf*, one of the finest of her class afloat; the *Hope*, which had an enviable record in Arctic exploration; the *Mastiff*, which had been built originally by the British Admiralty for northern work; the *Resolute*, a one-time Scottish whaler; and the *Elliot*—all succumbed to the terrible forces which nature exerts in this fashion; and it would require pages to tell of the mishaps to coasting and sailing craft in this region which have come to grief before these ice-monsters.

St John's is the haven of refuge every year for ships disabled by contact with bergs, which have to be docked for repairs to bows or hulls. In July 1897 the *Concordia* put in with her whole bow torn off by a berg, and only her front bulkhead to withstand the strain of forcing two hundred miles through the ocean to reach a shelter. The *Knight Bachelor* was almost an identical case, and the *Hatasu* another. The *John Bright*, the *Addington*, and the *Rotterdam*, to mention only a few, were similarly smitten. All these had to get wooden bows to continue their voyages. What small prospect of escape the crews of such crafts have is proved by the case of the *Castlegate*, which, in March 1893, was crushed and sunk off Newfoundland, her men taking to the floe and being adrift thereon for two days and nights till rescued by the sealer *Diana* at the beginning of a blizzard which they could never have survived, for it battered the ice into chowder and would have overwhelmed them.

Big passenger steamers frequently find themselves in dire peril from bergs, as was the experience of the liner *Normannia*, now the French flyer *L'Aquitaine*, on the Grand Banks on 31st May 1890, when, having threaded her way through a wide array of bergs, she put on speed and was racing ahead till a fog shut down. Then a crystal barrier interposed, upon which she escaped impaling herself only by the prompt working of her twin screws in opposite directions, causing her to spin round on her heel and just graze the berg with her side as she passed it.

The *City of Beril* struck a berg in a fog on the Banks three years later, but fortunately was going at reduced speed, else she would have torn her forepart asunder. Even as it was, her stem was telescoped, her forepart was shattered,

and the falling of a hundred tons of ice about her decks made a wreck of all the gear and fittings from the bowsprit to the foremast. Her sister ship, the *City of Rome*, hit a low-lying berg in September 1900, and knocked off her stem below the water-line, leaving an aperture large enough to admit an automobile. The crash alarmed the passengers, who were at lunch at the time, and a panic-stricken crowd rushed on deck; but there was seen to be no cause for alarm. The Swedish steamer *Nordcap*, with four hundred emigrants, hit a similar berg off Cape Race in May 1901, and sustained such damages that she had to put into St John's to effect repairs. This was also the experience of the French steamer *Burgundia* off St Pierre in March 1903, with one thousand French fishermen aboard, whom she was transporting to that port to engage in the cod fishery, and of whom twelve perished by the dismantling of the fore-castle in which they were lodged.

The *Scale* was another liner that rammed a berg, striking it a glancing blow as she swung round on sighting it; but the pressure of the mighty mass flung her over on her side until it was feared she would sink. Indeed, the coal in her bunkers ran over because of this, and she made port with a heavy list. The *Portia*, when off Newfoundland in 1895, ran near a berg to enable some passengers to 'snapshot' it, but went upon a sunken portion of the ice, disturbed its equilibrium, and was being lifted up out of water by the swaying mass, when her weight broke off the fragment which held her and she sank back in her native element again. The *Caspian*, with five hundred and fifty emigrants aboard, bound for Montreal, near Cape Race in 1891 in a thick fog, drove against a berg and shattered her bow so badly that she was barely able to reach St John's, so fast did the water gain on her pumps. The *Erl King*, in 1892, met a like mishap when entering Belle Isle Strait with seven hundred and twenty emigrants, and had to make this port stern first to relieve the strain on her leaky forward bulkhead. The French liner *Gascogne*, with six hundred aboard, came near being overwhelmed by ice on the Grand Banks in April 1898, having been caught there with a broken shaft, and was in extreme peril for several days, until the floe swept her bodily southward into warmer water and was then dispersed by a stiff breeze, which set her free. The German liner *Bulgaria*, in 1901, was compelled to seek harbour at St John's, with nearly one thousand passengers, having injured her propeller amid the floes.

IV.

Of course the most terrible marine disaster attributable to ice was the loss of the White Star liner *Titanic* on 15th April 1912, though this ship was destroyed by a floe and not by a berg. Through a mistaken idea of the strength

of the ship, Captain Smith, of the *Titanic*, drove her at full speed on her maiden voyage through masses of flat or floe ice on the southern edge of the sailing track, he being ambitious to break all records in trans-Atlantic passages by proceeding on a straight course, instead of skirting it, as other ships did, to escape contact with this floating crystal field. The flinty mass tore open the ship's side along several compartments, she filled with water, and shortly after sank with a loss of 1503 souls. She carried 898 crew and 1308 passengers, or 2206 in all, of whom 703 were saved, 210 crew and 493 passengers. Thanks to wireless telegraphy the Cunard Liner *Carpathia* was summoned, and, reaching the scene next morning, rescued the survivors.

As a means of recording the movements of both ice-fields and bergs, nearly all of them are reported to the United States Hydrographic Office, and are bulletined, with their exact location and size, at the various branches of the office. The *Hydrographic Bulletin*, a weekly journal published by the Government, and dis-

tributed without charge to mariners, consists almost entirely of reports of derelicts, wreckage, and ice sighted by steamers. On the pilot chart, published monthly by the Government, the distribution of icefields and bergs is shown in minute detail.

As for the origin of the North Atlantic bergs, most of them—the tardier ones—wander south from Greenland, while the early arrivals are products of Labrador and the north-eastern Canadas. Born of the great glaciers of the north, they generally begin to leave home in February, foraging for some weeks in the extreme North Atlantic. On the Labrador coast, as soon as warmer weather arrives, the disintegration of the glacier passes begins. Huge crevices appear, and soon solid mountains of ice begin crumbling, sometimes falling from vast heights with a roar resembling tropical thunder. A favourable wind eventually carrying these icebergs out to sea, they are caught by the Arctic current and freighted southward into warmer waters.

DIGGING FOR DIAMONDS

By WILLIAM ARDOUIN.

I.

IT is an established fact that some of the finest diamonds in the world come from the Kimberley 'River Diggings' and the surrounding areas, yet when these gems sparkle on the necks and hands of rank and fashion, on the society beauties of the different capitals of Europe, amidst happy surroundings of luxury and comfort, one often wonders whether the hard life of the lonely, rugged river digger, who wins these stones from nature's virgin soil, ever enters into consideration. Oftentimes he will ply his thankless task on South African veld in districts which have been relieved of the usual charm and picturesqueness of the country by unwieldy heaps of debris, which crop up with unfailing regularity all along the diggings, and in the majority of cases mark an abandoned claim of an unsuccessful exploiter. It may be that for months on end he has never had a 'find,' during which time he may have been compelled to submit to a process of semi-starvation and to endeavour to sustain life on the common and unattractive 'mealie-pap' fare of the country, patiently living in hope that his efforts will one day be rewarded, and that 'something will turn up.'

Located on different sites within an area of many scores of miles are these diggings, and when it is proposed that certain districts shall be 'proclaimed' for this purpose, an announcement is publicly made to this effect. As the time draws near for the ground to be thrown open, crowds flock from all parts of South Africa

to peg out their claims. The old Boer farmer with his wagon and oxen will be accompanied by the whole of his family retinue. Professional men, journalists, actors, prospectors, clerks, miners, the flotsam and jetsam of the Johannesburg Reef and other large South African towns will hurriedly arrive upon the scene. The South African 'wallabyite' will also be there, not as a rule with the intention of working a claim, but pegging it with the object of some one else making a bid for it. The hour mentioned in the proclamation has arrived, a government official makes the announcement, and the diamond rush commences in earnest. Prospective diggers, who have previously located their ground, rush out in all directions, and once the pegs have been inserted, their ownership in them has been for the time being acquired, which entails payment of a nominal amount to the owner of the ground by way of licence. Excitement usually runs high on these occasions, and there is not infrequently some exhibition of horseplay.

It is a criminal offence in South Africa to be in possession of unwrought stones, and long sentences of imprisonment are imposed for a contravention of the country's laws. In the case of a licensed digger, however, he is called upon to register any finds he may make at the local magistracy, after which he is at liberty to dispose of them to any licensed diamond buyer visiting the property. The registration of the stones, the fact that the debris on his claim is likely to be inspected at any time, and

that he is the owner of the claim, exclude him from the operation of the Act so far as having unwrought stones in his possession is concerned.

II.

On the buyers' arrival, usually a red or a yellow flag is hoisted, and those who have become fortunate possessors of these gems from the earth file out towards the buyers. The stones offered are carefully examined, tested, and weighed; then a price is quoted. If it is not accepted the business is presumed to be off. But, as a rule, money is not too plentiful; and the life of a diamond digger being a precarious one at the best of times, there is very little hesitation in accepting the buyer's offer.

Many years ago, when the Harrisdale diggings near Kimberley were declared open, a certain individual was attracted thereto, and in the course of the first week found two exceptionally large stones. He showed them to an occupant of an adjoining claim, a man whose name was similar to that of one of the geological 'bantams' discovered on the fields, who had spent practically a lifetime at this occupation, made many fortunes and lost them again. He declared the stones to be exceptionally beautiful specimens and worth £8000, if they were worth a penny. The buyer arrived the next day and the stones were brought to him. After some time an offer of £2000 was made for them. 'But I have been advised,' said the seller, 'by one of the best authorities on these fields that the stones are worth £8000.' No advance, however, was made, and the offer was declined. Subsequently another buyer was approached, who was prepared to do business only at £1750. This also was refused. A third buyer was approached; £1500 was offered and declined. This was very puzzling to a man admittedly somewhat lacking in business acumen, who had practically made a fortune on a single throw of the dice, if he could have received adequate value for the stones. After a week's delay, the stones were again brought up to the original buyer who had offered £2000. 'I have had an adverse report on these stones,' he said, 'and as there are several faults in them I am not now prepared to offer you more than £1500.' This offer was inconsiderately and foolishly accepted by the somewhat crestfallen owner.

When the Christiana fields were opened for exploitation they attracted one of the biggest rushes ever known in the history of these diamond fields, around which so much romance has at times been woven. The majority returned sadder but wiser men and women, but to all 'digging' apparently offered an interesting and attractive form of occupation.

III.

At the properties which are referred to in this article, the digging operations are carried on

in a very primitive manner. Two tubs, two or three sieves, fine and coarse, a large metal slab, picks, shovels, tents, canvas, etc., as a rule compose the stock in trade. The debris that comes from diamondiferous soil is very dazzling to the eyes, to protect which it is necessary to wear goggles. Water has to be paid for at so much a bucket, and unless the claim is situated close to the river it often happens that the carter of water makes a much better living than the exploiter of stones.

As a rule, within about three feet from the surface of the earth, the diamondiferous soil is located; then the bright pebbles, bantams, garnets, crystals, etc., make their appearance. When this debris has been finally washed and sieved, in order that the sand, mud, etc., attaching to them may be left behind, the most interesting operation in a digger's life arrives. The diamond itself, being heavier than the other stones and gravel, would sink to the bottom of the sieve during the course of the washing operations, and therefore when it is overturned on to the slab the diamond would appear at the top of the debris. Although nearly all the other stones are dazzling in colour, the appearance of the unwrought stone is so distinguishable that it can be immediately recognised, and with one rebound the digger's heart jumps to high flights of possibilities. The gem is eagerly seized, carefully deposited somewhere on the person, and, if discretion should prevail, the disclosure is not made to neighbouring claim-holders until the buyer arrives.

Washing debris in this manner is one of the most absorbing occupations that can be engaged in. The time goes by with surprising rapidity. Excitement and enthusiasm are kept up to an unusual pitch, as one never knows what may turn up next. Sometimes diggers find little time to eat or smoke, so much is the time begrudged from their precious undertaking.

Many years ago, when the writer of this article was travelling through Bloemhof, after a period of adventure on the diggings, the station-master remarked: 'I wonder that some of you fellows have never come to Bloemhof to try your luck. Recently a Kaffir woman found a black stone on the banks of the Vaal river, and it has often been rumoured that others have found stones and never disclosed them.' Years afterwards it became necessary to pass through this part of the country again. Bloemhof had some little time previously been declared open as a river digging, and within a short space of time a large township had sprung up; stores were established, houses built, hotels installed, and the whole area enjoyed a halo of prosperity. People had rushed up from all over the sub-continent, and many tens of thousands of pounds worth of precious gems were taken from Bloemhof's virgin soil.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

MY WIFE AND I.

By T. HERAPATH.

PART I.

I.

'VERY probably, Dick,' said my uncle dryly; 'very probably.'

I had been trying to explain to him that the reason why my grandfather, and Uncle Richard's father, had left the Earlesharte estate to me, a good-for-nothing stripling of one-and-twenty, instead of to him, my senior by nineteen years, was because I was such a ne'er-do-weel that there was no other way of steadying me. To be sure, I was the son of the eldest son, and Uncle Richard but the second son; still, it seemed a hard thing that a man of forty should suddenly become cadet, as 'twere, to the lad who had been his subject of cane and lecture for the last ten years. True, he was to live in the house, by the provisions of my grandfather's will, and was to receive a sufficient income, so that his circumstances were practically unaltered. Who, indeed, would think of turning him out? 'Twould be a black heart that would not make him welcome of all the amends that could be offered to him; nor could I imagine Earlesharte Hall without his solid proprietary presence, his grave countenance, his solemn voice. I would have begged his continued company, if only to do the honours of the Hall, to 'welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.' But he had been more or less the regent of Earlesharte ever since I could remember, and I relied on him for much more than this. I needed him to keep the bailiff in subjection (that worthy personage having a will of his own, too often expressed), to check the accounts, to mark such timber as should be felled, to decide what calves should be sold, and what kept. Above and beyond all, to supply the dignity, and inspire the respect, which I felt quite incapable of supplying and inspiring in my own person, as my position required.

'But I shall still do my best for the estate, Dick—and for 'you, and for you,' continued my uncle, filling his big chair in an attitude characteristically magisterial, while I swung my long legs from the table in front of him.

The remark was illuminating; it sketched

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the future, so to speak, in a nutshell; it swept in the line of my uncle's point of view, and I stopped swinging my legs to contemplate it.

Nothing was changed, then. That was evident. It came as a shock. My late-born feelings of compunction, and impulses for reparation, were nipped. My visions of liberty (somewhat airy, it must be confessed, and undefined) were disagreeably clouded, and began to dwindle rapidly behind familiar barriers.

Uncle Richard's conscientious benevolence was to be exercised, as of yore. He was not so much wronged as I had supposed. His talent for administration was still to be employed. He had administrated Earlesharte, and me, for the past eighteen years; he was going to administrate us still.

I saw all this in a flash, but I felt helpless. 'Tis not in my nature to quarrel with anybody; I have trouble enough with the man who tries to sell me a bad horse. I summoned all the forces of my manhood to bear up against Cotterell, the bailiff, when our opinions differed to a serious extent. Add training to disposition, and you will perceive how impossible it was that I should withstand Uncle Richard.

Our interview ended with the situation tacitly, but unmistakably, defined. I was conscious, not of defeat, for I had never striven, but of resumption (some one is helping me with the writing out of this, or I should never explain it half so well, nor have the use of such words); a little surprised pity may have floated on the surface of my mind at the memory of the dreams I had abandoned. But 'twas never my way to think long about anything, certainly not about anything unpleasant; and I accepted the renewed conditions with, I dare say, a sense of relief. After all, a state of thralldom has its compensations; I get into difficulties enough, even under the strict supervision which I now— But this is anticipating.

II.

For a time things went well. I was more my own master in public, at any rate, than heretofore; and, fortunately, Uncle Richard conceived it to be part of my duty as a country gentleman

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to hunt almost as often as I was minded. I had some ado with rents, and accounts, and so forth, which it seemed 'twas proper I should look at. Otherwise, I contrived to fill my time pretty comfortably with fishing, and a little cock-fighting, and what not, just as before.

'Twas when I had been the nominal owner of Earlesharte for six months that a blow fell—the blow. It descended quite unsuspected, and unforeseen. I had taken it for granted that the years would slip away in comparative ease and irresponsibility for an indefinite period, which I had not troubled my mind by forecasting more explicitly. Perhaps I should have to sit on the local bench of magistrates, a prospect at which I shuddered, but felt convinced, from my uncle's daily lectures on the responsibilities of a landed proprietor, I should sooner or later have to face. But beyond this, and a few more vague conjectures or presentiments, I had not gone.

It therefore came as a great shock to me when my uncle said one evening, as we were sitting over our wine, 'Dick, I have for some months past been more and more occupied with the thought of a solemn duty which it is now time to consider.'

I had been out all day with the Hertshire hounds, and was in the pleasant, lazy mood of a man who has plenty fresh air inside him. I was startled, but reluctant to quit my inward ease, though I knew the words were ominous. Still, I had no notion of what was coming, or you may be sure I should have fled the room 'instantly' on some pretext or another.

'Yes, uncle,' I said drowsily. 'Have some more port—or what do you say, shall we send for a bottle of the yellow seal?' For I was experienced enough to try to stop him, you see.

Uncle Richard was not to be put off, as, indeed, he very rarely could be. 'The subject, Dick,' he returned, 'is that of your marriage.'

I sat up at that. 'My marriage, sir!' I cried. 'Why, I'm but just twenty-one!'

'Very good, Dick. Your father was married at the same age.'

'Ah,' said I, 'I dare say.' For my father was more like Uncle Richard, in some ways. 'But you call it a solemn duty, sir, and I'd rather have more time to think about it before I undertake it. I think in another ten years, maybe—'

'Tut, tut, tut!' said Uncle Richard indulgently. 'A young man of your age ought to be thinking of marriage, Dick. Why, when I was twenty-one—' Here he recollected that he was unwed, and coughed away the allusion, if 'twas going to be one, to a selected, but hypothetical Mrs Earlesharte of the past. 'When I was twenty-one,' he presently pursued, 'I thought seriously on all subjects—("I'll warrant you did," thought I)—although, as I was not in the same position that you are, Dick—the poor

man brought it out with something of an effort, manfully concealed—'I may not have given my attention so particularly to that especial step.'

Oh Uncle Richard, Uncle Richard! And yet you turn red under your periwig as you say it! What lady, I wonder, denied you the happy right to protect and guide a more docile charge, and to superintend the upbringing of your own little olive-shoots instead of your brother's unruly scion? She must have struck you a shrewd blow, whoever she was, to cut you off for ever from those innocent exercises of your native talent, and cause your brow to mantle even now!

'Well, sir,' said I sulkily, 'and who am I to marry?'

He answered quite readily. 'The lady I have in view is Miss Kitty Cunningham.'

'What, little Kitty Cunningham of Long Edge? She's at school, ain't she? I've not seen her these five years.'

'She is coming home shortly. I broached the subject with Sir Lewis, and he gave me to understand that he was perfectly willing she should be settled in life. She is seventeen.'

'What!' cried I. 'You broached the subject, without my consent? Who's to say that I'm willing?'

Uncle Richard looked at me, and threw out his chest, as his manner was when slightly offended. 'I *approached* it,' he returned forbearingly. 'The matter, of course, is one for your own decision. I merely tried the ground.'

He evidently supposed that he had been doing his duty as my father, or my guardian, or both rolled into one, whatever he imagined himself constituted. That an impression of some sort had been conveyed to Sir Lewis Cunningham, who was not a gentleman to be trifled with, was clear. Probably my uncle, in his lumbering way, had given a stronger one than he intended or realised, and had gone far enough, if not to compromise my honour, at least to involve its nicety.

I began to foresee that the next event in my career would be my marriage with Miss Kitty Cunningham.

III.

'How far has it gone, sir?' I asked Uncle Richard politely, three days later at breakfast. I had just received a ceremonious note from Sir Lewis Cunningham, inviting me to dinner at Long Edge on the following Wednesday.

My uncle surveyed me heavily from under his brows. 'To what do you refer, Dick?'

'To the suggestions which I understand you made to Sir Lewis the other day? What did you say, precisely? I am not engaged to Miss Cunningham, am I?'

'Hardly yet,' said my uncle, looking shocked. 'Hardly yet!'

'Oh, very well. I wanted to be sure, you

know, because I am to dine there next week. How far did you and he get? Did you talk about marriage settlements, or anything like that?'

He was not quite certain how to take me. 'Ha . . . ahem,' he said at length. 'No—we spoke of the properties, but it went no further.'

'You didn't say, for instance, that we were of suitable ages, and that I wanted a wife?'

'I did not,' said my uncle, 'compare your age with Miss Cunningham's, but I certainly remarked that you were arriving at the time of life when it is desirable to settle down, and that your position required to be graced by—'

'Oh, my dear uncle!' I interrupted him, with a groan. 'Did you really say that? And to Sir Lewis, too . . . the sharpest old vulture in the county! Did he think it was a message?'

My uncle was struck, not with contrition, for he was supported by an immovable satisfaction in his own conduct, but by some degree of compassion for my dismay. 'Tut, tut,' he said. 'Wait till you've seen her, my boy. It'll be time enough to say whether you like it or not, then. I warrant you'll fall in love with her, straight off, take my word for't.'

I did not reply that it seemed I should have to take his word for the whole business. I hoped for the best, and went a-fishing to distract my mind.

IV.

Ah, and now I pause, and tenderer thoughts for Uncle Richard begin to reproach me when I think upon the young barbarian that I was, and the sweet civilisation he brought me into, though I liked the approaching of it no better than a colt likes his first harness! To think that I told my man Camp, when I came in late from a day by the river on the Wednesday evening, not to be so particular in winding my cravat, and grumbled at Mrs Allison for pinning a moss-rose in my coat—because Uncle Richard looked the finer young gentleman of the two, she said! The news was gone round the household already that I was setting out a-courting; no doubt, I thought, riding down the avenue in a very bad temper beside my composed and benevolent companion, 'twould soon be round the country-side too.

I remember that the honeysuckle was scenting the hedges as we rode along the Westbury road to Long Edge, and that the trees of the park were dark with the full green of summer; so pleasant it was, with a light breeze from the east just puffing in our faces, and the shadows lying long on the grass, that I wished we might have stayed out there under the elms, instead of approaching nearer the square white house within its flowering shrubberies and clipped lawns.

Sir Lewis's great, dark rooms were cool enough, however, and for once I found them tolerable. As a rule, I am never so uncomfortable as

when I am in the Midas-and-Pluto drawing-room at Long Edge (we at Earlesharte have a good old fashioned parlour, and much more agreeable 'tis) or the Pluto-without-the-Midas dining-room; the one hung round with the portraits of Sir Lewis's ancestors, as severe looking as himself, and the other decorated with gold-framed mirrors and Lady Cunningham's embroidery pictures—samplers, I think she calls them, though who could have been such a fool as to sit or stand for the original ensemble of her blotted-featured ladies and poker-like gallants is more than I can imagine.

I remembered little Kitty Cunningham vaguely, and should have had some good-humoured pleasure in seeing her again, and in finding any kind of relief in the society at Long Edge, but for the circumstances that attached to the dinner-party. I expected to meet a little black-haired thing with shy, dark eyes and romping ways. Instead, there stood up before me at Lady Cunningham's side a slim creature, full of fairy dignity, looking, in her green gown, for all the world like a sheathed lily growing in a dull, alien place.

Not even the consciousness of Uncle Richard's betraying satisfaction, of Sir Lewis's stern gaze, or of my Lady Cunningham's critical one could put me out of countenance as I bent over the small white hand extended to me, and saw (through my eyelashes, as 'twere) how the jetty curls fell over her neck when she curtsied. My heart was gone from that moment. When at last we came away, Uncle Richard and I, my mind was fully made up that Kitty Cunningham and no other should be the Lady of Earlesharte.

V.

I did not allow a hint of my resolution to escape me, however. When Uncle Richard asked me, with a sly glance and a doubling of his chin, how I liked the young lady, I answered as carelessly as I could (for my brain was in a whirl of sweet excitement) that I liked her very well, but that she was little more than a child.

'Hum, hum, hum,' said Uncle Richard, still doubling his chins together. 'You stayed by her side the whole evening, sir.'

'I supposed that was what you wanted me to do, sir,' said I. And Uncle Richard replied seriously, 'Quite right, Dick, quite right,' never suspecting that my remark covered newly-hatched thoughts of rebellion.

For you are not to conclude that, in resolving to marry Kitty, I was submitting to him again, part and parcel. On the contrary, I saw that now or never I must make a stand, not only for my own sake but for hers. I pondered upon it as we rode along, and it came to me more and more plainly that if I allowed Uncle Richard to engineer this whole business, and take credit to himself for it, both I and my wife, and my children too, as far as that went, if I had any

would be in leading-strings for the term of Uncle Richard's natural existence.

'No!' said I to myself, slapping Cornet's neck. 'Whatever I do, or don't do, I won't bring *her* under his thumb.'

Cornet gave a start, and Uncle Richard looked round in surprise, but I took no notice. Visions rose before me of little Kitty, ground out of independence by his supervision, and suppressed by his heavy notions of propriety. I could imagine his pompous dicta on what became the Lady of Earlscharte. 'No!' I said to myself, again, and this time I gave Cornet a cut across

the withers that sent him headlong over the grass by the road-side for the next hundred yards.

'You shouldn't do that, my boy,' said Uncle Richard, coming up, puffing.

'Do what, sir?' said I.

'Allow your horse to carry you off in that precipitate manner,' returned he. No doubt I had frightened his own.

'I suppose I can do as I please,' retorted I; and Uncle Richard rode along with his chest thrown out.

(Continued on page 125.)

ART, A PRODUCT OF SURROUNDINGS.

By DONALD M. HENSCHEL.

I.

ART is universally regarded as one of the most brilliant achievements of mankind, a product of the highest impulse of human nature. It is a thing which all men, save those of imperfect or perverse minds, have always readily appreciated. The contemplation of artistic productions excites a pleasurable sensation, even among the uninitiated, which is nothing else than the gratification of that remarkable lust for beauty and perfection, the heritage of humanity.

But the artistic aspirations of men in different parts of the world have sought their fulfilment in lines so utterly divergent, that what, in some countries, are considered the most exquisite representations of beauty would be regarded by other nations as the consummation of ugliness. In our age we exercise a certain amount of toleration toward all opinions, but what, do you think, would have been the criticism of a connoisseur of the Græco-Roman period had he been miraculously transported to the interior of a Buddhist pagoda in China? He would probably have classified the grotesque paintings, the elaborately carved ivories, the intricate reliefs, as the work of primitive savages. Yet Chinese art has been developed to a far more advanced degree of perfection than that of Greece and Rome.

This great difference in the conception of beauty in various countries is largely due to a difference in the national, or racial, characteristics, but its fundamental and primary cause is undoubtedly geography.

Let us consider for one moment the particular aspects of artistic impulse amongst the oldest civilised people of the earth, the Egyptians. Egypt consists of the lengthy and narrow tract watered by the river Nile. On each side it is bounded by vast, almost unbroken, stretches of desert. The endlessness of these sandy plains, emphasised by the clear atmosphere and the

general flatness of the soil, must have, at an early period, profoundly impressed the natives with the immensity and grandeur of Nature. Hence their passion for beauty must needs find its satisfaction in the colossal. Thus they erected those mighty pyramids, those towering obelisks, which have caused the astoundment of all succeeding generations. Thus they carved, in the midst of impenetrable sands, the stone features of the mysterious Sphinx, expressive of the silent wisdom behind Nature, the unsolved riddle of the ages.

Turn your attention, now, to the characteristic specimens of the art of Assyria. The bas-reliefs of ancient Nineveh represent, for the most part, scenes of combat, of hot action; the sacking of cities, the torment of captives, the collection of booty. It is a formidable display of vigorous human action, full of fierceness, of cruelty, of exultation. This, again, is the product of geographical conditions. Assyria, the upper valley of the Tigris, is a land bordered by mountains, provided with an uncertain, irregular supply of water, and exposed, moreover, to cold winds. The stony nature of the soil, unfavourable to agriculture, exacted from the Assyrian peasant stern and resolute toil. Thus he grew hard and wiry, an energetic fighting-man, insensible to fear and pity. And his nature was reflected in his art, pervading its details and imprinting on it a particular stamp.

Consider India, that marvellous continent of luxurious vegetation, of inextricable jungles haunted by innumerable species of wild animals, of virgin forests, whose intertwined boughs form the sporting-ground of chattering monkeys, of swamps infested by monstrous reptiles. Everywhere the eye is met by testimonies of the manifold wealth of Nature. And India has faithfully reproduced the multifarious bounty of her soil and climate in her art. Her complicated statues of many-limbed deities, her interminable epics, celebrating the numerous incarnations of her gods, her vast subterranean

temples, attest the spirit inculcated in the native by his surroundings.

The idealisation of the beauties of Nature has undoubtedly found its noblest embodiment in the art of ancient Greece. The azure sky, the emerald foliage, the rocky inlets and promontories, formed ample material for the inspiration of the poet and the sculptor. And it was not merely the outward scenery which attracted their fancy. Popular imagination, attributing the phenomena of the earth to the agency of particular deities, peopled the landscape with supernatural beings. The woodland became the sporting-ground of Satyrs, every tree the home of a Dryad, who watched over its growth and pervaded its foliage. On the mountains roamed the Oreads; the Nereïds inhabited the rocky caverns submerged by the sea, and Oceanids guided the course of springs and rivulets through mysterious subterranean channels into the sacred wells and fountains.

As the natural beauties of Greece surpassed those of all other countries, so did Grecian art acquire an incontestable superiority over that of all other nations.

The sculptors of Egypt and Assyria attained their limit of endeavour when they had succeeded in producing an exact resemblance of outward contours. But the Greek sculptor went farther. Not content with the absolute reproduction of external features, he acquired the power to engrave upon them the desirable expression or mood of thought. The blocks of marble which passed under his chisel assumed, not only the forms of life, but also its inner, spiritual essence. This is the highest summit of perfection to which art can aspire.

In the course of ages, however, the standard of Grecian art depreciated. The stern virtues of the early republics gradually giving place to a general moral laxity and enervation, the virile beauty of the ancient statues was supplanted by a new type, of looser build and effeminate aspect.

The fall of Grecian independence completed the ruin of the art, and although Greece remained, for many centuries after, the school wherein artists throughout the civilised world sought guidance and inspiration, yet the decadence of her models became more and more evident as time passed, and the ancient ideals were steadily departed from.

This denotes the influence of history upon art, an important factor which must not be overlooked.

The ancient Romans call for no special mention. Efficient in administration and statecraft, invincible in the field, they betrayed no particular originality in artistic pursuits, and were content to acknowledge the Greeks as their masters and teachers in this branch of culture.

We therefore turn our attention to the Mediæval and Modern periods.

II.

The civilisation of the ancients had been confined to the limited population inhabiting the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. The remainder of Europe consisted of untilled wilderness, swamps, and forests, where scanty settlements of semi-savages won their uncertain means of subsistence by the pursuit of primitive occupations.

These wild tribes had, on numerous occasions, given token of their warlike capacities in the many and frequent incursions which famine or greedy ambition had caused them to make on their southern neighbours. So far these invasions, unsupported by large numbers, had been easily defeated; but in the early centuries of our era, inter-tribal commotions in the great plains and steppelands of Asia and Europe had driven vast barbarian hordes against the natural barriers of the Rhine and the Alps. The degraded Roman Empire, unable to restrain the aggression of the invaders, was submerged by a flood of barbarian conquest.

Europe, at this period, presents a remarkable aspect. It is a maze of different nations, of every race, language, and grade of culture, engaged in almost unceasing strife. The territories of the Empire were parcelled out amongst the various units, and a conglomeration of different states arose upon the ruins of the Old World.

The predominant feature in the mind of the Middle Ages is a grotesque and fantastic conception of the factors of life, derived from this confusion of nationalities. It reveals itself in the intricate designs, the elaborate sculptures, the curiously embroidered tapestries, which decorate the Gothic cathedrals of the Golden Age of Mediævalism.

At first, however, this peculiar characteristic did not assert itself so boldly as at a later period. In the early part of the Middle Ages the formidable supremacy of the Church of Rome retained the popular mind in unquestioning subjection. Art was enlisted in the cause of religion, and restricted to the servitude of ecclesiastical purposes. The earliest style of mediæval architecture accordingly presents a sombre and barren aspect, indicative of the overwhelming power of the priest. The characteristic semi-circular arch is the attestation of hierarchical sovereignty.

It was the influx of new ideas and notions, resulting from the Crusades and the corresponding contact with the refined culture of the Saracens, which tended to emancipate the popular spirit. The architect shook off the rigid fetters which had hitherto bound his art, and undertook new and fanciful enterprises. The Gothic style arose, rich, graceful, complicated, its lofty steeples remindful of the minarets of the East. The gorgeously tinted

window-panes, resplendent with the figures of saints and knights, produced within the place of worship a mysterious twilight gloom. The illuminated missal, decorated with brilliantly coloured designs, testified to the skill of the painter.

The ideal which inspired the mediæval artist was totally different from that of the ancient world. The Grecian sculptor had delighted in shaping the outlines of perfect and heroic manhood. The warrior, the athlete, furnished him with sufficient material for the prosecution of his masterpieces. But the introduction of Christianity gave rise to a new conception of human virtue.

The stern patriotism of the Spartan, the devotion of the Athenian to his fatherland, respect for antiquity and the sanctity of the hearth, indomitable courage in the field—such were the ideal virtues of the ancient world. Christianity, on the other hand, emphasises moral purity, faith in the Divine, and passive mediæval art finds its ideal in the pious endurance of suffering and persecution. Hence the knight, the humble and saintly servant of God. And it finds its type of beauty, not in the noble and masculine expression of the ancient heroes, but in the delicate and effeminate figure of the angel, radiant with complacent beatitude.

The civilisation of ancient Rome had been swamped in Western Europe, and almost every vestige of her culture and learning had disappeared. The learned men of the Middle Ages had but imperfect notions of the glories of the antique world, acquired partly through tradition and partly through the medium of Arabian translators.

The works of the classical writers were still current, however, amongst the scholars of the Byzantine Empire. This last remnant of Roman sovereignty had long maintained a precarious existence in the face of the perpetually growing power of the Turks. The impregnable fortifications of Constantinople had hitherto baffled the ambition of the Ottomans. They had, however, seized her provinces, restricting the domain of the emperors to the walls of their capital.

At length the inevitable fall occurred of the imperial city. On the 29th May 1453, Sultan Mohammed the Second stormed her defences, and established his throne upon the ruins of the Metropolis of Eastern Christendom. The wholesale emigration of learned Byzantines to the hospitable shores of Italy, resulting from this event, gave rise to a general curiosity regarding the wisdom of the vanished Græco-Roman world.

Diligent inquiry gradually revealed the wonderful civilisation of the ancients, and a passionate desire sprang up amongst the artists of the period to emulate their achievements. The barbaric ideals of the mediæval world were discarded. The zeal of the Renaissance produced masterpieces unrivalled in human history.

In Italy, Michael Angelo created the gorgeous allegorical frescoes so remarkable for the splendour and magnificence of their conception, and Raphael depicted, in colours of marvellous brilliancy, the pure and harmonious lineaments of the Divine personages. The works of the Italian school are distinguished by a wonderful abundance of bright colouring. The spectator seems to contemplate a wealth of dazzling sunshine. We recognise in this feature the influence of the Arcadian climate of the Land of Olives.

Beneath the colder skies of the north the German and Flemish masters cultivated a more sombre art, noted, however, for the methodic precision of its execution.

It were futile to dwell upon further examples in support of the assertion which forms the title of this essay. The inquiring reader must use his own observation. But whilst demonstrating the all-powerful influence of external circumstances upon art, we have left unmentioned the problem of its original cause.

For art is like a tree, whose ever-increasing foliage, absorbing life from the surrounding atmosphere, delights the eye by its waxing beauty, whilst the roots remain buried in obscure concealment. The mystery of its origin lies within the mind of man, that unfathomable source from which so many miracles have sprung.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER IV.—*continued.*

ON the morning of the 27th of August, Benjie might have been seen, a little after seven o'clock, driving his cart up the fine beech avenue which led to Glenraden Castle. It was part of his morning round, but hitherto he had left his cart at the lodge-gate, and carried his fish on foot to the house; wherefore he had some slight argument with the lodge-keeper before he was permitted to enter. He drove circumspectly to the back regions, left his fish at the kitchen

door, and then proceeded to the cottage of the stalker, one Macpherson, which stood by itself in the clump of firs. There he waited for some time till Mrs Macpherson came out to feed her hens. A string of haddocks changed hands, and Benjie was bidden indoors, where he was given a cup of tea, while old Macpherson smoked his early pipe and asked questions. Half-an-hour later Benjie left, with every sign of amity, and drove very slowly down the woodland road

towards the haugh where the Raden, sweeping from the narrows of the glen, spreads into broad pools and shining shallows. There he left the cart and squatted modestly in the heather in a place which commanded a prospect of the home woods. From his observations he was aware that one of the young ladies regularly took her morning walk in this quarter.

Meantime, in the pleasant upstairs dining-room of the Castle, breakfast had begun. Colonel Alastair Raden, having read prayers to a row of servants from a chair in the window—there was a family tradition that he once broke off in a petition to call excitedly his Maker's attention to a capercailzie on the lawn—and having finished his porridge, which he ate standing, with bulletins interjected about the weather, was doing good work on bacon and eggs. Breakfast, he used to declare, should consist of no kickshaws like kidneys and omelettes; only bacon and eggs, and plenty of 'em. The master of the house was a lean old gentleman, dressed in an ancient loud-patterned tweed jacket and a very faded kilt. Still erect as a post, he had a barrack-square voice of immense power and compass, a high-boned aquiline face, and a kindly but irritable blue eye. His daughters were devoting what time was left to them from attending to the breakfasts of three terriers to an animated discussion of a letter which lay before them: The morning meal at Glenraden was rarely interrupted by correspondence, for the post did not arrive till the evening, but this missive had been delivered by hand.

'He can't come,' the younger cried. 'He says he's seedy again. It may really be smallpox this time.'

'Who can't come, and who has smallpox?' her father demanded.

'Sir Archibald Roylance. I told you I met him and asked him to lunch here to-day. We really ought to get to know our nearest neighbour.'

'I think he is hiding a dark secret,' said the elder Miss Raden. 'Nobody who calls there ever finds him in—except Lady Claybody, and then he told her he had smallpox. Old Mr Bandicott said he went up the long hill to Crask yesterday, and found nobody at home, though he was perfectly certain he saw one figure slinking into the wood, and another moving away from a window. I wonder if Sir Archibald is really all right. We don't know anything about him, do we?'

'Of course he's all right—bound to be—dashed gallant, sporting fellow. Sorry he's not coming to luncheon—I want to meet him. He's probably afraid of Nettie, and I don't blame him, for she's a brazen hussy, and he does well to be scared of old Bandicott. I'm scared to death by the fellow myself.'

'You know you've promised to let him dig in the Piper's Ring, papa.'

'I know I have, and I would have promised to let him dig up my lawn to keep him quiet. Never met a man with such a flow of incomprehensible talk. He had the impertinence to tell me that I was no more Highland than he was, but sprung from some blackguard Norse raiders a thousand years back. Judging by the sketch he gave me of their habits, I'd sooner the Radens were descended from Polish Jews.'

'I thought him a darling,' said his elder daughter, 'and with such a beautiful face.'

'He may be a darling, for all I know, but his head is stuffed with maggots. If you admired him so much, why didn't you take him off my hands? I liked the look of the young fellow and wanted to have a word with him. More by token——' the colonel was hunting about for the marmalade—'what were you two plotting with him in the corner after dinner?'

'We were talking about John Macnab.'

The colonel's face became wrathful. 'Then I call it confoundedly unfilial conduct of you not to have brought me in. There was I, deafened with the old man's chatter—all about a fellow called Harald Bottlenose, or some such name, that he swears is buried in my grounds and means to dig up—when I might have been having a really fruitful conversation. What was young Bandicott's notion of John Macnab?'

'Mr Junius thinks he is a lunatic,' said the elder Miss Raden. She was in every way her sister's opposite, dark of hair and eye, where Janet was fair, tall where Janet was little, slow and quiet of voice where Janet was quick and gusty.

'I entirely differ from him. I think John Macnab is perfectly sane, and probably a good fellow, though a dashed insolent one. What's Bandicott doing about his river?'

'Patrolling it day and night between the 1st and 3rd of September. He says he's taking no chances; though he'd bet Wall Street to a nickel that the poor poop hasn't the frozenest outside.'

'Nettie, he said nothing of the kind.' Miss Agatha was indignant. 'He talks beautiful English with no trace of an accent—all Bostonians do, he told me.'

'Anyhow, he asked what steps we were taking, and advised us to get busy. We come before him, you know. . . . Heavens, papa, it begins the day after to-morrow! Oh, and I did so want to consult Sir Archibald. I'm sure he could help.'

Colonel Raden, having made a satisfactory breakfast, was lighting a pipe. 'You need not worry, my dear. I'm an old campaigner, and have planned out the thing thoroughly. I've been in frequent consultation with Macpherson, and yesterday we had Alan and James Macrae in, and they thoroughly agreed.'

He produced from his pocket a sheet of foolscap on which had been roughly drawn a map of the estate.

'Now, listen to me. We must assume this fellow Macnab to be in possession of his senses, and to have more or less reconnoitred the ground—though I don't know how the devil he can have managed it, for the gillies have kept their eyes open, and nobody's been seen near the place. Well, here are the three beats. Unless young Bandicott is right and the man's a lunatic, he won't try the Home beat, for the simple reason that a shot there would be heard by twenty people, and he could not move a beast twenty yards without being caught. There remain Carnmore and Carnbeg. Macpherson was clear that he would try Carnmore as being farthest away from the house. But I, with my old campaigning experience—here Colonel Raden looked remarkably cunning—'pointed out at once that such reasoning was rudimentary. I said, "He'll bluff us; and just because he thinks that *we* think he'll try Carnmore, he'll try Carnbeg." Therefore, since we can only afford to watch one beat thoroughly, we'll watch Carnbeg. What do you think of that, my dears?'

'I think you're very clever, papa,' said Agatha. 'I'm sure you're right.'

'And you, Nettie?'

Janet was wrinkling her brows and looking thoughtful. 'I'm . . . not . . . so . . . sure. You see, we must assume that John Macnab is very ingenious. He probably made his fortune in the Colonies by every kind of dodge. He's sure to be very clever.'

'Well, but, my dear,' said her father, 'it's just that cleverness that I propose to match.'

'But do you think you have quite matched it? You have tried to imagine what John Macnab would be thinking, and he will have done just the same by you. Why shouldn't he have guessed the conclusion you have reached and be deciding to go one better?'

'How do you mean, Nettie?' asked her puzzled parent. He was inclined to be annoyed, but experience had taught him that his younger daughter's wits were not to be lightly disregarded.

Nettie took the estate map from his hand, and found a stump of pencil in the pocket of her jumper. 'Please look at this, papa. Here are A and B. B offers a better chance, so Macpherson says John Macnab will take B. You say, acutely, that John Macnab is not a fool, and will try to bluff us by taking A. I say that John Macnab will have anticipated your acumen.'

'Yes, yes,' said her father impatiently; 'and then?'

'And will take B after all.'

The colonel stood rapt in unpleasant meditation for the space of five seconds. 'God bless

my soul!' he cried. 'I see what you mean. Confound it, of course he'll go for Carnmore. Lord, this is a puzzle. I must see Macpherson at once. Are you sure you're right, Nettie?'

'I'm not in the least sure. We've only a choice of uncertainties, and must gamble. But as far as I see, if we must plump for one we should plump for Carnmore.'

Colonel Raden departed for his study, after summoning Macpherson to that shrine of the higher thought, and Janet Raden, after one or two brief domestic interviews, collected two terriers and set out for her morning walk. The morning was as fresh and bright as April, rain in the night had set every burn singing, and the thickets and lawns were still damp where the sun had not penetrated. Her morning walk was wont to be a scamper, a thing of hops, skips, and jumps, rather than a sedate progress, but on this occasion, though two dogs and the whole earth invited to hilarity, she walked slowly and thoughtfully. The mossy broken tops of Carnbeg showed above a wood of young firs, and to the right rose the high, blue peaks of the Carnmore ground. On which of these would John Macnab begin his depredations? He had two days for his exploit; probably he would make his effort on the second day, and devote the first to confusing the minds of the defence. That meant that the problem would have to be thought out anew each day, for the alert intelligence of John Macnab—she now pictured him as a sort of Sherlock Holmes in knickerbockers—would not stand still. The prospect exhilarated, but it also alarmed her. The desire to win a new hunter was now a fixed resolution; but she wished she had a colleague. Agatha was no use, and her father, while admirable in tactics, was weak in strategy; she longed more than ever for the help of that frail vessel, Sir Archie.

Her road led her by a brawling torrent through the famous Glenraden beechwood, to the spongy meadows of the haugh, beyond which could be seen the shining tides of the Raden sweeping to the high-backed bridge across which ran the road to Carnmore. The haugh was all bog-myrtle and heather and bracken, sprinkled with great boulders, which the river during the ages had brought down from the hills. Half a mile up it stood the odd tumulus called the Piper's Ring, crowned with an ancient gnarled fir, where reposed, according to the elder Bandicott, the dust of that dark progenitor, Harald Blacktooth. If Mr Bandicott proposed to excavate there he had his work cut out; the place was encumbered with giant stones, a thousand floods having washed its sides since it first received the dead Viking. Great birch woods from both sides of the valley descended to the stream, thereby making the excellence of the Home beat, for the woodland stag is a heavier beast than his brother of the high tops.

Close to the road in a small hollow, where one of the rivulets from the woods cut its way through the haugh, she came on an ancient cart resting on its shafts, an ancient horse grazing on a patch of turf among the peat, and a small boy diligently whittling his way through a pile of heather roots. The urchin sprang to his feet and saluted like a soldier. 'Please, lady,' he explained in a high falsetto whine, 'I've gotten permission from Mr Macpherson to make heather besoms on this muir. He's aye been awfu' kind to me, lady.'

'You're the boy who sells fish. I've seen you on the road.'

'Ay, lady, I'm Fish Benjie. I sell my fish in the mornin's and the evenin's, and I've a' the day for other jobs. I've aye wanted to come here, for it's the graundest heather i' the country-side, and Mr Macpherson, he kens I'll dae nae harm, and I've promised no' to kindle a fire.'

The child with the beggar's voice looked at her with such sage and solemn eyes that Janet, who had a hopeless weakness for small boys, sat down on a sun-warmed hillock and stared at him, while he turned resolutely to business.

'If you're hungry, Benjie,' she said, 'and they won't let you make a fire, you can come up to the castle and get tea from Mrs Fraser. Tell her I sent you.'

'Thank you, lady; but if *you* please, I was gaun to my tea at Mrs Macpherson's. She's fell fond o' my haddies, and she tell't me to tak

a look in when I stoppit work. I'm ettlin' to be here for a guid while.'

'Will you come every day?'

'Ay, every day about eight o'clock, and bide till maybe five in the afternoon, when I go down to the cobbles at Inverlarrig.'

'Now, look here, Benjie. When you're sitting quietly working here, I want you to keep your eyes open, and if you see any strange man, tell Mr Macpherson. By strange men I mean somebody who doesn't belong to the place. We're rather troubled by poachers just now.'

Benjie raised a ruminant eye from his besoms. 'Ay, lady. I seen a queer man already this mornin'. He came up the road and syne started off ower the bog. He was sweatin' sore, and there was twa men from Strathlarrig wi' him carryin' picks and shovels. . . . Losh, there he is comin' back.'

Following Benjie's pointing finger Janet saw approaching her from the direction of the Piper's Ring a solitary figure which laboured heavily among the peat-bogs. Presently it was revealed as an elderly man wearing a broad gray wide-awake and a suit of flannel knickerbockers. His enormous horn spectacles clearly did not help his eyesight, for he had almost fallen over the shafts of the fish-cart before he perceived Janet Raden. He removed his hat, bowed with an antique courtesy, and asked permission to recover his breath.

(Continued on page 121.)

THE CASE OF GOVERNOR EYRE.

By HORACE WYNDHAM.

I.

IT is very seldom that a man holding, or who has held, the important position of governor of a British colony, with all the pomp and circumstance thereby involved, finds himself standing in the dock of a criminal court. Yet it has happened twice within the last hundred and twenty years. The first case was that of Governor Wall, who went from a prison cell to the public gallows; and the second was that of a distinguished ex-civil servant who died so recently as 1901. As he was acquitted of the charges brought against him, the authorities had to award him a pension, which he lived to enjoy for thirty years.

The man who thus triumphantly vindicated his honour, and stepped from the Old Bailey (via Bow Street) back to freedom, was Edward John Eyre, ex-governor and commander-in-chief of Jamaica. His trial, which was held in 1868, caused tremendous public interest, and its echoes lasted for many years afterwards.

To trace the various happenings that brought

this distinguished public official from the pomp of Government House in a British colony to the grim shadow of Newgate, it is necessary to go back to the year 1865. Mr Eyre, who was then just turned fifty, had served in New Zealand, first as a magistrate, and afterwards as lieutenant-governor under Sir George Grey. As a reward for his good work, he was appointed successively governor of the islands of St Vincent and Antigua. Proving himself an able administrator, he was regarded with favour by the powers in Whitehall and earmarked for early promotion. In 1862 an opportunity occurred, and he was specially selected as captain-general of Jamaica. A couple of years later, when Sir Charles Darling resigned, he was advanced to the more important position of governor and commander-in-chief.

All promised well. The new official discharged his responsible duties in an efficient fashion, and was looked upon as a coming man, with a still better appointment and a peerage awaiting him in the fullness of time.

II.

But the governorship of Jamaica was fraught with peculiar difficulties. A spirit of unrest brooded over the island, and something very like what would now be termed 'Bolshevism' was afoot. The 'coloured gentlemen,' who formed the vast majority of the population, had, under the easy régime of Sir Charles Darling, begun to get out of hand. They were distinctly 'uppish,' and inclined to consider themselves just as good as—if not, indeed, better than—anybody else.

Eyre saw the storm that was brewing and, not being the man to stand any nonsense, dealt vigorously with cases of misconduct and disloyalty. Angry mutterings and threats to petition for his recall left him quite undisturbed. In October 1865 affairs came to a head. The negro element at Kingston, objecting to the arrest of one of their number, adopted a threatening attitude towards the forces of law and order. A firebrand among them voiced their alleged 'grievances,' and demanded that his comrades should follow him and set up a 'black republic.' Inflamed with drink, armed with razors attached to poles, and egged on by the windy promises of mob orators, they rushed through the town, resisting the police. The next thing they did was, at a preconcerted signal, to break out into open rebellion and embark upon a campaign of bloodshed and riot and pillage. Since the 'coloured gentlemen' outnumbered the Europeans by nearly thirty to one, and committed shocking excesses, the situation soon became very serious. The white troops in the garrison amounted only to a handful; and women and children were in grave peril.

The governor was not the man to shirk responsibility. Proclaiming martial law, he assembled a small but trustworthy force, and warned the mob that any of them refusing to disperse would be dealt with in severe fashion. The rioters laughed at what they regarded as an empty threat, and went on burning and looting. The threat, however, was no empty one. Eyre meant what he said and a bit more. Before they quite realised what was happening, a number of those captured red-handed found themselves behind bolts and bars.

The next act in the drama was the holding of a series of courts-martial. These resulted in certain ringleaders being brought out to face firing-parties at dawn, and others dangling from public scaffolds. The cat-o'-nine-tails also whistled vigorously over six hundred dusky backs, and long terms of imprisonment were awarded to various others whose guilt was fully proved.

Howls and lamentations filled the balmy air of Jamaica. Some of them were even wafted to distant England. A body of sympathisers with razor-slashing rebels formed themselves into

a 'Jamaica Committee,' and lustily clamoured for Eyre's recall. Thereupon, a Royal Commission, presided over by Sir Henry Storks, went out to the island, and held an inquiry there which lasted from January to March. After taking a considerable amount of evidence, they reported that, while Eyre had undoubtedly stopped serious rioting, he had 'subsequently acted with unnecessary rigour.' The result was, he was deprived of his governorship and relieved by Sir John Grant.

According to the evidence, it appears that, although animated by nothing but good intentions, Eyre certainly did in one instance act from an excess of zeal. He had a notorious rebel, who was captured at Kingston (where martial law had not then been set up), tried at Morant Bay. On conviction for high treason, this man was well and truly hanged. This prisoner, a mulatto called George William Gordon, happened to be a member of the Legislative Assembly, and a prominent Baptist. As a result, there were lots of people to take his part, and public opinion in England ran very high. It operated, however, in both directions. Thus, while Eyre was burned in effigy by his detractors, he was given a series of banquets by his supporters.

III.

The official decision to deprive Eyre of his appointment was not enough for the 'Jamaica Committee,' of which body, by the way, John Stuart Mill was chairman, and Professor Huxley and Herbert Spencer were members. Accordingly, they pulled fresh strings, and when Eyre came home, they instituted proceedings against him for 'murder.' They also included in their attentions Lieutenant Brand, R.N., and Colonel Nelson, who had conducted a court-martial. The case of the two subordinates was taken first. After a preliminary appearance before a magistrate, they were committed to the Old Bailey. The Grand Jury, however, showed what they thought of the prosecution by throwing out the bill.

But if Eyre had enemies, he also had friends, who considered that upholding the prestige of the white man (together with that of white women and children) was more important than protecting the delicate susceptibilities of a riotous mob of negroes. Accordingly, an 'Eyre Defence Fund,' amounting to £1600, was speedily organised. Among the subscribers were such well-known public men as Thomas Carlyle, Charles Kingsley, Ruskin, Tennyson, and Lord Cardigan; and the counsel briefed by them included a future lord chancellor and a judge, in Hardinge Giffard (afterwards Lord Halsbury) and Fitzjames Stephen. Eyre appeared at Bow Street (where the 'murder' charge was softened into one of 'misdemeanour') and committed for trial at the Old Bailey in

June 1868. Much to the annoyance of the John Stuart Mill party (whom Carlyle dubbed a 'pack of nigger philanthropists'), the Grand Jury declined to return a true bill.

The 'Jamaica Committee,' however, seemed remarkably vindictive. Accordingly in 1869 they took fresh proceedings on behalf of a mulatto named Phillips, who wrung their ultra-sympathetic hearts by declaring that he had been improperly punished by Eyre for his share in the *émeute*. This time they launched a civil action and claimed heavy damages for 'false imprisonment.' Once more, however, their luck was out, as Eyre had been granted a bill of indemnity by the local legislature.

As a result, the Crown had to pay him his costs, and also to grant him the pension to which he was entitled for his past services. This he lived to draw until his death in 1901.

After this interval, it is difficult to decide the rights and wrongs of the 'Governor Eyre Case,' or to appreciate the tremendous public interest it aroused. Still, considering the issues involved, the general verdict will probably be that of Carlyle, who declared Edward John Eyre to be 'a just, humane, and valiant man, faithful to his trusts everywhere, and with no ordinary faculty for executing them.'

PETER WAS SINGLE.

PART III.

X.

BEFORE Thursday evening came, Peter was destined to visit once again the private office. Judged by ordinary standards, however, the interview was quite a pleasant one. Mr Reginald was almost effusive. He waved Peter to the chair on the opposite side of the desk, and said that he had splendid reports about the progress of the hosiery department; he had also seen things for himself. The great thing was, of course, that this highly satisfactory standard set by Peter should be maintained and improved upon if possible. Mr Reginald expected the new standard to be maintained. Did Golding think he could keep it up?

The question rather alarmed Peter. He knew perfectly well, and Mr Reginald must know perfectly well, that with all the will in the world the staff could not go on breaking records indefinitely. He now had sufficient confidence in himself to feel capable of keeping the work of his department up to a very high level of efficiency, so wisely he remained silent.

'Our arrangement was that you should have a month's trial,' Mr Reginald reminded him. Then he added in an impressive voice, 'Now, look here, Golding, if you'll guarantee to keep the present high standard, I'll come to an agreement with you *now*. I am convinced that you will suit me; moreover, I like you personally—I liked you from the first. You will, of course, receive a substantial increase of salary. You may ask anything you like within reason—we are not mean with money.' (This was perfectly true). 'Now, what do you say, Golding?'

Peter shook his head. 'I think it will be better to let the present arrangement stand a little longer, Mr Reginald. You see, I have been trying new methods, and although their immediate result has been so satisfactory, the

success may not be permanent; it's rather early to decide.'

Mr Reginald shrugged his shoulders. 'Just as you like, my dear Golding, just as you like. We will leave the agreement until the end of the month, but I have every confidence in you—complete confidence.'

As he closed the door of the private office, Peter shivered slightly. 'The man actually fawned on me,' he thought. 'He is fabulously rich; he has more money than he could spend if he lived to be a hundred, yet just because he thinks I can squeeze a little extra work out of the staff, he actually called me his dear Golding. Disgusting!' In this, at least, Peter did not do Mr Reginald justice; before everything, the latter was a business man. He loved the intrigues and the little dishonesties, of which even businesses of the highest standing are not quite guiltless, as much for their own sake as for the great wealth that his business capacity brought him. Because the hosiery department had broken a record which even he, with all his knowledge and foresight, had deemed intact, he extended to Peter exactly the same homage which the latter would have felt only for a great artist. The fact that Mr Reginald had given so obviously inexperienced a young man as Peter a chance in the first place proved that he liked him, and although Peter did not realise it, he in turn rather liked Mr Reginald.

They liked each other because each, in his way, was an artist.

XI.

On Thursday evening Miss Slade and Peter met in the dark little street which runs alongside the warehouse, and proceeded to the cinema, where the latter had already booked seats. The girl was silent, and her escort far too self-conscious and embarrassed to attempt the light conversation the occasion seemed to demand.

The occasional glimpses he was able to catch of her profile from the corners of his eyes showed her expression to be troubled, and he felt miserably that she regretted having promised to spend the evening with him. He had almost decided to offer to release her while there was still time, when she spoke.

'I shall always remember this evening,' she said, and the sincerity of her gentle voice thrilled him so that he was unable to answer. 'Always,' she repeated in a voice so low that he only just caught the word. He was glad now that speech eluded him; there was nothing ungracious in silence, for the girl had spoken to herself rather than to him.

There was a gorgeous café attached to the cinema, and Peter led the way to a small table in a quiet corner far away from the orchestra. From the deferential waiter who approached them with the air of one who had worked all his life in preparation for that moment, Peter, with the assistance of his companion, ordered a light meal. The girl's sad demeanour underwent a complete transformation, and she abandoned herself to a mood of gentle gaiety. Her blue eyes began to sparkle, and her colouring, always high, now became so brilliant that a stranger seeing her for the first time might have been excused for suspecting a too liberal use of cosmetics. But Peter knew there was nothing artificial about those pink cheeks and that red mouth, dimpling and curving with mirth! It seemed to him that he could actually see the colour deepening, and this evening he understood for the first time that his companion possessed a keen sense of humour, which was entirely free from malice. She was not brilliant, and probably said nothing worth remembering, but her manner in uttering a simple little jest, and her quick, bubbling laugh delighted him; yet, beneath it all he felt that she was terribly unhappy—there was the shadow of tragedy behind her sparkling eyes, and her gentle laughter sometimes ended in a little sigh.

'It's as if she's doing something for the last time,' he thought; 'as if . . . she is saying good-bye. . . . Ah, if only I could help—if only I could reach out and comfort her . . . if only I had the right.'

XII.

The cinema entertainment concluded with a seven-reel drama which proved conclusively that virtue, in America at all events, invariably triumphs in the end. And then, leaving the beautiful and expensive heroine safe in the arms of the handsome and only slightly less expensive hero, Peter escorted his companion to the station. There they discovered that her train, which was already in, would not depart for nearly ten minutes, and they strolled the full length of the platform in silence.

'Perhaps you would prefer to leave me and—

and wait in the train?' suggested the diffident Peter.

She dismissed the suggestion with a quick shake of her head, and then said, 'Unless you are anxious to get home? You, too, have a train to catch, haven't you?'

'Oh, they run every few minutes on our line,' he answered eagerly and, for all he knew to the contrary, truthfully.

There was another silence, and then the girl spoke again. 'It is over, our evening together,' she said with a sigh. 'Thank you so much; I shall never forget.' Her lips trembled oddly with the last word, and it was with unshed tears that her eyes were bright now. Her emotion was so much stronger than the occasion seemed to warrant, that the young man was quite startled for the moment. He soon recovered the use of his tongue again.

'But you will come with me again—soon!' he urged in a low voice. 'Say that you will!' Greatly daring, he took one of her hands. She did not answer, but made no attempt to release her hand. Many shy people have the rare quality of being able to face life's greatest crises squarely and steadily; the blundering, boyish Peter was one of them. He drew the girl a little closer to him.

'Listen, dear,' he said quietly; 'they are satisfied with me down at Clawson's, and want me to stay on. Mr Reginald has asked me to sign an agreement, and offered terms which will—will make many things possible in the future. My—or—prospects are really rather good, you see. . . . I have heard them say, down at the warehouse, that you are alone in the world. Well, I am alone in the world, too. If, in time, you find that you—you—' For the first time Peter's voice faltered. 'I mean to say that loneliness is a beastly thing, and if ever you came to like me about a hundredth part as much as I like you—'

The girl uttered a low cry of pain. 'Oh, Peter, you must not say such things to me! You must not! Ah, what have I done? What have I done?'

Peter sighed. 'Please forgive me for distressing you like this,' he said simply. 'I was a fool for ever daring to think—'

Her hands fluttered against his for a moment. 'Don't think that, Peter. It isn't true. I ought to let you keep on thinking that I—I am indifferent, but—I haven't the courage.'

Peter, sorely perplexed, tried to take her hands again, but the girl eluded him. She was crying frankly now. 'Oh, what have I done?' came from her again.

'If you're not altogether indifferent, give me an answer now,' urged the young man. 'At least tell me that I may keep on hoping.'

She stood irresolute for a moment, and then said quickly, 'A train leaves this platform at 7.30 on Sunday evening. No matter what the

weather is like, I shall be waiting at the other end, and if you are on the train, I will give you my answer. Good-night, Peter, and—and God bless you.'

She was gone.

Peter remained motionless, oppressed by a nameless dread. Soon the train began to draw slowly out of the station, but he made no attempt to approach, feeling instinctively that she desired to be alone. There was something so poignant and childlike about her last simple blessing that the memory of it made his heart swell. Helen Slade was of that frank, steadfast

type of girl that never quite loses certain traits of its childhood; there were fleeting moments when her sixth year was as eloquent in her eyes and the curves of her mouth as her twentieth. Peter carried away from the station with him a mental picture, not of the girl with whom he had spent the evening, but of a little child in a long white nightdress, a child of six, with big blue eyes and a grave mouth, standing on tip-toe and reaching out loving arms to some one unseen and saying, 'Good-night, mummy, and God bless you. . . .'

(Continued on page 116.)

A VENDETTA.

I.

ON the morning of 25th March 1809 the news spread like wildfire in the peaceful commune of lower Rostino (Corsica) that the famous bandit Orlanducci had just been captured by the gendarmes. The adventure took place one night in thick *maquis*¹ situated above the village of Frasso.

Nothing could have been more surprising, because Orlanducci was the most ingenious bandit in the whole of Corsica. For the last three years he had evaded justice, and the gendarmes had not been able to track him. He was a bandit it seemed impossible to capture. People were asking how the gendarmes happened to be there so opportunely that very night.

The word treason was whispered. No other explanation was possible. Orlanducci had been betrayed by some one who knew exactly his habits and his place of refuge. People racked their brains over the matter.

But soon the event passed by; and except at Grâté, Orlanducci's birthplace, this bandit, who after all was not so attractive, was forgotten. Like most of his kind, his history had begun with a murder committed for the sake of vengeance. He took refuge in the *maquis* to escape justice, and as a matter of course had not hesitated to exchange shots with the gendarmes. He had killed a *brigadier* and wounded two or three men, quite enough for a price to have been put on his head. The bait must have tempted some traitor.

Orlanducci was tried some time after, condemned to death, and executed. To all appearances the matter ended there, because no one was specially interested in his fate. He had no near relation except a young sister of fifteen or sixteen, a very weak and timid creature, absolutely incapable of pursuing the murderer with

vengeance. Soon the affair of Orlanducci was ancient history.

II.

But suddenly in April 1810 other news spread. A man of some importance in the village, who did duty as *notaire* in Morosaglia, was found assassinated in a chestnut wood not far from the village—a peaceful man, esteemed by all, and thought to be without enemies. The wonder was, whose hand had struck him? Doubt was, however, soon removed. When the authorities arrived, and were about to remove the body, a paper was found pinned to the back of the coat. On this paper, in very clear handwriting, were these words: 'This man sold Orlanducci. He accepted the sum of five hundred francs. To-day he is paying the price of his betrayal.'

Naturally the general stupefaction was great. Although the bait of money explains many things, no one would ever have thought of suggesting that a man of his position would commit such an action. Many people refused to believe it. But what above all excited the curiosity of the public was the mystery which shrouded this crime—who was the murderer?

Thoughts were turned towards Orlanducci's sister, but that seemed quite impossible. In addition to the fact that she was a weak creature, everybody knew she could neither read nor write. Now, the note found on the victim was correctly composed in the most perfect French. Besides, the two fatal wounds—a bullet in the heart and one in the forehead—were not the work of a woman's hand: they spoke of a strong and steady aim.

The mystery became still more absorbing when the sudden disappearance of Orlanducci's sister was reported. She had left her village the day before the crime, and, since then, had never been seen; she was evidently mixed up in the affair. The gendarmes received orders to look for and arrest her. But the days passed by,

¹ Brushwood of lentisk, arbutus, cistus, juniper trees.

and the girl was not to be found. Most extraordinary stories were told about her. Every now and then some one was supposed to have seen her. At first in the chestnut wood, on the mountain-side, where she was dressed like a man, and carried a gun on her shoulder; next, hiding in the *maquis*. She looked quite mad, and she had asked for bread. Others said that she was travelling disguised as a beggar, and more and more was reported on these lines. The very diversity of these stories proved them alike untrue.

In fact, nobody knew anything for certain. Sensible people thought that the young girl had left the country with the accomplice who had helped her to carry out her design.

As to the victim, he was much less pitied when it was known that he had really received a draft for five hundred francs at the *greffier's* office at Bastia a little while after Orlanducci's arrest.

III.

Two months passed thus, and these events were being forgotten, when suddenly all the excitement was again aroused and renewed. A new complication arose, which drew forth general curiosity more than ever. Nothing more strange had ever been heard of.

It was the end of June 1810. Two poor inhabitants of Graté, named Bernardi, man and wife, were coming back quietly from the mill on the Golo, where they had carried their corn to be ground. They were coming with difficulty up the path which led to their village, when, arrived at a deserted spot, they encountered two individuals. It was nearly dusk. One of the two new-comers, a young, robust man, placed himself across the path, and barred the passage to Bernardi, saying, 'It's you, Bernardi of Graté, isn't it?'

Bernardi having replied in the affirmative, the young man added in a calm voice, 'Then prepare to die!' And before the very eyes of the terrified wife the bandit¹ fired a shot, striking Bernardi in the temple. Making quite sure that the unfortunate man was dead, the stranger went towards the wife and said to her, 'Bernardi received thirty francs from the *notaire* for taking the gendarmes to Orlanducci's hiding-place. To-day he is paying the price!' At the end of these fatal words he departed, followed by his companion, who was no other than Orlanducci's sister, disguised as a man. Bernardi's wife had recognised her most distinctly.

When the inhabitants of Graté came to carry away the body, they found a paper pinned to the clothes of the deceased. On it the following words could be read: 'Another man besides Bernardi has received thirty francs to deliver

Orlanducci up to justice; whatever he does, he will have the same fate.'

IV.

It is unnecessary to describe the emotion this event caused in the whole district. The most appalling uneasiness was aroused, and anxiety was increased by the prospect of yet another murder.

Who was the terrible man, Orlanducci's avenger? This cultured assassin who wrote in such correct style on the body of his victims? Certainly murderers were not scarce in Corsica, but such sang-froid, such audacity, such presumption had never been seen before.

What excited the people more were the stories told by Bernardi's widow. Summoned to give evidence before the Court of Justice, she related most extraordinary things. First came the description of the girl dressed as a man, with hair hanging in plaits on her shoulders. Secondly, the description of the assassin, a handsome youth, with a brown moustache—a real Hercules—wearing, strange to say, a uniform quite unknown in the country: breeches and long coat, with facings on the sleeves and on the chest. All this was very extraordinary, and the repeated assertions of the only witness were necessary to convince the public of these facts.

Stories got about. It was said that the girl Orlanducci, who was rather pretty, had married a great Turkish lord, who, for love of her, had become her brother's avenger. People spoke of nothing else; the women particularly had no other subject of conversation. The matter was taken up seriously. A very minute inquiry was made, which resulted in the discovery that the bandit Orlanducci possessed a half-brother, who had left the country when very young. Nothing more had been heard of him, and most people thought that he was dead. The authorities took the matter in hand; and as the description of the assassin answered to that of a deserter, investigation was made in that direction. Information was sought in Paris from the Minister of War, and here is a copy of the notice received some time after:

'Orlanducci, Jacques, volunteer—4th July 1796, in the 24th Light Infantry Brigade, became (in 1804) non-commissioned officer in the 113th line, served in Italy, Russia, and Austria. Appointed sergeant-major in the 9th Company on 1st March 1809, has been reported "missing" since the battle of Wagram.'

It was probably our man. The battle of Wagram took place on 6th July 1809, and the disappearance of Orlanducci fitted in with these events. Informed by his sister or some other person, he had left the army to return to the island. The thing astonished people a little, happening after so many years' absence, but family unity—so marked in every Corsican

¹ *Brigands* and *bandits* are not to be confounded. In this country the former kill for money or valuables, and are very rare; the latter kill to avenge the murder of a member of their own family, or for honour!

—has produced similar miracles, and many of them. Justice had no longer any doubts. The notes written in such regular writing on the victims could now be explained. Everbody knows that a sergeant-major has the pen of a ready writer. This one had brought his talent to the depth of the *maquis*, and made good use of it.

The idea of the great Turkish lord was given up, and ever after Orlanducci's avenger was known as the 'Sergeant-major.'

V.

There was a man, meanwhile, who would have given all he possessed to see the avenger captured. He was a certain Rognoni of Graté, who knew very well in his secret heart that he, as well as Bernardi, had once taken thirty francs to deliver the bandit Orlanducci to the gendarmes. One can understand that this man was not at his ease. The first few days he pretended to be ill, so as not to have to go out. Then, anxiety getting the better of him, he ended by owning to his wife what danger he was in. The latter, overcome with fear, advised him to go to Bastia to put himself under the protection of the 'Procureur Impérial.' Rognoni did this, and having stated his case to the authorities, he entered the prison as a voluntary prisoner. It is said that he still trembled behind the walls of his cell.

At the same time, the authorities made great efforts to find the whereabouts of the avenger. A price was put on Jacques Orlanducci's head, and in addition, several brigades of gendarmes started for Rostino in order to search the *maquis*. Much was expected from this. Nothing whatever came of it, and the gendarmes soon returned to their homes, without even having had a glimpse of the man. Some time after, another attempt was made, but it was equally unsuccessful.

The *brigadier* at Morsiglia had received an anonymous note which informed him that Jacques Orlanducci had his usual hiding-place in an old ruined hut, the situation of which was very accurately described. It was in the middle of the Bois de Roscamone. Attracted by the sum of five hundred francs, the courageous *brigadier* decided to undertake the adventure.

Having let his men into the secret, he chose a moonless night, favourable to an ambush, and directed his steps towards the spot indicated. An agreeable surprise awaited him. He perceived, as he approached the ruined hut, that a small light, coming from a lighted fire, was visible through the apertures of the stones. No doubt that he had been correctly informed; Orlanducci was really there! With the greatest precaution the *brigadier* placed six men round the hut, and when all was ready, at a given signal, the attack was made. But Orlanducci was not there. The hut was completely empty.

A little oil-lamp was burning on the ground in the middle of the shelter, and under the lamp, a paper folded in four was found. It was opened; and this was what the discomfited gendarmes read:

'Brave soldiers, you thought to kill Orlanducci. Orlanducci, on the contrary, had you under fire, whilst you were traversing the Bois de Roscamone, a minute ago. He could have killed you; but Orlanducci respects your uniform. Go back to your barracks, brave soldiers, and never meddle again with Orlanducci's affairs.'

VI.

The man from Graté, during this time, led the life of a voluntary prisoner in the Bastia prison. Although he had the right to go out, he never did so, and one can understand why. He lived in his cell, and contented himself with the ordinary prison fare. His wife, however, taking advantage of any opportunity that offered, occasionally sent him some little luxuries. That is how, on a certain day in October, Rognoni received, in his prison, a basket of victuals which arrived from Graté. A traveller had brought it with him in the coach, and on his arrival had had it taken to Rognoni by a boy from the street. Delighted with the windfall, Rognoni generously gave him some sous, then opened the basket. It contained a Bologna sausage, two old cheeses, and a bottle of excellent Corsican brandy, which would have revived a dead man if he had been able to taste it. Deprived for a long time of good living, Rognoni set to work at once. He ate and drank copiously, but shortly after, shivering from head to foot, he was seized with most violent pains, his face being livid. The poor man quickly succumbed, and the body was found soon after, perfectly black and swollen. At the inquest it was discovered that the bottle of brandy contained a large proportion of the terribly poisonous juice of monk's-hood (aconite). Orlanducci had sent the bottle to the prisoner.

The next day the governor of the prison received the following letter: 'Rognoni has paid for the thirty francs he received for delivering Orlanducci to the gendarmes.'

It was after these events that the Procureur Impérial, absolutely furious, swore he would obtain Orlanducci's head at all costs. Justice demanded it, because the audacity of this bandit, in whom the whole of Corsica was interested, was a very pernicious example. It was clearly necessary for the law to have the last word.

A most rigorous search was made. Two companies of Light Infantry arrived at Ponte Nuovo, flanked by twelve brigades of Gendarmerie. Not a corner of the territory of Rostino had been overlooked. Arrests were made in suspected houses. All the inhabitants were under strict surveillance. For eight whole days the country was in a state of upheaval. All this

trouble was ineffective, and had no other results beyond the capture of a number of beggars, vagabonds, and bad characters. No trace of Orlanducci was to be found.

VII.

But whilst he was thus being vainly pursued in the district of Rostino, an extraordinary thing happened, quite near, which showed to everybody Orlanducci's true character. On 14th November, in broad daylight, a little troupe of armed men suddenly made an appearance in the village square of Quercitello, situated at about two hours' distance from the place where the gendarmes were searching. These men, numbering eleven, were sitting quietly on the stone seat which adorned the square, and the few inhabitants who were there at the time noticed with surprise that there was a woman amongst the band. Although she was dressed as a man, she was recognised by her two plaits of hair. In a minute the whole village was on the spot, and pronounced the name of Orlanducci. It was he, in fact. Very tall, distinguished-looking, he was standing up in the midst of the others. As the woman of Graté had said, he was wearing knee-breeches and a long coat of Royal blue, on which traces of stripes could be seen. He was very calm and collected. When a fairly large circle was formed around him, he raised his hat slightly and, addressing the nearest, said :

'The bandit Orlanducci made up his mind to pay a visit to your village. I know you are all honest folk and will not think of giving information to the gendarmes.' As no one replied, he added in a bantering tone, 'In any case, the gendarmes are not here. They are looking for me on the other side of the mountains.' He stopped, and then, pointing to a rather fine house, he asked, 'Whose house is that?' He was told it belonged to the Paolacci family, important people in the district. 'Then,' said Orlanducci, 'it wouldn't cost them much to offer us a glass of wine!' At these words, he made a sign to his men and they all trooped in.

Mr Paolacci could not do less than receive them, and when they were all seated, he hastened to serve them. Orlanducci begged him to drink a toast, and then made the following speech :

'These honourable gentlemen are brave bandits of the neighbourhood, who, attracted by the fame of my name, came to keep me company. When the gendarmes come to question you, you can tell them that we are not in want of anything.'

'I shall not forget to tell them,' replied Mr Paolacci, smiling.

'This wandering life has its charms,' continued Orlanducci ; 'in many ways it resembles war, which I like immensely.'

'But,' observed Mr Paolacci, 'I see there is a young woman with you ; this life cannot be good for her.'

'She is brave, and she wished it,' replied the

bandit gently. 'All the same, you are right ; it is not a life for a woman,' he concluded in a calm tone, looking at her affectionately. 'I am thinking seriously of settling down, now that our task is accomplished.' At these words he rose, and making a sign to his companions to rise, said, 'It is time to leave you, Mr Paolacci ; life has taught me that one must not trust everybody. Although the gendarmes are far away, prudence orders me to retire. Adieu, Mr Paolacci !'

He went out, followed by his men, crossed the village square, and was lost to sight in the chestnut wood, leaving the peaceful village in a state of indescribable excitement.

This was Orlanducci's last exploit. From that time no news was heard of him. Months passed away, and he would have been considered dead, had not the Procureur Impérial at Bastia received a letter. This letter was dated from Leghorn in Italy. It was in Orlanducci's own handwriting, and said :

'MONSIEUR LE PROCUREUR,—I have the honour to let you know that I have definitely left Corsica. The fact that my task was ended, and that my sister needed a more quiet life, forced me to seek a peaceful retreat. I am only travelling through Italy, and my footsteps are directed to far distant climes. I hope to live there as a good citizen. At the bottom of my heart, I never had any personal taste for the violent adventures which have just marked my life. I was a brave servant of my country, and I have always done my duty loyally. But circumstances have intervened ; blood had been shed in my family, and I was appealed to. The cowardly betrayers of my brother were pointed out to me peacefully enjoying the price of their guilt.

'My sense of justice was outraged, and the Corsican blood which runs in my veins began to boil, for my fourteen years of absence had not been enough to calm it.

'I started ; arrived in Corsica. A few months sufficed to accomplish my task. Now I sleep peacefully, and shall be able to lead a quiet life. Do not trouble any further about me, and do not let the gendarmes waste their time looking for me. Such brave men deserve to be considered. As for you, Monsieur le Procureur, I wish you well. You have not been good to me, but you were only doing your duty, and I do not bear you any malice. I bequeath to you our house at Graté ; do what you like with it, and accept my greetings. ORLANDUCCI.'

This was the last that was heard of Orlanducci. But his name was remembered for a long time, and his exploits were related at night by the village firesides.¹

¹ The facts of this story were found in a booklet entitled *Les causes judiciaires les plus célèbres de la Corse*.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE RIVALS OF THE CRAGS.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN, F.Z.S., Author of *Habits and Characters of British Wild Animals, Tracks and Tracking, &c.*

L

'KRAWK!'

And across the craggy quietude the answer came like an echo—'Krawk!'

The ravens sat about eighty yards apart, each on a rocky pinnacle 400 feet up from the blue pine-wood and the blue loch nestling amidst it. For over an hour they had sat thus, croaking to each other at regular intervals, ticking it off like a funeral bell, till the men in the fishing-punt out on the loch had ceased to pay heed to the sound; or rather they heard it as they heard the persistent piping of the redshanks, the bubbling of the curlews, the drumming of the snipe, and the hundred other voices of spring-time in the hills. But to one of the men at any rate these sounds were full of melody.

Then something happened. One of the ravens fell head over heels from its perch, and tumbled twenty feet or more down the crag face, where it clung to the edge of a shelf, flapping wildly and croaking noisily. At the same instant there was a swish and a sound as of the beating of two strips of pasteboard together, and both men looked up to see—what they saw.

'Gee!' muttered the man with the oars, who last year had served an American gentleman. 'Yon was a close call!' and he grinned broadly.

The other, whose rod had become idle, knew not for what to look, and so had failed as yet to take in the situation. He saw the raven falling. He saw another bird flash past it into space, descending almost to the foot of the crags ere it could check the speed of its headlong stoop; then it rose vertically into clear relief against the sky.

'That,' said the fisherman quickly, 'is a peregrine falcon; isn't it, Sandy?' He had never seen one before.

The boatman removed his pipe and nodded. 'Scrapping with the ravens,' said he. Then, shading his eyes, he added, 'Watch ye the noo!'

For the second raven had descended from its perch, and was taking a short cut to meet the falcon as it rose. Taking a short cut, I say, yet when it got there, the falcon, mounting vertically, was a hundred feet above. Then the falcon

closed its wings and down it came like a stone, straight at its would-be aggressor.

The raven turned in the air to meet the assault claws upwards, his bayonet-bill presented, falling all the time, and both men saw that the peregrine checked his stoop within a yard. One could hear the terrific swish of his wings as he back-watered and shot off at a tangent, too wise to impale himself, even though in so doing he would most certainly have dislocated the neck of his opponent.

The first raven had recovered by now, and as the falcon swept across the crag face it went for him, and again there was a clatter of wings, while simultaneously a second falcon dropped sheer from the clouds and attempted to make a cannon. Both ravens flung themselves belly upwards, croaking wildly, as she swept from one to the next.

Truly now the stunt-flying had begun, and for five minutes or more the air rang with the clatter and swish of wings, though so far as one could judge there were no collisions in mid-air. Eventually each raven returned to its original look-out post, from which it refused to budge, merely ducking and presenting its bill when a falcon came swishing round. And so at length the peregrines, tiring of it, settled lightly as thistle-seeds on a gigantic outcrop midway between the two black-coated ruffians.

The angler remarked that he had never seen such flying in all his life. 'Nor did I know that a raven would stand up to a peregrine,' he added.

The boatman grunted. 'Yon impudent birds will stand up tae onything!' he muttered darkly. 'Even an eagle won't scare thae!'

'It was a very pretty match at any rate,' said the fisherman. 'What would have happened if the first raven hadn't seen the peregrine coming?'

The gillie smiled a wise and wizened smile. 'There's no' muckle a raven doesna see,' he remarked. 'But weel, if she hadna seen him, he'd have sent her heid spinnin' aff her shoulders!'

The fisherman smiled. 'I expect they both want the crag for nesting purposes,' he observed; 'and if one or the other is to have it, I hope it

will be the peregrines. One can see ravens, or rather their equivalent, any day in Rotten Row, but there are precious few falcons about.'

'An' if I had my way, sirr,' put in the boatman, 'there'd be fewer still! O' a' the destructive birds on a grouse-moor, yon are the worst. I've nae particular quarrel wi' the ravens; but peregrines——!' And he spat into the water.

The fisherman's face was a trifle disapproving. It was his first year as tenant of the big Highland estate, and though he had much to learn, he at any rate possessed the virtue of being anxious to learn it.

'Well, see here, Sandy,' said he. 'Neither the peregrines nor the ravens are to be disturbed, so you can hand those orders on to the gillies and all the other boys. I'll be interested to see what comes out of this.'

Sandy gave a surly nod. 'I'll no' need tae tell anyone,' said he. 'Thae falcons and thae ravens are as safe as the Bank o' Scotland up there. No one can get within gun-shot o' them.'

There was a pause; then, as nothing happened, the tenant pursued, 'Who do you reckon will get the crag, Sandy—the ravens or the peregrines?'

'The twae o' them, sirr,' replied Sandy unhesitatingly. 'Every spring since I was a wean thae falcons and thae ravens have nested in thae rocks. Every year they've fought for it like we've jist seen, and every year there's been a guid hatchin' o' both the varmint. Wait till the shootin' season, sirr, and ye'll no' hae muckle good to say aboot thae falcons!'

'Perhaps not,' the tenant agreed; 'but I'm quite prepared to forgo a few brace of grouse and wild duck in order to see such exhibitions of stunt-flying as we have seen to-day. If the nesting affairs of those birds are interfered with, Sandy, there'll be the very dickens of a row!'

II.

So the word went forth that the new tenant was one of those sentimentalists who cannot leave the preservation of his moor to those whom he pays to undertake it. Now, though Sandy was right in saying that the crag was inaccessible, he had omitted to mention the fact that he and his colleagues were in the habit of shooting and trapping the young falcons soon after they could fly. That kind of vandalism was to be stayed this year, and meantime the tenant, fishing the loch daily, often rested his rod to watch a fresh outburst of the feud, while Sandy regaled him with stories of the falcon's destructiveness, and of the sinful wastage of allowing such birds to remain on the hill.

'But, Sandy,' the tenant pointed out, 'they are at any rate protected by the law of the land.'

At which Sandy waxed eloquent as concerned the fools who frame the law.

As time passed it seemed to the fisherman that the stoops of the falcons and the stabs of the ravens lost much of their venom. In that first encounter he had witnessed each was clearly intent on shattering the other lifeless, but now it seemed that they were coming to regard each other in a different light, and their assaults were more by way of friendly buffetings.

The ravens had repaired their ancestral eyrie, and the peregrines had scraped out a hollow in the peat under the great overhang of rock, where the hen bird was busy with her own affairs, for one saw little of her. The tercel, who was smaller and more beautiful than his mate, was always on guard, sitting bolt upright on his look-out tower, while forty or fifty yards away, croaking occasionally, sat the male raven. Whenever the raven rose a-wing, the falcon would rise to buffet him; but, as the fisherman remarked, it seemed to have become a bachelor joke more than anything else.

One day Sandy and the tenant were out on the moor taking stock of the young birds, when they saw a thing which gave the old gillie the chance for which he had waited. A particularly strong covey of young grouse rose from the heather at their feet and went rattling down the slope, when—swish!—Milord in blue came down from the clouds in one headlong nose-dive. The covey split up like the bursting of a hand grenade, but so terrific was the speed of the falcon that they seemed to be motionless in the air. He overhauled them as a greyhound might overhaul a herd of swine, and before the very eyes of the onlookers, four young grouse were sent spinning into the heather in the twinkling of an eye. Then the falcon volplaned and cork-screwed back into the clouds, screaming savagely the while, but never even looking round to see what he had done.

'There ye are, sirr!' cried Sandy. 'What did I tell ye, sirr?' He was red to the roots of his red hair, his sandy moustache bristling like a tooth-brush; but now to his bewilderment he saw a look of rapt admiration and silent joy on the face of his employer.

'Grand!' the tenant muttered softly. 'Sandy, I never saw anything so neatly done in all my life, and if we do not kill a single bird this season, I have already had my money's worth out of the moor.'

Sandy glared. He simply did not understand. Such a spirit was beyond the comprehension of his materialistic mind. He thought over it solemnly and deeply for ten minutes or more, then eventually he said, 'Weel, if that's what ye pay your money for, sirr, it's no affair o' mine. But why rent a grouse moor tae see it? Why no' save your money and go for a walk in the deer forests where peregrines can dae what they like? It seems tae me an unco' wastage o' guid money.'

For this the tenant had no answer. Money

did not concern him greatly, but this he knew—that every day he was getting his money's worth, whether or not he was following what some might consider the orthodox rules. He knew also that Sandy was a good keeper, and he liked the man none the less for his abrupt speech and for his enthusiasm for the cause. 'Some day,' he said, 'we shall be seeing eye to eye, and I shall have you, Sandy, regarding the peregrines as every bit as sacred as your own sacred red birds.'

Sandy stubbornly shook his red head. 'Niver!' said he. 'Niver sae long as I live will ye find me preserving thae varmint!' And for the rest of the way he chose to walk twelve paces behind his master.

III.

The nesting season was well advanced when the two men, from their usual outlook across the water, saw one of the strangest little dramas of wild nature that man has been favoured to look upon. The young ravens and the young peregrines were hatched now, and on still days the men could distinctly hear the down-covered falcon chicks squealing to their parents when food was brought them.

Watching through the glasses, the new tenant spent many a fascinating hour observing the home affairs of these people of the crags, and the ways of the falcons were specially pretty. Suddenly the tercel would appear over the brow of the cliff, carrying something in his talons, and as he hung a moment like some beautiful silver thing suspended from the clouds, his wild and yet not unmusical note would ring out. Then the head and shoulders of his mate would appear from under the crag far below, and, wheeling in his flight, the tercel would toss to her the thing he carried. Down it would drop, a mere heap of crumpled feathers, till the hen bird shot forth from the eyrie and caught it lightly in mid-descent. Sometimes too the falcons, buffeting each other as they flew, would mount to the topmost heavens, there to wheel and glide, the merest specks amidst the infinite, till one, then the other, would close its wings and fall—down, down, larger yet larger, till it seemed assuredly that they would pulp themselves among the crags. Truly they were very lovely things, and their mastery of the air was a manifold wonder to behold. Even Sandy's eyes brightened at times when he watched them, and he would mutter reluctantly, 'Eh, that's bonny flyin', very bonny!'

But one soft, sunlit evening, I say, a strange thing happened. On hearing the familiar 'kree,' the sepulchral croak, and the clatter of wings, both men looked up, expecting to see the birds which had never yet satisfactorily settled the true ownership of the crag going at each other hammer and tongs, in the hope of arriving at a belated conclusion. But at first they were

mystified. Certainly the four birds seemed to be mixed up together, but they kept to one portion of the crag—to a narrowing of the shelf within a few feet of the peregrines' eyrie. Were the ravens striving to reach the young falcons? Surely not! One rule both parties had strictly observed throughout—that neither ventured within a certain prescribed line of the nest of the other.

'It seems tae me they're mobbing something,' Sandy remarked. And next moment it became clear that this indeed was the case, for both men saw some large animal detach itself from the *mêlée* and go bounding from shelf to shelf in a frantic effort to reach easier travelling; but the peregrines closed at once, and hard behind them, backing them up, the ravens.

'Got your glasses on her, sirr?' demanded Sandy with unusual animation.

'Yes. Here, take them. It's a wild cat, a pukka wild cat, big as a panther!'

Next moment Sandy had the glasses adjusted, and pronounced that conclusion to be correct. They watched, breathless, to see the finish of the fight, if there was to be a finish. The cat had evidently heard the young falcons screaming, and had taken her life in her hands in deciding to attempt to rob the eyrie. Now she had brought a veritable hornets' nest about her ears, for the ravens had joined the peregrines, and were just as intent on teaching that wild cat what she was up against.

Yes, side by side at length, the world-old feud at last forgotten, the ravens and the falcons confronted a common foe, and as the men watched they heard a hissing scream, they saw the wild cat clutch wildly at the edge of the shelf, then at a stab from one of the ravens she lost her hold and fell. So they saw her strike and spin, then down into the purple shadows, with both falcons in close attendance, as though to see that she landed safely, she hurtled.

On a boulder, nearer than the men had ever seen them before, within twenty feet of the pine needles, the peregrines alighted, to be joined by the ravens, and there, in the slanting evening light, they spread their wings and seemed to converse with one another, as though each was congratulating the rest on the valuable part they had played. The men could distinctly see the royal blue of the tercel, touched with kingly ermine, the softer but no less lovely shades of his mate, and the wonderful purple and green of the ravens' garb. Amidst that rugged setting, with the blue sky above and the feathery pines around, it presented a picture such as few men have looked upon, and on the tenant's face there was an expression of quiet wonderment. 'Wild Nature as God made it!' he muttered almost reverently.

The gillie nodded. 'One might live a long, long time, sirr,' said he, 'and never again witness the like o' that.'

Later, when the falcons and the ravens had returned to their family affairs, both men ascended the rocky slope to see if they could find the wild cat. They found her all right. She lay quite dead at the foot of the cliff, and as well for her too, for had she escaped from the crag she would have gone her way sightless.

IV.

A little while later the tenant was indisposed, and after some days had elapsed he sent for the head gillie. 'Sandy,' said he, 'the doctors sent me here because they thought it would set me right among the pine forests.' And he patted his chest significantly.

Sandy nodded, and for once the gray eyes were sympathetic under their shaggy brows. 'I guessed as much, sirr,' he said quietly.

'Well,' the tenant pursued, 'that scheme has failed, and now they are sending me a few thousand miles away on another wild-geese-chase. I don't suppose I shall come back, Sandy, but I have learnt to love this place with its torrents and its crags, so I have bought it all for my boy. He is too young yet to handle a gun, but I want him to learn. You will teach him, Sandy, and I want you to teach him well. I want you to teach him to love

every wild thing as God made it, and I want this to be an unspoilt range. I want the crags to be bird sanctuaries just as they were a thousand years ago, so that my boy can learn wild nature as the Creator made it, before man stepped in to upset the balance. That is what I have loved, Sandy, and believe me, it is the only kind of preservation worth while. I know in my heart that you will keep good faith.'

Sandy's eyes were downcast. 'If that's your wish, sirr,' said he, 'I'll devote my life to it.'

The tenant stretched out his hand, and for a moment they looked into each other's eyes, the one with his face still towards the day, the other with his face towards the sunset.

'That is all, Sandy,' said the tenant. 'You will like my boy when you see him. He's what you would call a "braw wee laddie."'

Old Sandy took the hand. His own was trembling, and his vision was dim. 'Knowing his father,' said he, 'I'll like him weel, aye weel.' And Sandy went his heavy-hearted, heavy-footed way.

So there came into existence one of Scotland's few bird sanctuaries, and the grizzled keeper of the gate keeps his hand upon the key.

PETER WAS SINGLE.

PART IV.

XIII.

PETER was all expectation, and the chill atmosphere of the compartment of which he was the only occupant troubled him but little. Indeed, the single feature about the train which succeeded in impressing itself upon his consciousness with any emphasis was its sluggishness of movement. For the twentieth time during what was really a very short journey, he rose impatiently and crossed to the other window, and then sat down again. The compartment had not been constructed to meet the requirements of nervous passengers who desired to perambulate. The journey, he knew, was supposed to take a little more than thirty minutes to complete, and if the train was running to schedule the moment he had been living for ever since Thursday was close at hand.

Miss Slade had not put in an appearance at the warehouse since that fateful Wednesday, and although it was nothing new for her to be away for two or three days at a time, the imaginative Peter tortured himself with all sorts of fantastic fears and doubts. Suppose something really terrible had happened to her? Suppose she were seriously ill and unable to keep her appointment, how was he to find her? During the previous day he had attempted,

in a painfully casual manner, to discover if any of his staff knew Miss Slade's address, but no one had any but the vaguest idea as to her exact whereabouts. He had even considered the advisability of going boldly down to the private office and asking for her address, but such an action would be sure to cause comment, and he shrank from doing anything which would be likely to cause her unpleasantness in the slightest degree. She was, he knew, extremely sensitive; also beneath his fears and doubts was a certain conviction that she would be waiting for him.

'Anyhow,' muttered Peter grimly, 'I sha'n't return until I've seen her.' The very thought of not seeing her was unbearable.

There now came that change in the rhythm of the grinding wheels beneath him which always precedes a stop, and Peter perceived that the train was drawing into a little station. His heart bounded into his throat as a sign-board, almost as big as the station itself it seemed, bearing in great white letters on a black ground the name of his destination, flashed past. He sprang eagerly to the window, lowered it, and gazed out along the platform.

She was waiting for him—a slim, dark, lonely figure. Peter finished the rest of his journey on the footboard, dropping off immediately he drew level with her.

'So you came,' she said softly; 'you came to me.'

His emotion was so deep that Peter was unable to answer. Without another word she linked a confiding arm in his, and they made their way from the station.

It was a cold, sharp evening, made palely luminous by a wintry moon which gave familiar objects a strange air of unreality and flung gigantic shadows across their path. From the station they turned into a lonely suburban road, which at first ran between rows of imposing semi-detached villas; soon these dark, silent buildings became less frequent, until, finally, there were fields on either side of them and fields in front of them. The road had now become a wide, unpaved lane. Peter's sense of unreality increased. He had an odd feeling that, at every next step, he would waken to find himself back in the warehouse. Peter did not want to waken.

'How different from the warehouse,' murmured his companion softly.

Peter nodded and sighed.

'I love the country, only——'

'Yes?'

'Only I miss the birds—how I would have liked to hear the birds twittering this night.'

The moonlight became stronger and clearer; their feet rang on the hard path which ran like a ribbon through lonely fields, over which the keen hoar frost was spreading a magic mantle of jewelled white. On and on they went, saying but little, completely happy to be near each other. Peter's sense of unreality deepened with every step they took. The girl at his side seemed not to be of this world, and he felt that he must soon lose her. When she looked up at him, as she did often and strangely, the bright moonlight touched her face with an ethereal beauty. She led the way along all manner of queer little paths and over all manner of queer little stiles and fences. Peter soon discovered that there was a method in her apparently aimless rambling. From her little whispered comments it became quite obvious that childhood memories made these places dear to her.

They must have been walking for more than an hour when Peter decided that the time had come to broach the subject nearest his heart. The path sloped gently downward into a shallow valley where, less than half a mile away, he saw, clearly, the dark outline of a lonely little church. . . . He spoke in a whisper.

She answered in a whisper. 'I will give you my answer when we reach the church.'

XIV.

The church was in complete darkness, and there was no outward indication to show that anyone had remained behind after the service. The building was ancient and, judging from the

condition of the low wall which surrounded it, badly in need of repair. They turned in at the open gateway and passed down a moss-grown path, at each side of which crumbling grave-stones rose in the moonlight like silent sentinels. Passing into the dark shadow of the building, the girl led the way to a secluded corner of the graveyard, and at one of the graves she stopped with bowed head. 'Peter,' she whispered, 'my mother lies here. She would have liked you.'

Peter removed his hat and, looking down, saw at his feet a mass of simple flowers, still fresh, and evidently placed here by the girl earlier in the day.

She sank to her knees. 'Oh, mother, I am near you now, very near.'

Suddenly she buried her face in her hands and fell forward, sobbing, across the mound. Throwing his hat down, Peter raised the girl to her feet with an ease which surprised him, for she was nearly as tall as he.

A silence fell between them, and then at last the girl spoke. 'My mother was consumptive,' she said at last, mastering her emotion with a great effort, 'but she was very happy until my father died. I was very young then and do not remember him. My mother was obliged to work in the city; you see she had to provide for me, and it killed her. I—I——' She ceased and looked at him appealingly. Peter drew a deep breath; he knew what was coming now. 'Oh, Peter, I have inherited her disease. There is no doubt, almost no hope. The specialist I went to see the day after our evening together was quite honest with me. Try to forgive me for keeping silent so long. I did so hope that I might be mistaken. You—you meant so much to me, and I could not bring myself to tell you until I knew there was no hope. You do not blame me for not telling you; do you, dear? Say that you forgive me!'

He took her gently by the shoulders. 'I am still waiting for your answer,' he said steadily. 'Will you marry me at once and give me the privilege of taking care of you?'

She drew away from him with a cry of pain. 'But, my dear, you—you don't understand. They are coming for me shortly—taking me away. I shall never go to the warehouse again; this is the last time we shall ever see each other—the very last time.'

Peter shook his head stubbornly. 'It is not true—it can't be true,' he answered; 'while there's life there's hope. At least I can come and see you every week.'

She shook her head, and the moonlight fell full on her face, washing away the deceptive colour and touching her features with a strange ethereal beauty, not, it seemed to Peter, of this world. Even in her own great misery she thought of him rather than herself.

'You cannot, dear. They are taking me too far away for that, and it is better so. You have

your life to live, and you must forget me as soon as possible, or at least only remember me as one whose sad life was made happier by touching yours for a moment. . . . They say that in this life we are watched over by the

spirits of those who loved us. . . . Well, if in the years to come you should pass this way again, think of one who loved you and who is watching over you always. . . .

(Continued on page 139.)

VENETIAN PALACES.

By E. BERESFORD CHANCELLOR.

I.

WHEN Philippe de Comines was in Venice, on a diplomatic mission, in the year 1494, he was specially struck by the palaces, 'very high and of good stone; the ancient ones all painted,' which he observed as he was carried along the Grand Canal on his entrance to 'the most triumphant city' he confesses ever to have seen. To-day the visitor cannot but be equally impressed by the long series of famous and beautiful houses which line Venice's chief water-way, and form so many links in the chain of her historic past. The annals of Venice may be read in the bricks and stones of her *palazzi* as clearly as in her written records. Their picturesque names recall the great families who have directed the destinies of her arms and commerce.

As we pass up and down the Grand Canal on which so many of them look—and seem to look so wistfully—we cannot but be moved by the air of past grandeur which they exhibit as they stand, the memorials of a by-gone age and a long-dead convention. Something of this effect is produced by the great châteaux of France, whose significance passed with the mighty upheaval of a down-trodden people. But in that case the desolation wrought was produced by a sudden mighty uprising, although its seed had been sown through many a generation. Here in Venice the result has been produced by a gradual, an almost imperceptible, development. Time and changed conditions have alike eaten out the core of these once princely and noble abodes. No sudden outburst of popular fury has defaced their façades or played havoc with their splendid decorations. They have merely outlived their uses and significance, and where once abode a powerful noble is now a collocation of rather dilapidated tenements; where once some resplendent Doge dwelt is, to-day, the establishment of an antique-furniture dealer whose name, as it exhibits itself on a be-coroneted front, ill accords with the once proud annals of the family which formerly possessed it. But one thing time and change have been unable altogether to destroy. The architectural features which the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries lavished on these buildings still remain

more or less intact. Indeed, from an artistic point of view, time has helped to soften and mature so much that it may almost be forgiven if, in other cases, it has laid its destroying hand too roughly on a frescoed front, or has shorn away the initial sharpness of some delicate tracery, some decoration wrought in a stout lace-work very lovely to an appreciative eye.

II.

There must be not fewer than sixty or seventy of these palaces on the Grand Canal alone. Their façades help to make this serpentine water-way, with its glorious curves and almost theatrical effect, the most fascinating of all existing streets. Those who stay in Venice beyond the few days which many tourists seem to think sufficient time in which to master the intricacies, and sate themselves with the wonders of the place, come to know these landmarks, which no familiarity can make other than ever more and more alluring.

As your gondola carries you slowly past these homes of dead hopes and ambitions, the gondolier will draw your attention to this or that palace, and will call out historic names with which famous names of our own day are intermingled: here a Contarini lived, or a Grimani; there stayed Richard Wagner, and there died Robert Browning.

It is all slightly bewildering; but after all it is the essential and marked characteristic—this mixture of the old and new—of Venice. For just as the great poet and musician come into intimate contact with the protagonists of a past time, so do the *vaporetti* and motor launches stir up the waters on which the gondolas and *sandolos* ride lightly as they rode when Loredano and Foscari were Doges; while cinemas penetrate into *calle* and *campi* through which the members of the Council of Ten must often have passed, their robes of Tyrian hue reflecting the sun's rays as do, to-day, the dresses of the young American and English girls who feed the pigeons in the Piazza, or eat ices at Florian's.

III.

In old days the Venetian did not call his home a palace, as has since become the custom. With him it was *Cà*, a shortened form of *Casa*, and there exists one of the loveliest of these old

buildings bearing the original name—I mean the Cà d'Oro. There is no doubt that this is the most exquisite of all the buildings on the Grand Canal—perhaps, one might say, in all Venice. It is known to have been built, between the years 1424 and 1430, for the Contarini family, who seem to have possessed many other palaces (there are at least four more on the Grand Canal known by their name), although none that could compare with this architectural gem. It was called d'Oro, because its front was originally richly gilded, and not, as has sometimes been stated, from the Doro family, with whom it had no connection. The contracts for its elaborate stone-work and for its decoration in gold and vermilion are still in existence. Ruskin has waxed eloquent, as well he might, over the delicate beauty of its façade, which once seen can never wholly be forgotten. In its chapel is one of Mantegna's last pictures—a St Sebastian, and once the place was inhabited by Taglioni; but its essential beauty is such that it requires not even the pencil of the great painter or the pirouetting of the great dancer to give it interest or add to its charm.

Another beautiful frontage is that belonging to the Palazzo Loredan, the home once of the famous Doge, whose portrait, by Giovanni Bellini, is one of the treasures of the National Gallery, and who became head of the State in 1501, and ruled ably for twenty years. It stands near the Rialto Bridge, and, indeed, stood there before the present stone structure was erected; for it was built during the twelfth century, probably about the time when the first wooden bridge took the place of a bridge of boats at this spot. Although it has been restored, once at least in Gothic times, and once in the days of the Renaissance, it preserves the form its Byzantine builders gave it. The arms over some of its windows are those of Peter V., King of Cyprus, who once stayed here as the guest of Federigo Corner Piscopia; and in one of its rooms the child who was to become the learned Elena Cornara Piscopia was born.

IV.

To give in any detail the history of Venice palaces would mean the writing, not of an article, but of a volume; properly to consider their architectural features would entail another. As one passes down the Grand Canal from the Dogana, one can but point out those which, from their associations or the beauty of their façades, or from both, are best worth noting.

The first that will thus strike the eye is the Palazzo Dario. This is situated on our left, and is noticeable on account of the discs of porphyry and serpentine which decorate its front. It was erected during the middle of the fifteenth century, and is a good example of the Lombardi style of architecture, looking much as it must have done when De Comines saw it.

A little farther on is the Palazzo Manzoni, of about the same, or a very slightly later, date, and also the work of one of the Lombardi, that noted family to whom are due so many of Venice's lovely buildings. Beyond the Accademia stand the twin Palazzi Contarini degli Scignini, one of which is Gothic of the fifteenth century; the other later, probably from the hand of Scamozzi, a notable contemporary of the more widely-known Palladio. Degli Scignini signifies 'of the money chests'; and the addition is said to have been popularly applied to those palaces on account of the wealth of the powerful Contarini family which once possessed them, and which gave no fewer than eight Doges to Venice. Slightly farther on we come to a very different kind of palace, one whose fame is rather with its nineteenth-century resident than with the family for whom it was erected. This is the Palazzo Rezzonico, where Robert Browning spent some of his later years, and where, on 12th December 1889, he died. A tablet on the side of the building commemorates the fact; below being the poet's lines:

Open my heart, and you will see
Graved inside of it, 'Italy.'

The world knows the Palazzo Rezzonico better from this fact than because it was originally built (in 1680) for the Rezzonico family by Longhena, the architect of S. Maria della Salute, or because Joseph II. of Austria was once sumptuously entertained within its walls. It is an immense structure in the rather heavy decorated style which characterised Longhena's work; and had not Browning's one-time presence hallowed it, we should, perhaps, have given it but a passing glance. For next to it come three far lovelier façades belonging to what was once the great home of the Giustiniani family; they date from the fifteenth century, and one of them is called 'dei Vescovi' from the patriarch saint who was a member of this clan. The third of these palaces was purchased, in 1437, by Francesco Foscari (he was Doge from 1423 to 1457), and goes by his name. The pathetic story of Doge Foscari, known to so many through Byron's play, is indissolubly associated with this beautiful structure; for it must have been in it that he suddenly burst a blood-vessel on learning the decision of the Council of Ten that the tears wrung from him by his son's fate were regarded as indicative of his imbecility and inability to carry on his functions as Doge. You may see the old man's bust, 'looking as if he were alive,' in the ducal palace, and can almost imagine yourself present at the scene when Loredano carried the cruel message to his enemy.

Farther on is the Palazzo Balbi, whence Napoleon once watched a regatta organised in his honour in 1807; and close by is the Palazzo

Grimani, dating from 1475-85, with its remarkable column-capitals. But the Palazzo Pisani beyond will attract our notice chiefly, at this point, because of the beauty of its fifteenth-century transitional architecture, and also because it once contained Veronese's 'Family of Darius,' which, before the Pacca Law prevented such things, was carried away and sold to our National Gallery for £13,500 in the year 1857. A neighbouring palace, that of Cappello-Layard, has also a connection with art, in our minds, for here lived for many years Sir Henry Layard, whose remarkable gallery contained, among so many riches, the famous portrait of the Sultan Mahomet II. which Gentile Bellini painted during his sojourn in Constantinople.

v.

Passing by two palaces to which Ruskin in his *Stones of Venice* gives the names of 'The Braided House' and 'The Terraced House,' and which deserve careful study, although we cannot give it them here, we come to the Rialto Bridge, and close by it the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi, otherwise the offices of the three Lords of the Treasury, erected in 1525 by Guglielmo Bergamasco, and once decorated with pictures by that somewhat illusive and mysterious painter, Bonifazio. This palace, unlike those already mentioned, has always possessed a public rather than a private character. The Palazzo Corner della Regina, to-day the municipal pawn office—Venice's *mont-de-piété*—takes its name from the fact that it is built on ground once occupied by the palace allotted to Caterina Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus, on her abdication. She left it by will to the Pope, by whom it was given to the Counts of Cavanis. The present building was designed by Giacomo Rossi, and was erected in 1724.

On the western side of the canal only two other palaces need be noticed, not because of the charm, but rather of the bulk, of their design. They were both the work of the heavy-handed Longhena—a sort of Venetian Vanbrugh. The first is the Palazzo Pesaro, built in 1679. Ruskin describes it as 'the most impressive in effect of all the palaces of the grotesque Renaissance'; but Fergusson is full of praise for its general outlines, although he confesses that slight irregularities of detail are present. The fact is, these large, heavy erections, excellent as they often are in fulfilling architectural requirements, yet strike an alien note when seen in juxtaposition to the charm of the Gothic and earlier Renaissance buildings which stand near them. This is markedly the case with another of Longhena's huge buildings, the Palazzo Battaglia, whose façade is spoilt by two obelisks rising at each corner, and which appears vulgar and commonplace beside the lonely Cà d'Oro, whose traceried beauty rises close by.

vi.

Our return on the other side of the Canal may well be commenced at this charming and lovely palace to which I have already referred. Passing it, we see another Gothic building, though on far less elaborate lines, the Palazzo Sagredo, now the Rava College, which dates from the thirteenth century, but which has undergone many subsequent alterations. Farther on, just beyond the Rialto Bridge, is the Palazzo Manin, a work of Sansovino, which reminds us of Venice's last Doge, a member of the family from whom the structure takes its name; and near by, after passing the fifteenth-century Palazzo Bembo, is the small relic of what was once the home of a much earlier and far more notable Doge—Enrico Dandolo. It dates from the twelfth century, as does the beautiful Palazzo Loredan already referred to.

Although the Palazzo Dandolo is associated with the Doge who ruled the destinies of Venice with such conspicuous success from 1193 to 1205, an inscription on another residence, now used as the *Municipio*, and known as the Palazzo Faretto, tells us that that building was originally erected by Enrico Dandolo in the year 1203. There is an added interest associated with this palace, because here was established the academy in which Canova learned the rudiments of his art, and it still contains evidences of his skill in some carvings on the great staircase.

For a very different reason the Palazzo Grimani will attract attention, for it is one of Sanmicheli's great achievements in this style of domestic architecture, and forms a link between the earlier work exhibited in the Dandolo and Loredan palaces (the Palazzo Corner-Spinelli close by, designed by Pietro Lombardi, is more or less contemporaneous) and the Palazzo Mocenigo, whose rich and elaborate frontage soon arrests the eye. Here the Duke of Savoy stayed in 1574, and here Giordano Bruno was denounced as a heretic in 1592, with the result that that famous philosopher perished at the stake, in Rome, some years later. It was here, too, that Byron stayed during his residence in Venice, and here he wrote portions of *Don Juan*, *Marino Faliero*, and *Beppo*. Many of the weird and exaggerated stories set afloat concerning the poet had for their *milieu* this old and attractive palace.

Before we emerge into the basin of S. Marco, where to-day war-ships and giant liners ride at anchor, and gondolas and motor-boats mark the extremes of Venice's water-power, there are various palaces, all of which possess some appealing note. For instance, that of Contarini delle Figure, with its shield and trophy decorations, which report says is haunted, mysterious knockings being heard and doors being seen to open by themselves, as a result of its one-time

owner having gambled away not only all his worldly possessions, but at last even his wife; the Palazzo Cavalli, of the fifteenth century, once belonging to the Comte de Chambord; the Palazzo Corner della Cà Grande, built by Sansovino; and the earlier Palazzo Contarini-Fasan, with its charming little front, popularly supposed to have been the home of Desdemona. Coryat, in 1608, specially mentions its 'pretty little turned pillars of marble,' and Ruskin regarded it as 'the richest work of the fifteenth-century domestic Gothic in Venice.'

Nothing, I think, can equal the catholic beauty of these Venetian palaces. All architectural tastes can be satisfied in their progress

up and down the Grand Canal. The rounded arched windows of the Byzantine convention, the glorious traceried work of the Gothic and earlier Renaissance, the imposing richness of the later period, and the massive solidity which marked the Baroque, are all represented. And, withal, a background of history and romance: memories of great Doges, illustrious princes, and famous men and women who have succumbed to the fascination of Venice, and who, like Byron and Browning, George Sand and George Eliot, Chopin and Wagner, have passed some of their time inhaling its influence and in perpetuating something of its incommunicable charm in the terms of their various arts.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER IV.—*continued.*

'I WAS on my way to see your father,' said Mr Bandicott at length. 'This morning I have prospected the barrow of Harald Blacktooth, and it is clear to me that I can make no progress unless I have Colonel Raden's permission to use explosives. Only the very slightest use, I promise you. I have located, I think, the ceremonial entrance, but it is blocked with boulders which it would take a gang of navvies to raise with crowbars. A discreet application of dynamite would do the work in half-an-hour. I cannot think that Colonel Raden would object to my using it when I encounter such obstacles. I assure you it will not spoil the look of the barrow.'

'I'm sure papa will be delighted. You're certain the noise won't frighten the deer? You know the Piper's Ring is in the forest.'

'Not in the least, my dear young lady. The report will be very slight, scarcely louder than a rifle shot. I ought to tell you that I am an old hand at explosives, for in my young days I mined in Colorado, and recently I have employed them in my Alaskan researches—'

'If we go home now,' said Janet, rising, 'we'll just catch papa before he goes out. You're very warm, Mr Bandicott, and I think you would be the better for a rest and a drink.'

'I certainly should, my dear. I was so eager to begin that I bolted my breakfast, and started off before Junius was ready. He proposes to meet me here.'

Benjie, left alone, wrought diligently at his heather roots, whistling softly to himself, and every now and then raising his head to scan the haugh and the lower glen. Presently a tall young man appeared, who was identified as the younger American, and who was duly directed to follow his father to the Castle. The two returned in a little, accompanied by Agatha Raden, and while the elder Mr Bandicott hastened to the Piper's Ring, the young people

sauntered to the Raden bridge and appeared to be deep in converse. 'Thae twa's weel agreed,' was Benjie's comment. A little before one o'clock the party adjourned to the Castle, presumably for luncheon, and Benjie, whose noon-tide meal was always sparing, nibbled a crust of bread and a rind of cheese. In the afternoon Macpherson and one of the gillies strolled past, and the head-stalker proved wonderfully gracious, and adjured him, as Janet had done, to keep his eyes open and report the presence of any stranger. 'There'll be the three folk from Strathlarrig howkin' awa' there, but if you see anybody else, away up to the house and tell the wife. They'll no' be here for any good.' Benjie promised fervently. 'I've graund een, Mr Macpherson, sir, and though they was to be crawlin' like a serpent I'd be on them.' The head-stalker observed that he was a 'gleg one,' and went his ways.

Despite his industry Benjie was remarkably observant that day, but he was not looking for poachers. He had suddenly developed an acute interest in the deer. His unaided eyes were as good as the ordinary man's telescope, and he kept a keen watch on the fringes of the great birch woods. The excavation at the Piper's Ring kept away any beasts from the east side of the haugh, but on the west bank of the stream he saw two lots of hinds grazing, with one or two young stags among them, and even on the east bank, close in to the edge of the river, he saw hinds with calves. He concluded that on the fringes of the Raden the feeding must be extra good, and as a steady west wind was blowing, the deer there would not be alarmed by Mr Bandicott's quest. Just after he had finished his bread and cheese Benjie was rewarded with the spectacle of a hummel, a great fellow of fully twenty stone, who rolled in a peat-hole and then stood blowing in the shallow water, as unconcerned as if he had been on the

top of Carnmore. Later in the afternoon he saw a good ten-pointer in the same place, and a little later an eight-pointer with a damaged horn. He concluded that that particular hag was a favourite mud-bath for stags, and that with the wind in the west it was no way interfered with by the activities at the Piper's Ring.

About four o'clock Benjie backed the old horse into the shafts, and jogged up the beech-avenue to Mrs Macpherson's, where he was stayed with tea and scones. There was a gathering outside the door of Macpherson himself and the two gillies, and a strange excitement seemed to have fallen on that stolid community. Benjie could not avoid—indeed I am not sure that he tried to avoid—hearing scraps of their talk. 'I've been a'round Carnmore,' said Alan, 'and I seen some fine beasts. They're mostly in a howe atween the two tops, and a man at the Gray Beallach could keep an eye on all the good ground.' 'Ay, but there's the Carn Moss, and the burnheads—there will be beasts there too,' said James Macrae. 'There will have to be a man there, for him at the Gray Beallach wouldna ken what was happening.' 'And what about Corrie Gall?' asked Macpherson fiercely. 'Ye canna post men on Carnmore—they will have to keep moving, it is that awful broken ground.' 'Well, there's you and me and James,' said Alan, 'and there's himself.' 'And that's the lot of us, and every man wanted,' said Macpherson. 'It's what I was always saying—ye will need every man for Carnmore, and must let Carnbeg alone, or ye can watch Carnbeg and not go near Carnmore. We're far ower few.' 'I wass thinking,' said James Macrae, 'that the youngest leddy might be watching Carnbeg.' 'Ay, James'—this satirically from Macpherson—'and how would the young leddy be keeping a wild man from killing a stag and getting him away?' 'Deed, I don't know,' said the puzzled James, 'without she took a gun with her and had a shot at him.'

Benjie drove quietly to Inverlarrig for his supply of fish, and did not return to his headquarters in the Wood of Larrigmore till nearly seven o'clock. At eight, having cooked and eaten his supper, he made a simple toilet, which consisted in washing the fish-scales and the stains of peat from his hands, holding his head in the river, parting his damp hair with a broken comb, and putting over his shoulders a waterproof cape, which had dropped from some passing conveyance and had been found by him on the road. Thus accoutred, he crossed the river and by devious paths ascended to Crask.

He ensconced himself in the stable, where he was greeted sourly by the Bluidy Mackenzie, who was tied up in one of the stalls. There he occupied himself in whistling strathspeys, and stuffing a foul clay pipe with the stump of a cigar which he had picked up in the yard. Benjie smoked not for pleasure, but from a

sense of duty, and a few whiffs were all he could manage with comfort. The gloaming had fallen before he heard his name called, and Wattie Lithgow appeared. 'Ye're there, ye monkey! The gentlemen are askin' for ye. Quick and follow me. They're in an awfu' ill key the nicht, and maunna be keepit waitin'.'

There certainly seemed trouble in the smoking-room when Benjie was ushered in. Lamancha was standing on the hearth-rug with a letter crumpled in his hand, and Sir Archie, waving another missive, was excitedly confronting him. The other two sat in arm-chairs with an air of protest and dejection. 'I forgot all about the infernal thing till I got Montgomery's letter. The 4th of September! Hang it, my assault on old Claybody is timed to start on the 5th. How on earth can I get to Muirtown and back, and deliver a speech, and be ready for the 5th? Besides, it betrays my presence in this part of the world. It simply can't be done . . . and yet I don't know how on earth to get out of it? Apparently the thing was arranged months ago.'

'You're for it all right, my son,' cried Sir Archie, 'and so am I. Here's the beastly announcement. "*A Great Conservative Gathering will be held in the Town Hall, Muirtown, on Thursday, 4th September, to be addressed by the Right Hon. Lord Lamancha, M.P., His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Dominions. The Chair will be taken at 8 p.m. by His Grace the Duke of Angus, K.G. Among the speakers will be Col. Wavertree, M.P., the Hon. W. J. Murdoch, ex-Premier of Nova Caledonia, and Captain Sir Archibald Roycastle, Bart., D.S.O., prospective Conservative Candidate for Wester Ross.*" Oh, will he? Not by a long chalk! Catch me goin' to such a fiasco, with Charles hidin' here, and the show left to the tender mercies of two rotten bad speakers and a half-witted chairman.'

'Did you forget about it too?' Leithen asked.

'Course I did,' said Sir Archie wildly. 'How could I think of anything with you fellows turnin' my house into a den of thieves? I forgot it just as completely as Charles, only it doesn't matter about me, and it matters a devil of a lot about him. I don't stand an earthly chance of winnin' the seat, if first of all I mustn't canvass because of smallpox, and, second, my big meeting, on which all my fellows counted, is wrecked by Charles playin' the fool.'

Lamancha's dark face broke into a smile. 'Don't worry, old chap. I won't let you down. But it looks as if I must let down John Macnab, and just when I was getting keen about him. . . . Hang it, no! There must be a way. I'm not going to be beaten either by Claybody or this damned Tory rally. Ned, you slacker, what's your advice?'

'Have a try at the double event,' Leithen drawled. 'You'll probably make a mess of both, but it's a sporting proposition.'

Archie's face brightened. 'You don't realise how sportin' a proposition it is. The Claybodies will be there, and they'll be all over you—brother nobleman, you know, and you goin' to poach their stags next day! Hang it, why shouldn't you turn the affair into camouflage? "Out of my stony griefs Bethels I'll raise," says the hymn. . . . We'll have to think the thing out very carefully. Anyway, Charles, you've got to help me with my speech. I don't mind so much lyin' doggo here if I can put in a bit of good work on the 5th. . . . Now, Benjie, my lad, for your report.'

Benjie, not without a certain shyness, cleared his throat and began. He narrated how, following his instructions, he had secured Macpherson's permission to cut heather for besoms on the Raden haugh. He had duly taken up his post there, had remained till four o'clock, and had seen such and such people, and heard this and that talk. He recounted what he could remember of the speeches of Macpherson and the gillies.

'They've got accustomed to the sight of you, I suppose,' Palliser-Yeates said at length.

'Ay, they're accustomed right enough. Both

the young leddy and Macpherson was tellin' me to keep a look-out for poachers.' Benjie chuckled.

'Then to-morrow you begin to move up to the high ground by the Carnmore peat-road. Still keep busy at your besoms. You understand what I want you for, Benjie? If I kill a stag I have to get it off Glenraden land, and your old fish-cart won't be suspected.'

'Ay, I see that fine. But I've been thinkin' that there's maybe a better way.'

'Go ahead, and let's have it.'

Benjie began his speech nervously, but he soon warmed to it, and borrowed a cigar box and the fire-irons to explain his case. The interest of his hearers kindled, until all four men were hanging on his words. When he concluded, and had answered sundry questions, Sir Archie drew a deep breath and laughed excitedly.

'I suppose there's nothing in that that isn't quite cricket. . . . I thought I knew something about bluff, but this—this absolutely vanquishes the band. Benjie, I'm goin' to have you taught poker. You've the right kind of mind for it.'

(Continued on page 133)

THE TRAVELLING CINEMA IN CUBA.

DOWN on the East Coast of Cuba, a few miles from the sea, where the sun shines brazenly on the fields of sugar-cane, and mosquitoes approach the size of June Bugs, the travelling cinema show is a unique and picturesque institution. Even in the large cities it is comparatively rare to find the splendidly-equipped theatres with their symphony orchestras and latest offerings from Film Land that are common in Britain and America. In the rural districts, the natives are far too poor to afford any elaborate amusements, and except for an occasional 'Fiesta,' they have to supply their own brand of entertainment. Cuba is striving mightily to be modern in all things, and the portable cinema is one of her efforts to bring the outlying sugar districts into a little closer touch with civilisation.

The isolation of the people who work on these cane plantations is complete, for they are miles away from the nearest town. They live in communities that are nothing more than straggling lines of board-shacks, three or four saloons, and a company store. Stretching across the level country as far as the eye can see are the green acres of sugar-cane, merging toward the coast with tangled jungle and swamp lands.

If you should take a peep into one of the Cuban drinking places that forms the centre of attraction for the conglomerate population who gain their livelihood in the fields, you would see a sight that would make one of William S.

Hart's western film-settings seem tame in comparison. Crowded about the bar are Cuban planters and sugar men, each with an American-made six-shooter at his hip, who drink generously of Bocardi rum and while away the long evenings with animated discussions or occasional Spanish songs. On the fringe of the crowd are strapping Barbados negroes, there on contract as cane-cutters, with their sheathed cane-knives dangling about their legs.

Farther off in a corner a little group of Chinese coolies chatter away over their beer. They have been imported as cheap labour to tend the molasses pots in the nearby mill, and seem contented with their jobs.

Up from the loading-docks come a crowd of Cuban stevedores—small, wiry fellows of dark complexion, who drift up to the bar for their nightly round of drinks. A close inspection will reveal the handle of a knife sticking from under the broad leather belt each one wears. Weapons of all kinds are popular with the natives, and a fire-arm with the stamp 'Made in U.S.A.' is highly prized.

It is into such a community as this that the itinerant cinema manager makes his entrance. The merest rumour that a travelling show is in the vicinity is received with joyous exclamations and a call for more liquor. The man who makes the rounds of these obscure and unheard-of settlements is a resourceful and versatile fellow. He performs the duties of operator, advertising

man, ticket-taker, and manager with equal facility. With the help of a mulatto boy, he transports the heavy apparatus from place to place over the wide sugar-cane areas. Not possessing an advance agent to spread the glad tidings of his intended arrival, he formally announces the presence of his cinema show in the village by a long flowery speech from atop the bar of the principal drinking-place. The news travels fast, and soon the entire population, including the so-called police force, is crowded into the building, while the silver-tongued orator describes the merits of his films. The good people, whose imaginations are kindled by the glowing descriptions thus presented, are only too anxious for the performance to begin.

The first thing the travelling-cinema magnate seeks is a suitable building for the showing of his films. Rural Cuba does not afford the barn-storming facilities of America, and he must needs use the largest saloon in the village for his theatre. Usually this structure, although somewhat flimsy, is spacious enough for the purpose, and after much 'dickering' with the proprietor as to the rental, he proceeds to assemble the machine.

Sometimes it happens that the village does not boast of a place of sufficient proportions, but this does not 'feeze' the moving-cinema man. Selecting the broadest side of a shack, he tacks up his sheet and starts business under the stars. During the fall months the outdoor show is a rather risky undertaking, for tropical showers are frequent. No rain checks are given out, however, and when the downpour starts, the disappointed audience scurries to shelter, usually at the moment when the villain was just about to commit an especially dastardly deed.

The type of projecting machine used is reminiscent of the days of the 'Nickelodian,' when Indian thrillers were in vogue and the 'Just-a-minute-please' motto flashed on the screen as the reel was changed. Any parts of the apparatus that happen to be lost or stolen are replaced by the local blacksmith, and the result looks like a grotesque scissors-grinder rather than a motion-picture machine. Yet it always works under the experienced fingers of the manager-operator, and its assembly is the wonder and admiration of the mechanically inclined natives, who crowd around and bombard the nervous little man with questions. The absence of electricity worries him but little, for his light is supplied by a carbide gas generator which forms part of his travelling outfit.

No chances are taken about losing any of his prospective audience, and by means of a novel advertising scheme he endeavours to gather in those living outside the village. Beneath a bright light at the entrance to the improvised theatre is a poster of large dimensions, stating in glaring red letters the nature of the cinema to be shown. Below is a marvellous picture,

probably painted by some native futurist genius, representing the terrific fight of the film hero against half-a-dozen villainous-looking bandits. Most noticeable of all is the statement of the admission price, forty centavos. A good hour before the performance, the manager and his *aide* seat themselves beneath their startling advertisement, and proceed to issue their call to all and sundry with drum and bell. The former is more like the African tom-tom in appearance, and is played with the palms of the hands with the same rhythm as is employed by the voodoo worshippers of Hayti. Across the darkened fields of cane rolls the monotonous throbbing of the tom-tom and the sharp clanging of the bell. Sometimes this primitive orchestra is supplemented by a couple of native volunteers, one of whom shakes a pair of gourd rattles, while the other whines out a high-pitched Spanish ballad with the aid of a battered mandoline.

Such clamour is not long in rounding up every man, woman, and dog within a radius of two or three miles, and quickly changing from the rôle of musician to that of ticket-seller, our cinema magnate gathers in the silver. All is now set for the beginning of the show, and silencing the excited mob with some difficulty, he proceeds to deliver a short lecture on what is to come, emphasising the happy privilege of the audience in viewing such marvellous pictures. And truly they are marvellous! There are about six reels in all, three comedies and three dramas, not one being of a later date than 1913. The comedies are of the kind that came out when the moving-picture industry was in its infancy—French slapstick affairs, dealing with the amusing pranks of children. As for the dramas, they range from the Western thriller to the archaic 'costume drama.' In the latter, the old reliable story is presented of the beautiful maiden being rescued from the cruel clutches of the robber baron by her gallant mail-clad lover. This is the kind of picture that especially appeals to the emotional Cuban cinema 'fans.' They weep with the heroine when she is in trouble, and yell with delight when the naughty villain gets his inevitable share of punishment.

Western pictures of Indian massacres or cowboy hold-ups are something of a bore to the natives, because they themselves are prone to stage insurrections or young revolutions so often, that seeing such things in the movies isn't half as interesting as in real life. If, however, some innovation in the way of murder or banditry is shown on the screen, the chances are that some of the male members of the audience will try it out for themselves the next day—usually with disastrous results!

The last number on the programme, according to the manager, is the 'feature.' If we were to view it, we should probably be quite

disappointed, for it is nothing more than one of the episodes of those hair-raising serial thrillers that used to be the rage ten years ago. Yet the unsophisticated Cuban audience gasp with amazement at the daring deeds of the 'Americanos,' and sit on the edges of their chairs during the whole film. It is imperative that these good people possess good eyesight, for often it is hard to distinguish the characters from the streaks and specks on the screen.

When the last scene has flickered away, the

manager announces in a loud voice that the next instalment of the amazing serial will be shown on his next visit, which may be three or four months away, depending on the success of his trip. For many a day the pictures are the subject of animated conversation in the torrid cane-fields or on the loading-docks. The natives of eastern Cuba to-day are going through the same experiences that we did when the cinema was still a novelty, and they're enjoying it immensely.

MY WIFE AND I.

PART II.

VI.

I SOON found that my uncle and Sir Lewis were setting about arranging the desired match in a stolid, lumbering way that was in reality all too slow for me. I pretended to hang back, whilst all the time I went a great deal the faster. I was invited to dine at Long Edge; I refused. Sir Lewis met me, and talked graciously about his shooting; I thanked him, but said the Earlesharte coverts were good enough, and that my favourite sport was fishing. Uncle Richard suggested my returning the Cunninghams' hospitality, and I put up as many excuses as I might pheasants in October.

In the meanwhile, Kitty and I had encountered each other in the Long Edge woods, and I had filled her lap with hyacinths while she sat under a tree and tied them into bunches, looking like a little dryad in her summer gown. Later, we tossed hay together in Sir Lewis's farthest fields, the workers smiling at us.

At last I took her little hand, as we walked in the avenue one evening—I had ridden over to see Sir Lewis on some pretext or other—and told her that she must be mine, and that we would be playmates and partners for the rest of our lives. And she looked up at me with those brown eyes of hers, and said, 'Yes, Dick.' And I kissed her on the lips, and the brown eyes filled of a sudden with tears, that fell down betwixt trembling smiles, like April rain.

VII.

I announced my betrothal in a hang-dog manner to Uncle Richard. He took my grim way of conveying the news as the sign of a reluctance not yet wholly overcome, and ascribed the engagement entirely to his own powers of management and to my respect for his superior judgment. He made it plain that he anticipated some difficulty about bringing me to the actual point of the wedding, but that he had no doubt of achieving it, giving me time.

'There'll be a good many things to arrange, you know, Dick. There's plenty of time . . .

plenty of time. We shall have to see Mr Hutchinson, and all that.'

I hung my head to conceal the smile that I could not restrain, and laughed like a madman when I was out of hearing again, betwixt joy and triumph. For the game was not played out yet: far from it. 'This is *my* affair,' I told myself, 'and I mean to manage it my own way.'

Because Kitty was mine. And what right had any lawyer, or uncle, or cold baronet of them all, to come between us and carry out this binding of our hearts as though it were any common kind of business?

VIII.

Uncle Richard and I dined at Long Edge a day or two afterwards, in due course, and I bore the Cunninghams' congratulations, and his satisfaction, as well as I could. After dinner Kitty and I were allowed to slip away together, leaving our elders to talk about settlements in the drawing-room.

'Twas necessary to explain how matters stood to my little betrothed. As we wandered along the terrace in the moonlight I began. 'Darling, you know what they are talking about in there, don't you?'

Kitty dropped her pretty head, and did not answer.

'Well, now,' I continued, 'if we let them arrange it their own way, and have a big wedding, with all the county looking at us'—Kitty shuddered—'and lawyers, and coaches with four horses, and what not: if we let them do all this, Kitty, you won't be marrying *me*'—I paused dramatically—'you'll be marrying Uncle Richard.'

'I *shan't*, Dick!' cried my darling, standing still and lifting up her small face quite ablaze.

I had to reassure her. 'I don't mean, sweetheart,' I said, 'that Uncle Richard will put the ring on your blessed finger, and all that. But what I mean is——' And I went on to explain the situation to her. It took a considerable time, for Kitty was still rather frightened by what I had said.

When at length she did understand, she was ready to agree with me. 'You see,' I concluded, 'what I mean is, that we will just be married quietly, as we please, Kitty; and afterwards we will come and tell them that it is done. That will save a great deal of bother, and there will be no need for any one to be vexed, because they want us to marry; and we shall save them a vast deal of expense, besides.'

'Yes,' returned Kitty eagerly, 'that will be a good thing.' From which I gathered that Sir Lewis was inclined to economy, as, indeed, he had the reputation of being.

'But mamma will be buying all my clothes,' she hesitated, after a moment. 'My wedding-gown . . . she will be sure to buy a very fine one . . . you know, Dick——!'

'You will want all the other clothes, darling. And as for the wedding-gown, we will be married before she has ordered it.'

'O Dick!' cried Kitty.

'What! Don't you want to marry me, Kitty?' said I reproachfully; and Kitty begged my pardon, and promised to do all that I wished.

IX.

So we walked across the green together one morning, Kitty and I, when the dew was still bright on the grass, and the hot August sun had risen but a short way above the trees of Long Edge. I had taken the vicar into my counsel, almost upon command, the living being in the gift of Earlesharte. I brought the crackling license out of my pocket, and the little gold circlet that had been my mother's wedding-ring from my watch-fob, where I had placed it with I know not how proud a thrill. My man, Camp, and Kitty's old nurse were attending us as witnesses, somewhere in the chancel; but I scarcely saw them. The sunlight poured through the east window upon us twain as we stood up before the vicar, while he began to read. I heard the words in a dream, until he bade us join hands, and then each sentence fell on my ears like a hammer-stroke. Kitty's little hand lay in mine . . . my soul was in my fingers as I held it. . . . We spoke the vows, my voice sounding oddly hoarse and deep. . . . I slipped the ring over the slender member whose vein, they say, communicates direct with the heart—we were wed!

I led my bride home to Long Edge, and kissed her under the elms. 'Soon I shall come and bring you to Earlesharte, darling,' I said. 'But you will want some breakfast first, and nothing will be ready for you, love, till I have told Mrs Allison to prepare your rooms.'

I have it on her own confession that Kitty went straight to bed when she got in, to avoid seeing her parents, who were not yet come down to breakfast.

For myself, I rode back to Earlesharte in a fever of joy, and wonder, and triumph. My

revolution was fairly accomplished. It only remained to inform Uncle Richard of the expiration of his office. Now that I had made the plunge into independence I felt ready to dare any lengths, though my mind misgave me a trifle when I thought of Cotterell and the various problems that I had hitherto escaped. But I dismissed these drawbacks, and kept my courage high with thoughts of Kitty as I made my way to Uncle Richard in the library. I believe at that moment I even entertained visions of him as ending his days in his own apartments, like a superannuated minister. If I did, I was quite wrong, for he is 'practising' now, as one may say; only, he understands that his authority is limited to the estate, and that Kitty and I do not allow any one to manage the royal household but ourselves.

X.

I found him sitting in his big chair, looking as magisterial and overwhelming as ever. 'Uncle,' said I, copying his own manner as well as I could, and speaking with portentous solemnity, 'I'm worse than you thought me.'

'H'm, Dick?' responded my uncle, looking up, and preparing to treat me with a proper mixture of severity and indulgence.

'Far worse,' said I, sitting down, and slapping my riding-boots all up and down with my crop. I do not know precisely what I wished him to do or to say, except that I wanted him somehow to abjure my marriage.

'What is it now, Dick? . . . Debts again, eh? Debts?'

I shook my head. I suppose my silence and the shaking of my head gave an appearance of despondency. At any rate, Uncle Richard inclined to the side of clemency (to judge by his voice, for I dared not glance at him) as he proceeded. 'Come, Dick, what is it? You've been gaming—hum?'

I shook my head.

'Well, what *have* you done?' asked my uncle, rather impatiently.

'I'm married,' said I.

He fairly leaped from his chair. I had not thought him so nimble. 'What, sir?'

'I'm married, sir.'

He stared at me for a few seconds as though he did not credit his senses. 'But you're engaged to Miss Cunningham, sir!'

'No,' said I, 'I'm not.'

'But I say that you *are*, sir!' roared Uncle Richard.

'I can show you my marriage lines,' I returned. 'Twas wonderful how cool I kept. I marvelled at it myself.'

Uncle Richard began to walk up and down the room. If I had looked at him, which I could not, I believe I should have seen that he was really upset to an extent that might have moved me to contrition. At that moment his

world must have been whirling about him; it had hitherto gone round so orderly, and at such a regular and regulated pace, that he was perfectly nonplussed. 'You're *not* engaged to Miss Cunningham?' repeated he, stopping.

'No,' said I. For, of course, we were married, and there was no longer such a person as 'Miss Cunningham.' The occasion when he had first broken the news of his negotiations with Sir Lewis, and my feelings then, recurred forcibly to my memory. My wrongs spurred me on. What might he not have led me into? 'I would have been all the same. 'Look here, sir,' I said, 'you will remember that 'twas you who started that business; I never began it. You dragged me into it, willy-nilly. You said things to Sir Lewis Cunningham that fairly compromised me . . . for, of course, any ordinary person would suppose that I was acting for myself, at my age—'

I saw a slight expression of surprise cross his face in the midst of his anger, as though the idea were actually new to him. He interrupted, in a tone that I confess did shame me somewhat. 'If I had known what a young blackleg you were, Dick, nothing would have induced me to involve that innocent young lady, and her respectable parents, in such an alliance.'

I answered sulkily—because I was beginning to repent my usage of him just a trifle—'You see what you've done, however, sir.'

Then, of a sudden, it came upon me that 'twas his own scheme I had completed—that it was he himself who had led me into the offence. I had only, as it were, taken the bit between my teeth and galloped ahead. And a great burst of laughter rose up and threatened to choke me, so that I was obliged to plunge out of the room and give it vent in the garden.

XI.

I went to Mrs Allison, and told her to prepare my wife's rooms immediately.

She said, 'Yes, sir,' complacently.

'By dinner-time,' I added.

Mrs Allison dropped a whole pile of clean clothes that she had in her arms. 'Mr Richard?'

'By dinner-time,' said I firmly.

'The great walnut chamber, and the red boudoir, and the dressing-closet that opens out of it?' said Mrs Allison in a gasping way.

'The walnut chamber, and the red boudoir?' I returned, considering. 'No, my wife shall not have those. She is to have that nice sunny room on the south—'

'Oh, Mr Richard! Only the nursery that was.'

'—And that pretty chamber over the west porch will do much better for her boudoir. It does not smell of stuff curtains, at any rate, and she can see the garden from it.'

I left Mrs Allison wailing about 'a Lady of

Earlesharte,' and 'who had ever heard of such a thing?' But she was too much taken by surprise to resist in proper force, and I gave her no time to recover herself. I daresay she had barely got her breath, and left off putting her hand to the side-seam of her bodice, ere I was riding down the avenue.

XII.

I burst in on Sir Lewis and Lady Cunningham at breakfast. 'I want Kitty,' I said.

They looked astonished. Sir Lewis rose slowly, and leaned towards me, like a courteous vulture hovering over its prey. Lady Cunningham sat stiffly erect, with cold eyes.

'Certainly, Richard,' returned my unconscious father-in-law, after a slight pause, 'you have a right to ask for our daughter. My dear, be so good as to ring. Kitty is late in coming down this morning.'

'She will be down directly,' returned Lady Cunningham, still fixing a frigid gaze on me. I daresay I appeared rather wild.

A few minutes passed, while I fidgeted up and down the room, refusing the chair that Sir Lewis offered me at intervals. At heart, I was afraid of them both, yet I was master of the situation, and I was determined to carry it.

'My dear, will you ring?' said the baronet again, after enduring my restlessness with the watchful but rather helpless calm of a keeper in charge of an insubordinate animal.

This time Lady Cunningham complied. They exchanged glances, plainly signalling 'Excited!' Her attitude announced as plainly, 'Anything to get rid of him.'

A footman appeared. 'Call Miss Kitty's woman,' said my lady.

In a few moments Kitty's old nurse was curtseying in the doorway. Her eye sought mine fearfully, then dropped under her mistress's.

'Miss Katherine is late in rising, Beaton?'

'Yes, my lady. Miss Katherine—Miss Katherine is indisposed, my lady.'

'Ill?' cried I, hastily. 'Why, she was all right this m—' Beaton's terrified glance, full of meaning, shot at me once more; and I understood the nature of Kitty's indisposition as being moral, and not physical.

Lady Cunningham turned to me triumphantly. 'I am afraid you cannot see Kitty to-day, Richard. Perhaps if you come to-morrow at a later hour—your call was made rather early—'

'I have come to take Kitty to Earlesharte,' I said distinctly. 'She is not ill. We were married this morning.'

I do not remember if anything happened immediately after I said that. I have a vague impression of the Cunninghams' faces like stone-carved ones, and of Beaton's terror-stricken visage sinking back in flight from the doorway.

XIII.

Suddenly I burst into a great roar of laughter. I could not help it; the position was so comical.

Then Sir Lewis found his voice. 'This is a joke,' he said.

I became grave with an effort. 'Look here,' I responded. I pulled out my marriage certificate, and handed it to him. He read it and passed it silently to Lady Cunningham, then back to me.

I continued, standing in the middle of the floor, 'I have come to fetch my wife. You have no right to stop me. You consented to our engagement, and now we are married. We have done it our own way, instead of yours, that is all.'

Lady Cunningham spoke at last. 'Villain!' she uttered. Doubtless she was thinking of the wedding-gown, the coaches, the cakes, the display. Well, poor woman, we had wronged her in that respect, but 'twas a wrong that might be oftener borne.

Then, to end the scene, Kitty ran into the room in her cloak and hood. Evidently Beaton had fled upstairs and told her what was happening. She came straight to me, and together we stood facing the angry parents, her little hand with the ring upon it clasped in mine.

'Come, darling,' I said, making a movement to go.

'Stop, stop!' cried Lady Cunningham, forgetting her pride in anxiety as to further developments of our madness. 'How are you going?'

Without remorse, I answered by appealing to my bride. 'Kitty, you can ride on a pillion behind me, can't you?'

'Yes, Dick,' assented Kitty.

'A pillion! . . . O Richard — Kitty —!' wailed Lady Cunningham, 'at least have the coach! Do not be seen going through the lanes —'

'The clothes can come in the coach,' I said firmly. 'Kitty and I are man and wife, and we do not care if all the world sees us. I've as much right to carry my wife home behind me as any farmer. Goodbye, Sir Lewis. Goodbye, madam. Kitty is still your daughter, though she is married to me.—Say goodbye to your parents, darling; we must go now.'

The Cunninghams remained stiff under Kitty's penitent embrace, and we went away together.

My bride began to cry as we left the house. 'O Dick, I fear we have done very wrong!'

'Not in the least, darling,' I maintained. 'Tis all a matter of fuss and fripperies. They'll soon forgive us.'

XIV.

As we rode towards Earlesharte, I said, 'Now see, love, you're not to do what Uncle Richard wants. Remember that.' 'Twas a trifle brutal of me; but as it fell out, it did not signify.

I was surprised, as we rode up the avenue, to see Uncle Richard standing on the doorstep. Surprised, and rather abashed at his magnanimity; for of course he did not know whom I was bringing to be the mistress of Earlesharte Hall. It was a sacrifice to his sense of fitness, a concession of his own dignity to that of the family, which softened me and made me feel that his old domination had been based on something better than I had understood. For all he knew, I was about to introduce to him a milkmaid, an innkeeper's daughter—what not! He could not suppose her to be anything better, from my manner of presenting her. Yet there he stood upon the steps.

I saw him give a start as we approached . . . his stately attitude changed perceptibly. He peered forward, as though scarcely believing his eyes. As Kitty's identity became unmistakable a whole pantomime of expressions passed over his form. He tucked his chin in—he threw it up. He took a pace along the terrace and back again, in an agitated way. He patted his waistcoat, and then clenched his fist upon it. He shook his head violently—paused—shook it again. He was still shaking it, but not as though he were angry, to judge by his face, when we reached the foot of the steps.

'Dick, Dick—Dick! Dick!' said he then, just like a clock. Before I could lift my bride down, he had gone forward and taken her two hands.

'And I suppose, my dear,' he said in a voice that was not as firm as usual, 'you can't forgive an old man for trying to make you happy—you and Dick?'

And my bride, with a defiant look at me, threw her arms about his neck, and said, 'But we thank you.'

THE END.

THE SALT BEACHES.

I REMEMBER the wild, salt beaches
Where the limpet-gatherers roam;
Well do I know that sand which reaches
Cold and wet to a line of foam.

Well do I know that rain-dark moorland
(Lowering clouds roll up from the west)
Where the sheep loom large in the heather,
And each little bird sits close on its nest.

Long dark nights in a lonely cavern—
Inky pools by the cliffs o'erhung—
But when I heard the bull-frogs' chorus
I knew where I lived when the world was young.

I was a prince in rich Mycenæ,
Merchants all paid toll to me;
Latticed rooms in the ancient stronghold
Looked on the mountains and the sea.

All are gone, but the memory lingers
Bitter-sweet of the rain and sun;
And I shall seek these pleasant places
When my wanderings are done.

O. G. S. C.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

THE Sultan Abd el Aziz caused a pleasant message to be conveyed to me, that, if the time suited, he would be glad to play golf with me on a certain day at three o'clock in the afternoon. I was then in Tangier, and the Sultan dwells in a palace on what is called 'the Mountain,' some way outside the city. On the plain below, not distant, is a golfcourse of a kind that is the best to be produced in these difficult climatic parts, and it is called the 'Diplomatic' course, because it is the chief playground of the ministers of the various Powers, their friends, and such people as it is proper should be gathered with them in the same social and sporting community. Here occasionally the Sultan Abd el Aziz plays the game. There are few players on this course, and an adequate privacy is assured, but, because he greatly likes the game and desires complete possession of a course, the Sultan, when we met, pointed out to me on the hillside in the distance the lines along which would run the new course of his own which he was having made at that very time, where the starting point would be and where the small pavilion. It was evident that the Sultan, assisted by his golfing adviser, who happens to be an Irish gentleman with an intimate knowledge of the game and all its ramifications in these our islands, was about to be master of the best course to be found at this time in all Morocco. Yet that may be saying little, since the only other course at present in existence is this Diplomatic ground, whereon our international and inter-racial game was duly played and much enjoyed for the real pleasure of the golf. However, the hand and mind of this player are working upon some new schemes for golf in southern Morocco, for there are French interests in the regions of Marrakesh and Fedala that conceive it were well if the most universal game of both social and economical importance, as it is thought to be, were planted there. Only by count of a single item of humanity, I think, does the Sultan Abd el Aziz lose the distinction of being the only Moor at the present time who devotes attention to this curiously fascinating pastime, which apparently attracts all races, creeds, and ranks, and this other is an ex-minister of an old régime who, I am led to

believe, having been a strong man in the days of power, retains some independence of method still, and has a tendency to make laws of his own as the play proceeds, according to the necessities of his case. Thus, and for all reasons, when it comes to a case of golf in Morocco, the Sultan is the man, and worthily.

* * *

Let it be declared that there is no nonsense in this affair, and that we are writing of golf and golfers. Thoroughly does the Sultan know the game, and he is as devoted to it as any of us. Possessing a natural instinct for our British games (strange, but true, and perhaps the only Moor of which such a thing could ever be said), he was led some years ago to make an attempt at golf, and was instructed by French professionals of St Jean de Luz. They taught him the elements of the game, how to stand, and where to put his feet, and how to swing his club, imparting to his style something more of what we may still call an East-coast swing than might have been imagined possible in the circumstances. The chief golfer of St Jean de Luz, Arnaud Massy, acquired his own playing parts and style at a golfing shrine of no less fame and respect than North Berwick. Without hesitation and seriously, as one who in his time has been accustomed to make himself a judge of golfers, I state that the Sultan Abd el Aziz has an excellent style. To continue with the impartial truth, it must now be told that he wallows in the vice with which the greater part of the world of golf has been afflicted more and more since the rubber-cored ball came to be invented, in that he loves to drive the ball very far, has a lust for long driving for its own sake, for the sensuous pleasure of this rhythmical and passionate exercise. And such vice has been nurtured not among other golfers likewise sinning on the links of our own golf-laden land, but in the solitudes of Morocco, proving again that it is inherent in golfers now, conditions and circumstances being what they are, and is not a habit engendered by simple imitation. Indeed, some might argue from the evidence that in comparative solitude all restraining influences are abandoned or discounted, and that the vice—if vice it be, for the moral standards of golf are changing now—may flourish more than

when there are reproachful eyes or, as is more important, holes and matches to be won, for the Sultan is one of the uttermost slaves to long driving that mine eyes have seen. Give to him a full fling from the tee, all in balance and harmony, not a creak or a twitch in the human machine, only a sense of the joy of power silkened and elasticated, the ball sent sweetly from the middle of the club, and he cares not what ensues, truly he does not care. This must be held for a defect in him as a golfer. He will play away tolerably well with irons afterwards, but for putting he has no liking. I have witnessed his taking four putts on a green with a carelessness suggesting he would little mind if it were forty, and he has ceased putting when tired of it, even though the fate of the hole were still undetermined. Something in this is to be excused him, since from the tee the stroke and the ball and its flight are matters of atmosphere, and may be closely governed by some exact if undetermined science. The person who fails in this effort must be held to blame; but on the Moroccan putting-greens there are inevitably grits and hindrances, and when last I played on them in the departed summer there were locusts, too, so that no man here could be master of his game or full gainer by his exerted skill. Yet to show how much the instinct of golfers everywhere is the same, and how this Sultan Abd el Aziz embraces precisely like passions with all British golfers, and can indeed express them in phrases which, translated, are worthy of being established among the permanent and accepted aphorisms of golf, I will repeat an exclamation he made to me. He had made a remarkably good tee-shot, and the ball in its course had assumed the most promising and delightful trajectory. The Sultan has that best of qualities of being a silent golfer, and he did not speak, but showed his pleasure by the light in his eyes and a few twitches of facial expression. Hereupon I ventured comment, and as we strode on after the balls we had driven, I murmured to my opponent, having hinted at the subject once or twice before, that truly he had a passion for long driving, and that—but there he interrupted me, and in tones of ecstasy scarce subdued declared, ‘I don’t know why I like it, but I do!’ Could the strange and potent fascination of this rhythmical exercise have been better suggested by any golfer in the world? I do not think so. This should become a classical phrase. I also do not know why I like it, but truly I do, and in generations to come golfers here at home may drive and say that, as in the celebrated case of the Sultan Abd el Aziz, they do not know why they like it, but they do. No other formula will serve them so effectively for the expression of their sentiments.

* * *

This, my opponent in a very pleasant game, the Sultan Abd el Aziz, is a man of whom

you may hear again in a very different capacity at some future time. He has already made great history; he has a further chance. At this moment the world awakes to the simple truth that Morocco in the piece is not just a half-mysterious land flowing with milk and honey, which is being collected in the casks of the enterprising French, with nothing more to be said or done, as is the vague impression that somehow spreads. Despite the magnificent effort of our friends, and the amazingly effective manner in which they have changed the face of a large part of the land, this Morocco is still largely an intensely backward and almost a savage country. Very eastern in feeling, it is charged with elements of difficulty and resistance to European influence, while it comes within the sympathetic bond of the Moslem ideal. European international jealousies and rivalries make the situation difficult for all, and more difficult will it be in time to come, while the interests of our own country, which have not been well pressed in recent times through deference to France, must become more and more emphasised and increasingly delicate in the maintenance. The case of Abd el Krim and Spanish Morocco opens up new problems; and it must be remembered that while ‘zones’ mark great divisions and indicate separate countries for the occupying Europeans, they mean nothing to the natives, for whom there is only one Morocco, one Maghreb, the land of the setting sun, as the name indicates. All who spend any length of time in Fez, the chief capital, as I did recently, must be deeply impressed with the general disdain of the native people there, high and low, for all Europeans, including the French who exercise their protectorate there. One need not be a pessimist to feel that this is one of the danger-spots of the world. Besides, it is not as a rule sufficiently realised that fighting proceeds in the French zone continuously, and that in the south the natives on the slopes of the Atlas mountains, always hostile at heart, are kept in hand only by the pressure and the influence of their own great chiefs, heavily subsidised by European money. Tranquillity in Morocco, then, is a larger question than has been indicated in the various news of the difficulties of the Spaniards in the northern portion of the country, and, as part of the Mediterranean system, it is of the most vital importance to ourselves. In this Morocco there are various great and powerful figures of whom our people, in the main, seem to know but little. Perhaps they are secreted through subsidies, or they move stealthily in a shadowy background. At home the general knowledge of the native personalities of Morocco was until recently limited to Raisuli, the crafty old brigand turned conqueror and statesman-conspirator; and it came like surprise at the beginning of the winter that there was another, Abd el Krim,

who was clever and successful likewise. Yet these leaders of the hill-tribes of the north are small people compared with others of power whose names are unknown here. There is the great Glaoui of the south, who is one of three chiefs who control and hold in check the warlike tribes that creep about the Atlas mountains, and could, let loose, make European occupation of the lower parts impossible in existing circumstances. His home is a castle in the wild fastnesses of the Atlas, of such a stark, half-barbaric grandeur as, in the contemplation, to set beating in the senses that raw mad music of *Peer Gynt* when the Hall of the Mountain Kings is presented. The chief of the Glaoui has been made, with the most substantial tokens, a friend of France, and his relatives are given remunerative offices under the protectorate. Years ago, but within our time, there was a sultan on the throne of Morocco whose sovereignty was coveted by his brother, who engineered rebellion in the south, and had the Glaoui to assist him; so that victory was to this side, and Mulay Hafid won and became sultan in place of Abd el Aziz—the prince with whom I had been playing golf. That was a tremendous time, and it marked the great change in Morocco. Mulay Hafid caused a *rogz*, or pretender, Bu Hamara, who was making trouble in the country and gaining many adherents, to be carried about and exhibited in an iron cage, not large enough for him to stand erect in, and after weeks of confinement in this receptacle (now exhibited in a museum in Fez—being something like a double-sized parrot's cage with a hole in the wooden bottom), flung him to wild beasts that tore him to pieces. However, Mulay Hafid, evidently a most unpleasant fellow, in due course found himself in difficulties, and the French, being now established in their protectorate, preferred that another brother, Mulay Yusuf, willing to do all that he was told and make no trouble of any kind, should be sultan; so Mulay Hafid had to leave the country, and during the Great War was a considerable nuisance through his assistance of the Germans in their schemes to disturb France in North Africa. For the most part this exiled sultan, after his stormy career, went promenading about and amusing himself in various parts of France and Spain. A large body of attendants was attached to him, and his escapades in various places attracted attention from time to time. His harem was left behind, and living relics of it are still stored in the old palace of Meknes. Mulay Hafid, however, does not seem to count with the native people of Morocco now; he never really did. And assuredly the existing sultan, Mulay Yusuf, does not, for the people make no secret of their contempt of him for his subservience to the invader. None of the three sons—by different wives—of the old sultan, Mulay Hassan, who died in 1894, has his father's great qualities

of ruling strength and determination; perhaps in the new conditions it would make no difference if they had. Mulay Hassan was the last of the great sultans of the old type, and when Morocco, always by the nature of things inclined to lapse to full anarchy, was crumbling, he used to lead expeditions all over the country, by force or by cajolery imposed his authority, and held it in a piece. On such grand excursions he took with him his young and favourite son, Abd el Aziz, who rode on a white horse beside him. Together, with an extensive army accompanying, they made journeys through the plains and over the mountains, the Sultan here and there cajoling, promising, threatening, but pacifying and strengthening always. Strong men might shrink from such arduous expeditions now; and really this one killed the Sultan. They rode over the great Atlas mountains. Mulay Hassan had the ambition to visit distant Tafilet, the source of his family, where the cherifs were of great importance and prestige, and by the Atlas crossing at Kasb-el-Maghzen, he went there and was well received. The cherifs liked the little Abd el Aziz, and that visit had much to do with the circumstance that they favoured his succession to the throne. In due course Mulay Hassan, having lived the strenuous life and patched his empire up, died, and so veritably ended, though it was not then understood, the days of the old and independent Morocco. Reasons of custom and state made it necessary to hold his death secret for a time while his body was carried through the country, only a few being aware that the vital spark had left it. This made it easier for Abd el Aziz to rise to the throne. The proclamation of the new sultan was made at Rabat at the same time as the demise of Mulay Hassan was announced, and the tribes had no opportunity for dissent.

* * *

Somehow the young Sultan Abd el Aziz was not like any of the other sultans of Morocco one had ever heard of. That was largely the cause of the difficulties that led to the rebellion against him and his undoing, while his much less admirable and enlightened brother, Mulay Hafid, came to reign in his stead. In the same way the essential differences between the Sultan Abd el Aziz and other sultans and princes might very conceivably—and more than that—lead to some remarkable recovery on his part. In the mosques of Morocco the faithful pray for the sultan they recognise; and we hear, in such a manner that we know, that the name of Abd el Aziz is mentioned in these days. Mulay Hassan, the father, a strong man, and one of keen discernment, liked this son the best, and believed in him most for sovereignty, and that keen Moor saw that times were changing, and men, even in Morocco, must to some extent change with them. Abd el Aziz differs in appearance from the regular type of eminent Moor of good or

high family, for the type is well marked. He does not possess the same roundness of face and heavy softness of feature, nor eyes of the same degree of somnolence; nor is he even now at middle age corpulent, as is the way with the Moor on whom the years begin to creep. His features are finer—more of the Indian type—his eyes are restless, flashing, and his body is lithe, while his manner indicates that his mind and imagination are catching quickly at the changing scene and incident of existence, and not dreamily turning inwards from them. When first I met him the instant impression was that this prince differed greatly from other men of high Moorish rank. As sultan, this Abd el Aziz did not conduct himself as others had done. He did not accomplish extensive massacres, which is a well-credited method of exhibiting strength. He displayed a curiosity most unusual among Moors concerning the signs and things of progress in the European world. He wanted them himself. He would ride a bicycle, he was interested in photography, and he devoted himself to many innocent pleasures to which the Moorish court was not accustomed. Perhaps he did some unwise things. At the same time his country's finances became weakened, and foreign traders were taking advantage of the Sultan's predilections. Yet his intelligence and enlightenment were conspicuous, and in a settled and more advanced Morocco the possibilities of this sultan might have been enormous. As it was, discontent arose. The Glaoui, who went to Fez with the object of assisting the Sultan against the pretender, Bu Hamara, felt he was not treated with sufficient respect, and returned to his southern headquarters indignant. At Marrakesh, the southern capital, Mulay Hafid, the Sultan's brother, a violent and cruel man, was writhing under an irritating sense of his fraternal inferiority, his comparative penury, and, so far as he could and dared, he was intriguing among the tribes of those parts. When the Glaoui came back, he and Mulay Hafid began to associate more and more closely, a plot was started, and then one day, after a massacre of Europeans at Casablanca that was likely to make difficulties for Morocco, the Glaoui called a general assembly of religious heads and the chiefs of tribes, declaring to them that Abd el Aziz was delivering the country to the Nazarenes, and only Mulay Hafid could save it. The religious heads demurred, but when the Glaoui made a gesture to the chiefs of tribes they turned towards Mulay Hafid, and with one voice acclaimed him sultan. Thereafter the army of Abd el Aziz and that of Mulay Hafid set out towards each other, though it is said facetiously that each did its best to avoid its enemy. One morning an attack was being made by the forces of Abd el Aziz against a section of his rivals, when a body of horsemen that had been sent

forward charging did not return, and it was learned that they had deserted to the enemy. His whole army melted, and he was left with only his French army instructors and a number of black slaves. 'We are betrayed!' he said simply, and he knew his sultanate was ended, and that his life was in the gravest peril. His cloak was already shot through in several places. The slaves closed round him and made a body-guard; they hurried him to a place a couple of hundred yards away where horses waited; and, mounting him, they galloped into the lonely solitudes of the country. Night fell, and they halted. The Sultan sat under a fig-tree, and discoursed upon the strange chances of fate to one of the French officers who held to him. 'This morning,' he murmured, 'I was sultan, and I nominated the kaids. To-night I am just a man like all the rest. It is the will of Allah!' Eventually he retired to the palace he built for himself near Tangier. Such are a few fragments of the history of my opponent on the golfcourse. Propaganda has some delicate and devious ways, and strenuous efforts have been made to discredit Abd el Aziz, especially by the use of belittling nicknames, but they have failed. Of all the princes of Morocco, he is known as the most enlightened.

* * *

At the appointed time the Sultan drove up to the Diplomatic course in his car, and as he descended the native boys went forward to kiss his hand. He wore gray flannel trousers and a pleated golf-jacket, with a fine gray jilaba over all, discarded when the play began. On his head was a white turban; he was shod with ordinary golfing-shoes. For the game he assumed spectacles of tinted glass, and gloves with rubber fingers; and the experts may like to know that he carried six good clubs, kept very clean and nice—three of wood, being a driver, a brassy, and a spoon, with one iron, a mashie, and an aluminium putter. He was a pleasant companion, and it was a beautiful day, with storks floating slowly here and there over the course, and a white marabout or holy place shining out conspicuously on the hillside where his own new course was about to be made. Before beginning, he told me that he was fond of our British games, and had been much addicted to tennis, but for him now there was nothing like golf. 'They tell me,' I said, 'that Your Majesty drives a long ball.' He hesitated a moment, and answered cautiously in the manner of one holding up a reservation, 'Sometimes.' For no golfer ever knows what is about to happen. His style, as I noted it at the first teeing ground, was good. He occupied a square stance, used the overlapping grip, indulged in one waggle of the club of a somewhat flourishing kind, then, rather curiously, a final address about nine inches behind the ball, and a swing which was rather quick. Some-

times he tops and sometimes pulls, but his good ball is very good indeed—fast and low and a willing traveller. On this hard turf his best drives were well beyond two hundred and fifty yards, perhaps over three hundred. And I liked his close regard for the etiquette of the game. He made no ejaculations when a shot went wrong, and talked little during the game. But once we spoke of the possible origin of golf, and he agreed that something like it must have been one of the first things ever done, and he thought it would be popular in Morocco some time, and good for the country. We spoke of Arabic terms, and I took a lesson from him, learning that *hofra* is the proper word for a hole in the ground, like a golf-hole, but that there is another word for such a thing as a button-hole. We played some shots well. At a short hole over a gully both were putting for twos, and at the long eighth, maybe the best hole of the course, the Sultan's ball was delivered close to a stream in front of the green, some four hundred and sixty yards from the tee, with a drive and an iron shot. Here the scene was sweet. Barbary sheep were dallying on the banks of the stream, near by eucalyptus trees were overhanging it, and from the middle distance we could hear the characteristic chirping of a party of native girls in their white

attire as they were busy washing clothes in the running water. It was a pleasant game. The Sultan condoled with me for that, having come to Morocco for other business, I had no clubs of my own with me, and had had to borrow some. He wished to play with me again, and exacted a promise that I would bring my own next time. For a few minutes he fell to something like that mellow mood of satisfaction that golfers often feel near the end of an excellent day. It is against law and custom to photograph a Moor, especially a sultan in his mightiness, but, knowing I had a camera in my possession, he volunteered to pose. 'But Your Majesty is too yielding,' I said; 'you know you do not like it.' 'But as between friends!' he smiled. And later he confided to me that one of his life's desires was to play at St Andrews, Deal, and Sandwich, and that he meant to do so. He drove me back to my quarters in his car. At the moment of starting, something possessed a Moorish child, just a baby, that somehow came suddenly into the scene, to toddle up to the car crying and screaming in the manner peculiar to babies the world over. The Sultan Abd el Aziz took it into his car and petted it, and, having ascertained that its place of residence was some way along the road, transported it there.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER V.—THE ASSAULT ON GLENRADEN.

SHORTLY after midnight on the morning of the 29th day of August, three men gathered at the door of Macpherson's cottage, and after a few words took each a different road into the dark wastes of wood and heather. Macpherson contented himself with a patrol of the low ground in the glen, for his legs were not as nimble as they once were, and his back had a rheumatically stiffness. Alan departed with great strides for the Carnbeg tops, and James Macrae, the youngest and the leanest, set out for Carnmore with the speed of an Indian hunter. . . . Darkness gave place to the translucence of early dawn, the badger trotted home from his wanderings, the hill fox barked in the cairns to summon his household, sleepy pipits awoke, the peregrine who lived above the Gray Beallach drifted down into the glens to look for breakfast, hinds and calves moved up from the hazel shaws to the high fresh pastures, the tiny rustling noises of night disappeared in that hush which precedes the awakening of life, and then came a flood of morning-gold from the back of the dim eastern mountains, and in an instant the earth had wheeled into a new day. A thin spire of smoke rose from Mrs Macpherson's chimney, and presently the three wardens of the marches arrived for breakfast. They reported

that the forest was still unviolated, that no alien foot had as yet entered its sacred confines. Herd-boys, the offspring of Alan Macdonald and James Macrae, had taken up their post at key-points, so that if a human being was seen on the glacis of the fort the fact would at once be reported to the garrison.

'I'm thinkin' he'll no' come to-day,' said Macpherson after his third cup of tea. 'It will be the morn. The day he will be tryin' to confuse our minds, and that will no' be a difficult job wi' you, Alan my son.'

'He'll come in the da-ark,' said Alan crossly.

'And how would he be gettin' a beast in the dark? The laird was sayin' that this man John Macnab was a gra-and sportsman. He will not be shootin' at any little staggie, but takin' a sizeable beast, and it's not a howlet could be tellin' a calf from a stag in these da-ark nights. Na, he will not shoot in the night, but he might be travellin' in the night and gettin' his shot in the early mornin'.'

'What for,' Alan asked, 'should he not be havin' his shot in the gloamin' and gettin' the beast off the ground in the da-ark?'

'Because we will be watchin' all hours of the day. Ye heard what the laird said, Alan Macdonald, and you, James Macrae. This John

Macnab is not to shoot a Glenraden beast at all, at all, but if he shoots one he is not to move it one foot. If it comes to fightin', you are young lads, and must break the head of him. But the laird said, for God's sake you was to have no guns, but to fight like honest folk with your fists, and maybe a wee bit stick. The laird was sayin' the law was on our side, except for shootin'. . . . Now, James Macrae, you will take the outer marches the day, and keep an eye on the peat-roads from Inverlarrig, and you, Alan, will watch Carnbeg, and I will be takin' the woods myself. The laird was sayin' that it would be Carnmore the man Macnab would be tryin', most likely at skreigh o' day the morn, and he would be hidin' the beast, if he got one, in some hag, and waitin' till the da-ark to shift him. So the morn we will all be on Carnmore, and I can tell you the laird has the ground planned out so that a snipe would not be movin' without us seein' him.'

The early morning broadened into day, and the glen slept in the windless heat of late August. Janet Raden, sauntering down from the Castle towards the river about eleven o'clock, thought that she had never seen the place so sabbatically peaceful. To her unquiet soul the calm seemed unnatural, like a thick cloak covering some feverish activity. All the household had been abroad since breakfast—her father on a preliminary reconnaissance of Carnmore, Agatha and Mr Junius Bandicott on a circuit of Carnbeg, while the gillies and their youthful allies sat perched with telescopes on eyries surveying every approach to the forest. The plans seemed perfect, but the dread of John Macnab, that dark conspirator, would not be exorcised. It was she who had devised the campaign, based on her reading of the enemy's mind; but had she fathomed it? she asked herself; might he not even now be preparing some masterstroke which would crumble their crude defences! Disquieting stories which she had read of impersonation and the shifts of desperate characters recurred to her mind. Was John Macnab perhaps old Mr Bandicott disguised as an archæologist? Or was he one of the Strathlarrig workmen?

She walked over the moor to the Piper's Ring, and was greeted by a mild detonation and a shower of earth. Old Mr Bandicott, very warm and stripped to his shirt, was furiously busy and most voluble about his task. There was no impersonation here, nor in the two fiery-faced labourers who were burrowing their way towards the resting-place of Harald Blacktooth. Nevertheless her suspicion was not allayed; she felt herself in the ante-chamber of plotters, and looked any moment to see on the fringes of the wood or on the white ribbon of road a mysterious furtive figure which she would know for a minion of the enemy.

But the minion did not appear. As Janet stood on the rise before the bridge of Raden, with her hat removed to let the faint south-west wind cool her forehead, she looked upon a scene of utter loneliness and peace. The party at the Piper's Ring were hidden, and in all the green amphitheatre nothing stirred but the stream. Even Fish Benjie and his horse had been stricken into carven immobility. He had moved away from the road a few hundred yards into the moor, not far from the waterside, and his little figure, as he whittled at his brooms, appeared from where Janet stood to be as motionless as a boulder, while the old gray pony mused upon three legs as rapt and lifeless as an Elgin marble. The two seemed to have become one with nature, and to be as much part of the sleeping landscape as the clump of birches whose leaves did not even shimmer in that bright silent noontide.

The quiet did something to soothe Janet's restlessness, but after luncheon, which she partook of in solitary state, she found it returning. A kind of *folie de doute* assailed her, not unknown to generals in the bad hours which intervene between the inception and execution of a plan. She had a strong desire to ride up to Crask and have a talk with Sir Archie, and was only restrained by the memory of that young man's last letter, and the hint it contained of grave bodily maladies. She did not know whether to believe in these maladies or not, but clearly she could not thrust her company upon one who had shown a marked distaste for it. . . . Yet she had her pony saddled, and rode slowly in the direction of Strathlarrig, half hoping to see a limping figure on the highway. But not a soul was in sight on the long blinding stretch or at the bridge where the Crask road started up the hill. Janet turned homeward with a feeling that the world had suddenly become dispeopled. She did not look back, and so failed to notice first one figure and then another, which darted across the high-road and disappeared in the thick coverts of the Crask hillside.

At the Castle she found Agatha and Junius Bandicott having tea, and presently her father arrived in a state of heat and exhaustion. Stayed with a whisky and soda, Colonel Raden became communicative. He had been over the high tops of Carnmore, had visited the Carn Moss and Corrie Gall, had penetrated the Gray Beallach, had heard the tales of the gillies and of the herd-boys in their eyries, and his report was 'all clear.' The deer were undisturbed, according to James Macrae, since the morning. Moreover, the peat-road from Inverlarrig had relapsed, owing to recent rains, into primeval bog, which no wheeled vehicle and few ponies could traverse. The main fortress seemed not only unassailed but unassailable, and Colonel Raden viewed the morrow with equanimity.

The Carnbeg party had a different story to tell, or rather the main members of it had no story at all. Agatha and Junius Bandicott appeared to have sauntered easily into the pleasant wilderness of juniper and heather which lay between the mossy summits, to have lunched at leisure by the famous Cailleach's Well, and to have sauntered home again. They reported that it had been divine weather, for a hill breeze had tempered the heat, and that they had observed the Claybodys' yacht far out at the entrance to Loch Larrig. Also Junius had seen his first blue hare, which he called a 'jack rabbit.' But of anything suspicious there had been neither sight nor sound.

But at this moment a maid appeared with the announcement that 'Macpherson was wanting to see the colonel,' and presently the head stalker arrived in what John Bunyan calls a 'pelting heat.' Generally of a pale complexion which never tanned, he was now as red as a peony, and his gray beard made a startling contrast with his flamboyant face. As a rule he was an embarrassed figure inside the Castle, having difficulties in disposing of his arms and legs, but now excitement made him bold.

'I've seen him, Cornel,' he panted. 'Seen him crawlin' like an adder and runnin' like a sta-ag!'

'Seen who? Get your breath, Macpherson.'

'Him—the man—Macnab. I beg your pardon for my pechin', sir, but I came down the hill like I was a rollin' stone. . . . It was up on the backside of Craig Dhu near the old sheep-fauld. I seen a man hunkerin' among the muckle stones, and I got my glass on him, and he was a sma' man that I've never seen afore. I was wild to get a grip of him, and I started runnin', to drive him to the Cailleach's Well, where Miss Agatha and the gentleman was havin' their lunch. He seen me, and he took the road I ettled, and I thought I had him, for, thinks I, the young gentleman is soople and lang in the leg; but he seen the danger and turned off down the burn, and I couldna come near him. It would have been all right if I could have made the young gentleman hear, but though I was roarin' like a stot he was deafer than a tree. Och, it is the great peety.'

'Agatha, what on earth were you doing?' Janet asked severely.

Junius Bandicott blushed hotly. 'I never heard a sound,' he said. 'There must be something funny about the acoustics of that place.'

Colonel Raden, who knew the power of his stalker's lungs, looked in a mystified way from one to the other.

'Didn't you see Macpherson, Agatha?' he asked. 'He must have been in view coming over the shoulder of Craig Dhu.'

It was Agatha's turn to blush, which she did with vigour, and, to Mr Bandicott's eyes, with remarkable grace.

'Ach, I was in view well enough,' went on the tactless Macpherson, 'and I was routin' like a wild beast; but the twa of them was that busy talking they never lifted their eyes, and the man, as I tell you, slippit off down the burn. It is a grea-at peety, whatever.'

'What did you do then?' the colonel demanded.

'I followed him till I lost him in that awful rough corrie. . . . But I seen him again—ay, I seen him again, away over on the Maam above the big wud. Standin', as impident as ye please, on the skyline.'

'How long after you lost him in the corrie?' Janet asked.

'Maybe half-an-hour.'

'Impossible,' she said sharply. 'No living man could cover three miles of that ground in half-an-hour.'

'I was thinkin' the body was the Deevil.'

'You saw a second man. John Macnab has an accomplice.'

Macpherson scratched his shaggy head. 'I wouldn't say but you're right, Miss Janet. Now I think of it, it was a bigger man. He didn't bide a moment after I caught sight of him, but I got my glass on him, and he was a bigger man. Ay, a bigger man, and, maybe, a younger man.'

'This is very disturbing,' said Colonel Raden, walking to the window and twisting his moustache. 'What do you make of it, Nettie?'

'I think the affair is proceeding, as generals say about their battles, according to plan. We didn't know before that John Macnab had a confederate, but, of course, he was bound to have one. There was nothing against it in the terms of the wager.'

'Of course not, of course not. But what the devil was he doing on Carnbeg?—There was no shot, Macpherson?'

'There was no shot, and there will be no shot. There was no beasts the side they were on, and Alan is up there now with one of James's laddies.'

'It's exactly what we expected,' said Janet. 'It proves that we were right in guessing that John Macnab would take Carnmore. He came here to-day to frighten us about Carnbeg—make us think that he was going to try there, and get us to mass our forces. To-morrow he'll be on Carnmore, and then he'll mean business. I hoped this would happen, and I was getting nervous when Agatha and Mr Bandicott came home looking as blank as the Babes in the Wood. But I wish I knew which was really John Macnab—the little one or the tall one.'

'What does that matter?' her parent asked.

'Because I should be happier if he were tall. Little men are far more cunning.'

Junius Bandicott, having recovered his composure, chose to be amused. 'I take that as a personal compliment, Miss Janet. I'm pretty

big, and I can't say I want to be thought cunning.'

'Then John Macnab will get his salmon,' said Janet with decision.

Junius laughed. 'You may bet he won't. I've gotten the place watched like the Rum Fleet at home. A bird can't hardly cough without its being reported to me. My fellows are on to the game, and John Macnab will have to be a mighty clever citizen to come within a mile of the Strathlarrig water. Nobody is allowed to fish it but myself till the 3rd of September is past. I reckon angling just now is the forbidden fruit in this neighbourhood. I've seen but the one fellow fishing in the last three days—on the bit of slack water five hundred yards below the bridge. It belongs to Crask, I think.'

Janet nodded. 'No good, except with a worm after a spate. Crask hasn't any fishing worth the name.'

'I saw him from the automobile early this morning,' Junius continued. 'Strange sight he was, too, dressed in pyjamas and rubbers, flogging away at the most helpless stretch you can imagine—dead calm, not a ripple. He had out about fifty yards of line, and when I passed he made a cast which fell with a flop about his ears. Who do you suppose he was? Somebody from Crask?'

Janet, who was the family's authority on Crask, agreed. 'Probably some English servant who came down before breakfast just to say he had fished for salmon.'

After tea Janet went down into the haugh. She met old Mr Bandicott returning from the Piper's Ring, a very grubby old gentleman, and

a little dashed in spirits, for he had as yet seen no sign of Harald Blacktooth's coffin. 'Another day's work,' he announced, 'and then I win or lose. I thought I had struck it this afternoon, but it was the solid granite. If the fellow is there he's probably in a rift of the rock. That has been known to happen. The Vikings found a natural fissure, stuck their dead chief in it, and heaped earth above to make a barrow. . . .'

Down near the stream she met Benjie, who appeared to have worked late at his besoms, bumping over the moor to the road. He and his old pony made a more idyllic picture than ever in the mellow light of evening—almost too conventionally artistic to be real, she thought, till Benjie's immobile figure woke to life at the sight of her and he pulled his lint-white forelock. 'A grand nicht, lady,' he crooned, and jogged on into the beeches' shade. . . . She sat on the bridge and watched the Raden waters pass from gold to amethyst and from amethyst to purple, and then sauntered back through the sweet-smelling dusk. Visions of John Macnab filled her mind, now a tall bravo with a colonial accent, now a gruarled Caliban of infinite cunning and gnome-like agility. Where in this haunted land was he ensconced—in some hazel covert, or in some clachan but-and-ben, or miles distant in a populous hotel, ready to speed in a swift car to the scene of action? . . . Anyhow in twenty-four hours she would know if she had defeated this insolent challenger. On the eve of battle she had forgotten all about the stakes and her new hunter; it was the honour of Glenraden that was concerned, that little stone castle against the world.

(Continued on page 152.)

LOST IN THE CENTRAL TABLELANDS OF BRAZIL.

By CARLOS HERNAL.

I.

AFTER an unsuccessful expedition of pearl-fishing in the lakes formed by the Araguaya—one of the most beautiful of Brazilian rivers—I paid off my Indian crew and resolved to hunt twenty miles inland on the western banks. On the other side of the Araguaya River begins the 'Wild West,' with immense plains, unknown and mysterious, the home of the untamed Chavante Indians. Two or three huts of cattle herdsmen, forty to fifty miles apart, are the farthest outposts of civilisation.

One such hut I proposed to make a centre of operations, but the cowboy was busy bringing in cattle to form a drove which was to be sent to Goyaz; therefore he could not go with me as a guide, and I was left to myself.

The immense valley of the Araguaya River is nearly all flat. Dark virgin forests indicate the

presence of lakes and lagoons; extensive prairies of evergreen luxuriant grass vary with thin dry woods in ever-changing scenery; changing, and yet so desperately alike as to be extremely dangerous to get lost in.

The next day I started out alone. The cowboys informed me that no jaguar had been noticed in the vicinity, so a gun was sufficient, with the addition of a long bush-knife. The cattle-trails, those unique ways of communication, led through a thin dry wood to a beautiful prairie. Far away a black forest contrasted with the deep blue sky, this place having been indicated to me as the rendezvous of all sorts of birds and game. Following its direction, I had not gone far when I heard a strange noise, faintly at first, increasing when the wind turned, and deafening as I drew near the forest. Cautiously I stole through. A glade opened sharply—thence came the noise; it was the

lagoon. Approaching carefully, I beheld a glorious sight. In the gleaming waters hundreds of snow-white garças and garrettas, rose-coloured spoonbills, Eurypyga helios, gray herons, and other birds—presided over by the big jaburus, close relations of the African marabou—had assembled and were making that strange noise, which could be compared best to that made by half-a-dozen jazz bands all turned crazy at the same time.

Every year at the end of the rainless season the lagoons dry up, and the great quantity of small fry that entered them during the flood become an easy prey to these birds. All the different kinds gather in these lagoons. As soon as one is empty of water and of fish they fly to another, and thus the noisy feast lasts more than a month.

My gun went off, but too high! The birds rose in the air like a large cloud, circling over the lagoon for a while, and then set off for another near by. There I went after them, and succeeded in bringing down two beautiful garrettas, which produced a fine bunch of delicate egrets.

II.

Early next morning I was on the same way, and, getting near, the wild music told me that the feast was on again. This time I brought down six garças and two rose-coloured spoonbills. The lagoon was drying fast and the water formed pools here and there. I waded knee-deep through the bog to secure the birds. Passing one of the pools, I saw what I thought to be the head of a small caiman right at my feet, but, as they are quite harmless, I paid no heed and went on. Having now secured the last bird, I returned the same way and noticed that strange triangular head still on the same spot, below the water. Passing on slowly with the head now behind me, I was trying to make it agree with that of a caiman, when suddenly, like a flashlight, the thought that it must be a sucury (giant water snake) pierced my brain, and in the same fraction of a second I turned round. . . . Only two yards distant was the monster, erect, stalking out of the water, with open mouth and piercing eyes, about to throw itself like a lasso over me—and once in that deadly embrace there would be no escape from being helplessly crushed. Fortunately, the reptile is a perfect coward, and before I was able to get the gun ready it shrank back. I shall never forget the terribly wicked glance it shot at me out of its large black eyes.

The sucury (*Boa anaconda*) is without doubt the largest existing snake. Larger than the python, it attains up to fifteen yards in length, and even more. It lives in the lakes, close to the drinking-places of animals, where it lies awaiting its prey, and woe to the tapir, stag, or peccary that is surprised by this treacherous monster. Like a spring it darts upon its

victim; with its huge jaws well provided with long hooked teeth it seizes the prey, at the same time lassoing and crushing it. The largest of these reptiles will attack successfully even cattle. Several eye-witnesses have described this interesting scene to me. The sucury waits patiently for weeks, even months, its previously chosen victim, and at a favourable moment bites itself into the neck of the unfortunate old cow, or the inexperienced heifer or stirk. The horn-like end of its tail is firmly hooked round the foot or the trunk of a tree. The animal, wild with fear and pain, dashes ahead, but the monstrous reptile dilates, extending with astonishing elasticity, until it becomes as thin as a ship's hawser. The unlucky animal, now half exhausted, is pulled back like a mouse by the formidable strength of its foe. This is repeated until it is completely exhausted, when the reptile, letting go its hold, suddenly encircles its prey and crushes it to death. After having broken all the bones, till the animal forms one hapless mass, the sucury then starts deglutition, the head and horns remaining out of the mouth until they rot and fall off. Repeatedly the ugly monster has been encountered by cowboys in this position and killed. Its scaly skin is of a dirty yellow colour, changing to brown and dotted with large round black spots. This was my first experience with one of these horrid snakes, and a lesson to be more careful in the future.

III.

After a few days I knew the region all round for ten miles, and for a short time was perfectly at ease. One afternoon I resolved to visit two lagoons close together, only two miles from the hut. It was a very agreeable sight—the lagoon bordered by graceful palms, in its centre a flock of white garças and in their midst a stag—but before I could get near, stag and garças were off to the other lagoon. The two lagoons formed a sort of V, and, instead of going where they joined, I went in the opposite direction. After a while I began wondering at the long distance, and finally, growing uneasy, I climbed a tree and saw what I supposed to be the palms of the lagoon at a good distance; but when I got there I saw they were quite different. I realised then that I had lost myself.

Following a westerly direction, I cut through a very extensive thin wood, which gradually gave way to a virgin forest, indicating the vicinity of a lagoon. It began to rain now and soon I was drenched. My boots lost their soles and I had to throw them away, and the thorns tore my wet clothes to rags. A very pleasant situation I was in; wet, without boots, my clothes torn, without a match, lost in a virgin forest, and with only two cartridges left in my gun!

The sun was low when I came to another

lagoon. And what a lagoon! I immediately recognised it by the description I had heard of it as the 'Lagoa do Inferno' (the Lagoon of Hell) about ten miles from the hut. This lagoon fully deserved its name, and would well have illustrated the Valley of the Shadow and its quagmire in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, or would have served equally well for Milton's *Paradise Lost*, or Dante's *Inferno*.

The sun was slowly sinking behind the dark forest, and the highest trees cast their long shadows across 'Hell's Lagoon,' all covered with reeds, hiding its black hideous water. A small island in the centre stood out sharply against the creeping darkness, and it was now time to look out for a place where to pass the night. There were a few withered trees near by, and I resolved to climb one of them. It seemed a good idea, inasmuch as a couple of garcas and a wild duck had already chosen a similar lofty abode in an adjoining tree. When I came up they were somewhat upset and, I believe, a little shocked at the strange intruding monkey they saw for the first time in their realm. They looked at each other, and then at me in a reproachful manner, and I expected they would ask me to explain such bold housebreaking conduct, but after a while they subsided and made no more fuss about it.

I did not like this place, because it was impossible to keep away the mosquitoes, and there came also a deep howling from the forest—the howling of wild boars. As these are always followed by the jaguar, I thought of leaving my feathered friends, for that 'cat' is a good climber and I would rather meet him on the ground. Some distance away I saw a grove of high palms that looked like a huge alley. Palms are always a pleasant sight, and, wherever they grow, add to the charm of the scenery, but these immensely high and dense palms formed a dome which the sun could not pierce. Such was the aspect of this grove, which might be fitly termed the peristyle of the 'Lagoa do Inferno.' There I passed the night on a heap of withered palm-leaves, with my gun at my side, and kept awake by the rain and swarms of gentle mosquitoes that were more eager for my blood than the jaguar, of which, fortunately, I neither saw nor heard anything.

IV.

I had ample time to think, and arrived at the conclusion that if ever I was to come out of this situation I should have to go east. As soon as the sun looked over the forest, which encircled this 'Hell' like an immense black wall, I started, having had for breakfast the same as for dinner—a little brackish water. Clouds soon covered the sky. After some hours of walking, I arrived at a lagoon, which I recognised with bitter disappointment as being the very one I had left. I now grew desperate

it seemed to me that this 'Hell' had some magic power to attract its victims, but I was fully determined to get away from it, inasmuch as I had never heard that anybody went to a place with such a name before leaving this world. When the sun pierced the clouds for a moment I started again, and whenever it hid I was careful to hew marks on the trunks of trees pointing in the direction I was to follow. Some hours afterwards the forest grew thinner, and, walking on with sore feet and clothes torn into rags, I came to a very narrow glade, and plunged into the forest again with greater confidence. The sun was low when I hit a trail and noticed the track of a horse. On I tramped till another glade opened, narrow and long, but after a while it closed and the trail disappeared. On my turning back, the glade widened into a prairie and the trail led to a lake. Here I quelled my burning thirst and searched for a passage, but there was none. Then, noticing a forest on my right, I again found the trail, which was leading to a lagoon behind. Drawing near, suddenly I noticed between the reed bunches of the lagoon two yellow bulks. Jaguars! was my first thought, and only one cartridge left! Remaining motionless, I observed them for a good while through the telescope, but strangely enough they did not move; neither could I see their heads. Creeping cautiously nearer, I then noticed brown and black stripes running in zig-zags horizontally across their yellow bulks, but still I could see no head or feet, nor could I notice any movement.

As the sun was setting, it was evident that I should again have to pass the night in the open, for the trail now led on to another forest, which I dared not enter at night. I reflected that it would be better to wait until morning, now I felt confident of being on the right way, and I did not care whether it took me a day longer to get to the hut. I was feeling very tired and my stomach cried indignantly for food, but I could pay no heed to it as the investigation of those enigmatic animals was more important.

A few yards ahead, on the border of the lagoon, which was dry, stood a few trees with low branches. Noiselessly creeping up to them, I climbed one, and then I discovered that the enigma was a sucury, but of such size as I never had seen before. The reed bunches had concealed parts of its body, so it gave the impression of two jaguars from afar. It was a female, of a length impossible to calculate with accuracy, but I estimated it at from 15 to 20 yards, and her thickness at about 25 to 30 inches. Her head was half hidden, and at the end of her tail I saw a kind of tube like a piece of pipe, and noticed distinctly three young snakes, her offspring, entering and coming out again. It was a very strange spectacle.

Several times I rubbed my eyes to make sure I was not dreaming, for I almost seemed at that moment to be living in the prehistoric epoch. This monster was of a kind that has never been described by any naturalist. I was much grieved at not having my Winchester at hand, and dared not approach her with the only shot I had left in my gun.

It was now getting dark and I retired a hundred yards from the lagoon to the prairie. Cutting a few palm-leaves in the forest near by, I brought them there to pass the night, but, tired as I was, I could not sleep owing to the mosquitoes that were after my blood. At dawn I resumed my walk; after crossing the forest I noticed that the tracks increased, and with them grew my hopes. Suddenly I heard a shout far away. My heart leapt with joy, and never in my life have I opened my mouth and shouted so long as I did at that moment. I

was answered, and then I fired my last shot. Soon the men came into view. They were the cowboys, who had been searching for me ever since I had been lost. Their pleasure at my return was as great as my own, for they had given up hopes of finding me. I got on horseback and after a short time reached my destination. They gave me some food and I told them the story.

When I came to the big snake I suggested going back right away, forgetting that I was tired. We mounted, but when we came to the lagoon the reptile had gone, probably to its hiding-place in the lake. We found, however, its track, like a large band on the bog, about 16 inches wide. The cowboys had never seen such a formidable sucury and were much astonished at the extraordinarily large track. We all felt disappointed that we did not get the skin of this 'prehistoric' monster.

PETER WAS SINGLE.

PART V.

XV.

THE famous specialist raised a perfect hand and smiled at Peter in a puzzled fashion. 'But, my dear sir, you are labouring under a very grave misapprehension,' he declared. 'I remember Miss Slade quite well. Undoubtedly her case is serious—something more than serious; but hopeless—that is a word we doctors never use. While there is life there is hope.'

Peter gave a great gasp of relief and dropped his hat on the expensive carpet. 'I—I shall be very grateful if you will tell me exactly what is required—what can be done for her—'

The famous specialist smiled again—rather sadly this time, for he was a busy man. He nodded briefly, and motioned Peter to a chair. 'First and foremost, Miss Slade is not incurable. You can make your mind easy on that score at once. Her own doctor has communicated with me, and I understand that she will be moved to a sanatorium sometime within the next two weeks. Her treatment will, in all probability, cover a period of, roughly, two years. Given the will to live, I believe a complete cure will be effected. It is of course useless to attempt to disguise the fact that money plays an important part in matters of this sort.' He paused significantly.

'You mean,' said Peter, 'that if Miss Slade could afford—'

'Precisely,' interrupted the famous specialist. 'Miss Slade interested me, and I have a certain amount of—ah—influence with a famous private sanatorium. Had Miss Slade's means been less

—er—less limited it would have given me great pleasure to use that influence on her behalf. The place she is going to is a public institution, and while everything possible will be done for her, constant individual attention such as I should have liked her to receive is quite out of the question. However, the chief difficulty will arise when she is discharged in about two years' time, for no matter how complete the cure, I must warn you, as I warned her, that she will never be out of danger while she remains in this country. Immediately she leaves the sanatorium it will be essential for her to make her home in some land with a dry climate. There only will she be safe. It is this fact, probably, that forces her to take so hopeless a view of her own case.'

Peter rose to his feet. 'Thank you, doctor. I shall have to see what can be done.'

The famous specialist also rose and held out his hand. 'Don't forget your hat, Mr Golding,' he murmured, ringing for the maid.

XVI.

A few days later Peter sat at his desk in the warehouse, going through a pile of complaints and ordinary correspondence. Progress was slow, however, for his mind was not on his work. With unseeing eyes he stared at a typewritten letter, noticing subconsciously through his sense of touch that the paper was of excellent quality. He shook his head impatiently, and the artistic heading of the letter between his fingers caught his attention.

'Slater, Potter & Slater of Cape Town,' he said aloud. 'This means we are going to be busy. Cape Town!' he repeated, suddenly

struck with a new thought; 'Cape Town, *South Africa*. The very thing!' He sprang to his feet and went in search of Mr Hughes, and a little later he was tapping at the door of the private office.

Mr Reginald stood with his hands thrust into his pockets, staring out of the window. 'Sit down, Golding,' he said as Peter entered. 'As a matter of fact I was just going to send for you.'

Peter seated himself.

A few moments passed in silence, and then Mr Reginald turned suddenly and faced Peter across the table. 'Look here, Golding, something very terrible has happened. I am more anxious than ever that you should sign that agreement. You are not a good business man, but you have brains, and I'll pay you anything you like in reason—er—business isn't everything, you know.'

Peter stared at him in amazement. 'I'm sorry,' he said, finding his tongue at last, 'but I'm afraid it is impossible. Something has happened to me too; I shall emigrate shortly.'

Mr Reginald, who had remained standing, began to pace nervously about the office. 'I wish you would reconsider this, Golding.'

Peter shook his head, and then a new idea occurred to him. 'I could stay for a few months, even a year—that would give you a chance to find somebody suitable for the position.'

Mr Reginald looked distinctly relieved. 'I'm glad to hear that, Golding, very glad indeed. Are you thinking of going out to one of our colonies?'

'South Africa,' answered Peter promptly. 'I—I was thinking,' he went on a trifle nervously, 'that you might perhaps be able to help me—that's what I came to see you about, really.'

Mr Reginald inclined his head. 'In any way I can, Golding; only too pleased.'

'Well, it's like this: I've heard it said many a time in the warehouse that this firm—our firm, I mean—has a more than ordinary interest in the big Cape Town mail-order house, Slater, Potter & Slater, Ltd. They say that you went to South Africa some years ago to study their special requirements.'

Mr Reginald smiled, and darted a curious look at Peter.

'I thought that if you put a good word in for me they might be prepared to give me a job—any sort of a job.'

'That's a good idea,' Mr Reginald admitted thoughtfully. 'Coming to think of it, you'd probably be very useful to us on the other side; and your letter-writing ability will be very valuable in a mail-order house. Yes, I think I can arrange that for you, Golding.'

'Thank you, Mr Reginald,' said Peter simply, and rose to his feet.

'One moment, Golding—there is this other matter. Miss Slade, as you know, has left us; she will never return. A communication from her doctor caused us to make enquiries, and I was terribly shocked to learn that the poor girl is in a very critical condition. We had not the faintest idea of the truth.' Mr Reginald choked, a spasm of pain contorting his face for the moment; he began to pace restlessly.

Peter watched him with perplexed eyes. His employer's emotion was obviously genuine; he was profoundly moved. Apart from business, Mr Reginald was evidently a human being.

'Of course, Golding, we are in no way responsible for this unfortunate affair. Miss Slade inherited the dreadful disease from her mother, but the doctor thinks that the conditions under which she worked here did not give her a fighting chance, as it were, and—and I think that there may be something in what he says.'

'There undoubtedly is,' said Peter, a flood of resentment thickening his voice.

Mr Reginald nodded. 'That is another reason why I wanted you to remain with us. You are *not* a business man, but you could help to improve conditions without disorganising the whole system. Everything possible is being done for Miss Slade. We have instructed every one concerned that no expense must be spared. Next week she will go into a private sanatorium, which has been recommended to us by a famous specialist. Meanwhile, a trained nurse has taken command.'

'The firm is very generous,' murmured Peter, half in gratitude, half in bitterness.

Mr Reginald looked a trifle uncomfortable. 'This dreadful thing has moved us deeply, Golding, and my wife has interested herself in Miss Slade. To be quite candid, Golding, there are certain phases of the business which my wife has long wanted to see altered—women, you know, do not understand business. She knows that I have practically a free hand in the warehouse, and—well, she insists that certain changes be made without delay—nothing drastic, you understand, Golding; I will not tolerate a complete upheaval, but slight changes in certain directions will, I am convinced, be all to the good. After all, one has to humour one's wife occasionally.'

Peter smiled. 'One has,' he admitted, rising again and moving to the door.

Something in the young man's tone arrested Mr Reginald's attention. He looked up as the door closed behind Peter.

'I'm sure Golding told me he was single!—I wonder—?'

XVII.

They left the church in silence, and by common consent moved away from the thin stream of other worshippers.

'My mother would have loved you, Peter,'

said the girl, when they reached the lonely grave in the quiet corner of the churchyard, but Peter did not hear, for only her heart had spoken. She stooped and began to arrange the flowers. He watched her thin nervous fingers, and saw how loosely the plain gold band hung on one of them. . . .

He raised her gently, and hand in hand they left the churchyard.

It was Sunday, Spring was in the air, and the same thought was in the heart of each.

'Let us not waste to-day, for to-morrow we part.'

Suddenly Peter spoke aloud. 'But not for long,' he said.

She turned a radiant face to him. 'Listen,' she whispered. 'The birds are twittering Spring's song of hope.'

They drew closer together, and side by side went bravely on through the silent fields into the future. . . .

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

PRESERVATIVES AND COLOURING MATTER IN FOODS.

WHETHER preservatives and colouring matter in foods are harmful or harmless is a matter of vital consequence to all. This question has been inquired into at great length for the Ministry of Health by a departmental committee, which has recently issued a final report. It may be stated at once that little evidence is forthcoming that any one has been, or is being, actually poisoned by preservatives or by colouring matter in foods. At the same time it seems probable that a certain amount of dyspepsia is traceable to this cause, while the drugs used may seriously affect infants and invalids. An important point brought out in the report, which will surprise many, is that almost all foods can be kept fresh long enough without preservatives, even when imported from the antipodes. Some preservatives are more harmful than others. Formaldehyde and its derivatives are deemed to be the worst in use, but there appears to be no reason why this drug should be employed. Boron preservatives and salicylic acid and its salts are less harmful, and these, especially the former, are the commonest in use. The least harmful preservatives are benzoic acid, sulphurous acid, and their salts. Preservatives in milk are now illegal, and the committee consider that they should be prohibited in cream after a sufficient period of notice. Most of the butter imported from European countries contains no preservatives. Of that sent to us from New Zealand and Australia, samples taken showed that 20 per cent. and 10 per cent. respectively were free from preservatives, and the proportion is growing. In view of these facts it is considered possible to dispense with preservatives in butter from all countries. No less than 140 grains of boric acid to the pound has been found in butter, against a maximum of 35 grains said to be necessary by trade witnesses. Samples of margarine have been tested which contained 175 grains of boric acid to the pound. Here, again, the committee deem preservatives to be

unnecessary, and recommend their prohibition. In spite of the fact that many sausages are made without preservatives, and that several medical officers advocate prohibiting their use, the committee, in the absence of refrigerator vans for transport and cold chambers in retail shops, recommend that a small amount of preservative be permitted. But they suggest the use of sulphites, as being less harmful than boron and equally effective. No preservative is employed in the curing of bacon, but borax is used in some countries to keep good that exported, being dusted on or packed in the boxes. But this is not considered necessary, even for bacon and ham imported from America and Canada. It is said to be a common practice for butchers to treat meat with preservative preparations, to make it keep longer, or to mask the odour of incipient putrefaction. The committee recommend that the treatment of meat with any preservative substance whatever should be forbidden. Most of us have thought that dried fruits were entirely free from preservatives; but such is by no means the case. Apricots, peaches, prunes, and similar fruits are treated with the fumes of burning sulphur both before and after the drying process, the result being that considerable amounts of sulphur dioxide are absorbed. Neither dried eggs nor frozen eggs contain any preservative, but the yolks of imported eggs are treated with boron preservative in the country of origin, while the whites are dried, the two being reconstituted in this country to produce 'liquid egg.' It is considered that preservation by freezing would meet all demands. The most harmful colouring matter used is sulphate of copper for canned vegetables, especially peas. This is deemed to be quite unnecessary, and is prohibited in Denmark and the United States. Among foods which one would not suspect of being coloured are biscuits, jams, custard-powder, and egg-powder. With regard to the last two, custard-powder may be coloured starch, while egg-powder is frequently ordinary baking-powder with yellow colouring matter. Sausages and fish paste are also often dyed.

A NEW AID TO THE DEAF.

All aids to the deaf that have hitherto been placed on the market have been percussion instruments, in which a vibrating diaphragm communicates its vibrations to the drum of the ear, thus giving rise to the sensation of sound. There is a danger, however, that in some cases, at least, the remedy may eventually accentuate the trouble by the violence of its action, and thus result in the deafness becoming progressively worse. This danger seems to be avoided in a new aid to the deaf which we have recently tested. It operates, not by percussion, but by the almost infinitesimal changes of temperature set up by means of a microphone of special design in a tube small enough to rest quite comfortably and inconspicuously in the ear. Hence the new appliance may be called a thermophone or a pyrophone. Those who have tried the instrument comment favourably upon the absence of accompanying noises, the distinctness of the articulation, and the 'naturalness' of the sounds heard by means of its help, there being an almost entire absence of any 'metallic' effect. The device does not pick up general conversation, as the speaker has to speak into a mouth-piece, but as a means of communication between two people, or for use in churches or other public buildings where the system is installed (in which case the mouth-piece may be placed in any convenient inconspicuous position at a distance of a few feet), it appears to have before it a wide field of usefulness, especially as its price is very moderate.

AN EFFECTIVE WIND-SCREEN WIPER.

There are no half-measures about a wind-screen wiper for cars in wet or snowy weather that has lately been brought out. It wipes the whole of the top panel, moving slowly to and fro from end to end. A wind-screen wiper is now considered almost a necessity for an all-weather car. Until the advent of the type referred to most of these devices have been of the radial description, which clean a semi-circular patch. It is true that at least one operates over a rectangular area, but this only extends to the driver's half of the upper panel. These wind-screen wipers are squeegees, similar in principle to those which are used for cleaning muddy pavements. They are worked by various means—some by the suction of the pistons, others by gear from the road transmission. The new device, which wipes the whole of the top panel, is driven through skew gear by a tiny electric motor. This form of drive has the advantage of giving a constant wiping speed regardless of the speed of the car. The squeegee is carried by a vertical arm, of which the upper end is mounted upon a horizontal spindle extending along the top of the screen. This spindle has two screw threads cut into it—one right-handed, the other left-handed.

It is turned in one direction by the electric motor. When the squeegee reaches either end of the screen, having been moved thither by one screw thread, it is changed over automatically to the other screw thread, which carries it in the opposite direction; and so it continually moves to and fro so long as the motor is running. When not required, the wiper is stopped at one end of its travel. The spindle is protected from the weather by a tube with a slot along its lower side for the squeegee arm. The motor is mounted just inside the screen on the off side, the spindle passing through a hole in the glass. Very little electric current is required, the demand being well under two amperes on a 12-volt circuit.

A NEW FIRELESS COOKER.

Of late years what are known as fireless cookers have come into widespread use. The idea was borrowed from the hay-box, which has long been a popular Norwegian method of cooking food and keeping it hot. These fireless cookers are based on the prevention of radiation by heat insulation. If radiation could be entirely avoided, a boiling food would continue to boil without any source of heat; and this condition is aimed at in the fireless cooker. One device of this description, however, differs from the general run of such contrivances, in that massive heated iron discs are put in with the food and obviate any need for a preliminary heating over a gas ring for from five to ten minutes. The fireless cooker referred to takes the form of a rectangular box with one or more big round holes to receive the cooking utensils. The box is made of galvanised steel, and the spaces between the walls of the box and the linings of the holes are filled with heat-insulating material. The lid of the box is also heat-tight, being in two thicknesses of sheet steel with a layer of insulating material between them. In addition to this provision for preventing the escape of heat there is a circular heat-insulated lid for each hole.

This cooker has the advantage over others in being able to bake and roast as well as to stew. For baking or roasting, the *modus operandi* is as follows: Two of the iron discs are made hot over a coal fire, a pressure oil-stove, or a gas-ring, this operation taking about twenty minutes. The discs are lifted by detachable handles, and one of them is placed at the bottom of the cooking hole. The food to be cooked in its pot is then inserted, followed by another hot disc, which is placed over the lid of the pot. Finally, the insulated lid is put over the top of the heated disc, and the lid of the box shut down. For stewing only the bottom hot disc is used.

These fireless cookers are made in three sizes, the largest having a hole for a cooking pot 10 inches in diameter by 7 inches deep, and

two smaller holes for pots 8 inches in diameter and 6 inches deep. A smaller size has one large and one small hole, and another model is made with only the large hole. The cooking pots are made either of tinned steel or of aluminium. The device can, of course, be used without the heated discs, when the effect is similar to that of the ordinary fireless cooker or hay-box, which continues the cooking after it has been begun over a fire or a gas ring, or keeps the food hot for hours after it is cooked.

FIXED SCREW-JACKS FOR CARS.

One is sometimes tempted to wonder when the approach of motor cars to finality in design and accessories will be indicated by a lessened flow of new devices. At present there is no sign that inventors in this line are suffering from exhaustion. Among the latest novelties is a permanently-fixed jack at each side of a car which raises both wheels clear of the ground at the same time. Attached to the frame of the chassis by a special bracket, each jack is fixed near the middle of the car. The upper portion consists of a steel tube which houses the screw, and terminates at the bottom in a casing for a bevel gear. By the turning of a toothed bevel wheel which forms the nut for the screw, the screw is forced downwards until the swelling pad at the bottom rests on the road, when further turning raises the side of the car. The bevel wheel is turned by a bevel pinion mounted on a horizontal spindle which is carried in a tube clipped to the underside of the running board. To operate the jack a key is inserted into the tube, and this engages with the end of the bevel-pinion spindle, when it is the work of a few seconds to jack up the car. There is no stooping or grovelling, as with a loose jack; and as both wheels are raised, the front and back wheels can be quickly interchanged. Washing is also facilitated; and it is claimed that the raising of one side of a car on its jack is an effective guarantee against theft. The gears are entirely enclosed, and the ends of the operating-spindle tubes are stopped up with rubber plugs when the jacks are out of use. The device is easily fitted to any make of car, modifications and adjustments being provided to suit all conditions.

A NEW AERIAL FOR LISTENING-IN SETS.

Whether the outside aerial in a straight length and mounted at a height will maintain its popularity in the face of competitors is perhaps open to doubt. If it does, a recently-invented form is likely to take the place of the plain wire. This consists of a strip of gauze made from high tensile bronze wire. The makers claim that by using this aerial the signal strength and clearness are increased up to 50 per cent. compared with the results from ordinary wire. That numerous tests have

shown the superiority of the gauze aerial over the plain wire is indicated by a guarantee to refund the purchaser's money if the results are not as represented. These aerials are supplied in lengths of 50 feet, 75 feet, and 100 feet. An end terminal for the down-lead and insulators ready for erecting are included with the two longer lengths. The gauze strip is supplied in widths of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch or $\frac{3}{4}$ inch.

A NEW DEPARTURE IN DOMESTIC TRAYS.

Few domestic appliances have changed less within living memory than trays. Towards the end of last century they acquired handles by which to lift them, but this is the only modification of any consequence which has occurred. Recently the tray has attracted the attention of an inventor who has produced a pattern that constitutes a radical departure from previous types. The new model consists of two trays of the same size which are provided with a jointed aluminium frame that, when collapsed, holds the trays side by side at the same level, making practically one flat tray. By lifting the handle, however, one tray assumes a position vertically above the other. The two trays are connected together at each end by two links, which are vertical when the handle is lifted. These links are pivoted to the trays, and as they are parallel with each other, the moving tray always remains parallel with its confrère below it, and is, therefore, always level. One of the connecting links at each end is extended to a height equal to the distance between the links, and the tops of the long and short links are connected by bars which are pivoted to them at each end. As described so far, these bars would make the frame rigid, so that it could not be folded down to bring the upper tray level with and alongside the lower one. The bars are, therefore, hinged in the middle, so as to fold up as the upper tray is lowered. A handle between the ends of the long links serves to carry the trays with the one above the other, and also as a means of lowering the top one. The trays are made of wood, and are finished with transparent cellulose, which is not marked by hot plates or by any liquid, hot or cold, which may be spilt upon it. Although the 'two-tier' tray has been described, single trays with collapsible handles are likewise made; also three-tier trays. Except the last-named, they are constructed in two or three sizes. These trays are much more easily carried than the ordinary type, for only one hand is required, leaving the other free to open doors or to carry something else.

STROPS FOR SAFETY-RAZOR BLADES.

With the advent of machines for stropping them, blades for safety razors need no longer be thrown away when their edges become dull. In one machine the actual stropping is done

by leather strips wound upon small Duralumin rollers in the form of very coarse, square screw threads. Two rollers are fixed side by side in each half of the device. Tiny gear-wheels at one end, which mesh with each other, compel the rollers to turn in unison, although in opposite directions. The two halves of the machine are hinged together at the gear-wheel ends, while one half is fitted with two pegs which match the holes in the blades, and thereby hold them in position. One roller spindle is extended and provided with a little handle. When a blade is inserted and the upper half of the machine is closed down upon the lower, the edges of the blade are lightly nipped between the upper and lower rollers at each side. Moreover, the gear-wheels of these rollers intermesh. The result is that, when the handle is turned, all four rollers rotate together, and away from the edges of the blade; while the leather strips, being helical in form, travel along the blade edges, and very closely imitate the heel-to-toe stropping action of the professional barber. The roller cases forming each half of the machine are stamped from sheet metal and nickel-plated.

Another device for this purpose which we have thoroughly tested and found very effective is of a quite different kind. Fixed on one side of a rectangular framework is an emery block for honing the blade; on the opposite side is a leather pad for stropping it. The blade to be sharpened is fitted into a holder, which is then dropped into position in a 'carrier' running over the block of emery. The carrier, on being moved backward and forward, automatically brings the four sides of the two cutting edges of the blade into successive contact with the emery at the correct angle. When the backward and forward movement has been repeated a sufficient number of times (say 20), the holder is slipped out of the carrier, and is then inserted into another carrier on the other side, which similarly brings the blade into contact with the leather pad, thus effectively stropping it. The whole process takes but a very short time, and its repetition at suitable intervals prolongs the life of the blade almost indefinitely. A special holder is required for each kind of blade; otherwise the device is adapted to deal with any or every kind of safety-razor blade.

A NEW STAMP PAD.

A new stamp pad which has recently been put on the market has some novel and valuable features. A projecting flange running along the lower edge of the front of the containing box prevents the lid from being pressed down on to the pad and thus becoming soiled; at the same time it ensures that the box shall be easily opened. The hinge of the containing box is so constructed that the lid may be thrown right back, making it lie quite flat when the box is

open. The pad is of such a nature that it holds a very large quantity of ink, every fibre of the several constituents being made to contain its due quota. Below the pad proper is a layer of wood planed to the exact thickness required and coated with a special preparation to prevent absorption of ink. Above this are placed in order (1) a layer of felt; (2) a layer of thick blotting paper (to ensure equal distribution of the ink); (3) another layer of felt; and (4) a covering fabric of long-stapled sea-island cotton binding the whole together, and stretched so tightly that the upper surface of the pad is kept uniformly level. A distinctive feature of the containing box is that it is coloured to correspond with the ink to be used in the pad.

AN IMPROVED PRIMING PLUG FOR MOTORS.

Few will dispute the advantages of priming when it is desired to start a motor in a car on a cold day. It is not every motor that is fitted with compression cocks for the injection of petrol, and in the absence of these, the only course is to remove the sparking plugs. This, however, is obviated by the use of what are known as priming plugs. A recent pattern possesses several improved features. Of these the most important is the enclosing of the cup in a screw-on cap which prevents the entry of dust and the ejection of the petrol on the up-stroke of the piston when the engine is turned over. A terminal has also been provided which fits all regular cable terminals. A spigot in the centre of the cup reaches to the top, and is drilled to take a needle valve situated at the bottom of the hole. The hole is continued in a smaller size half-way down the plug, where it divides into two grooves that discharge the petrol just above the sparking points. Tiny holes are drilled at the root of the spigot, through which the petrol in the cup flows into the central hole and thence to the needle valve. The cap, to which the needle valve is attached, can be removed without loosening the terminal.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

*. * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

MAN—OR BEAST?

By PATRICK RUSHDEN.

CHAPTER I.

I.

ARMINEL LEYTON, married during the War to her Peter, a major in a Gurkha regiment, had only been established as a mem-sahib for three months; but she had taken India to her heart from the first. It wasn't difficult to do at Dehra Doon—acknowledged to be one of the choicest stations in the whole peninsula.

She revelled in the picturesque native aspects of the new life; in the setting of the fertile Doon plain, bordered by both Jumna and Ganges; in the great green parade-grounds and splendid trees, and the riot of flowers in the bungalow gardens. To the north-east rose the mighty ramparts of the Himalayas, alluring, forbidding; while to the west the plain was bounded by the long, low range of the Siwalik hills, their outline here and there like the edge of a giant saw.

To-day, in response to a note from Arminel, Colonel Buxton, I.M.S., an old friend of Peter Leyton's, had come to tea with her. He had made a considerable name for himself in surgery and in X-ray discovery and invention; but his face was more suggestive of the philosopher than the scientist. The forehead was broad and low; the mouth generous, humorous, yet firm, under the clipped gray moustache; a touch of the visionary showed in the dark-gray eyes, which nevertheless could look as if they pierced to the marrow of things.

Buxton found Arminel entertaining a solitary guest, Captain John Leonard. Her husband had been kept late at the battalion office.

The youngster was stiff and shy, and his hostess rather obviously relieved by the colonel's entrance.

'So you've made your curtsy to the Siwaliks, Mrs Peter,' he said, taking the cup she held out. 'You know, don't you, that the name means "The Abode of Shiva"—the Destroyer? Was the great god in a friendly mood?'

'I've been there several times since I saw you,' she told him.—'Won't you smoke, Captain Leonard?'

'Well, what did you think of the Siwaliks?'

Her frank, brown eyes studied the colonel's

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quizzical expression. 'They're very—queer. Queer from a distance—but much more so when one's in the middle of them.'

'The shapes of the hills?'

'Partly——' She hesitated; then, with the impetus of a long breath, decided on a plunge. Glancing almost deprecatingly at Leonard, she turned to Buxton. 'You'll laugh, but—there's something uncanny about those hills! You remember how keen I was to go? But after the first time I found I was always choosing another way when Peter took me for a run in a car. At last he spotted it, and thought I didn't trust his driving on that tricky road; so after that I used to pretend I was quite willing.' She glanced at Leonard. 'You mustn't tell Peter this!'

'Of course not!' with the first smile since he had come; an understanding smile, thought Arminel, encouraged.

'Of course we won't tell Peter,' endorsed the colonel. 'Peter, bless him, has no use for the uncanny.'

'I'm glad he hasn't!' said Peter's wife, with curious emphasis. Then she shook herself. 'Why should I be solemn about the Siwaliks? They're not nearly so solemn-looking as the Himalayas, but they—they intimidate me! It's the same every time—I feel *there's something there*.' She looked from one man to the other.

'I know,' said Buxton quietly, taking a cake. The other two gazed at him, and he returned Arminel's look humorously.

'You think I'm an imaginative ninny!' she threw at him, her pretty, changeful face alight with challenge.

'I said, "I know,"' remarked the colonel meekly; 'I meant, I feel the same.'

'You! Shake hands!' she cried, and they shook. Leonard smoked in silence but for an appreciative laugh.

II.

'What *is* it?' Arminel pursued; and again, 'What *is* it?'

'I don't know,' mused Buxton. 'Sometimes I think it's only because they're like the enchanted hills in a fairy-tale. They suggest dragons and ogres——'

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FEBRUARY 7, 1925.

'I'm sure it isn't that. Three other people besides me feel—uncomfortable in them, and you—that makes four. I'm glad you're a man; all the rest of us are mere women!'

'Me too, please,' said a quiet young voice. Arminel faced round. 'You! Oh no, not you!'

Both men laughed.

'Why not, Mrs Leyton?' The boy was slightly pinker than usual. "'More things in heaven and earth," you know, and all that.'

'I thought——' She hesitated.

'That I thought only about ponies and polo, and that sort of thing? But I've thought about the Siwaliks too. They *make* you think.'

'They do—they do! But most men only think about the shooting in them, and to the women they're just a good place for picnics. How funny—we three! Now I don't mind—I'll tell you everything—it'll do me good. I hope Peter won't be back just yet—I'd have to stop; I should hate him to think I was a nervy idiot. . . . Well, the first time I didn't feel anything but just interest and excitement at the newness till we were through the Mohand tunnel. You know how the shapes of the hills get more weird after that, and the road more twisty. Peter drives awfully well—I wasn't a bit nervous. I loved the shapes of the peaks—those sugar-loaf ones—and the cliffs and the giants' fortresses; and the road winding between them, with sometimes hardly room for it, and sometimes a wide, dry river-bed between it and the hills; and the great flowering aloes and hanging creepers, and the funny trees one didn't know—I loved it all. But soon after the Mohand Pass I began to feel—*something*. Joseph—our "shover"—was in the back of the car, and I was by Peter. We were chatting and seeing interesting things—a peacock, a cheetal doe, and two mongooses. In the midst of it all I suddenly felt . . . It came upon me—I can't put it into words!'

'Have a try,' said the colonel.

' . . . I felt as if *something*, that wasn't man or beast, was there—filling the place with its influence. It seemed as if it was watching us. . . .' She hesitated. 'As if it was—what's the word?—omnipresent. Very nasty the feeling was. I knew the *Something* was aware of us, and *hated* us.' She shivered. 'And there was Peter, as gay as a bird, feeling absolutely nothing. It was so comforting!'

'And that's all?' asked Buxton.

'Not quite. On the way back we stopped at that little mud house with banana trees by it, not far from the tunnel—we wanted water for the car. A boy got some in a brass pot, and while it was being poured in, an old, old man crept down the path from the hut and salaamed to us. Peter spoke to him, and he began talking. I saw that Joseph was listening. He was educated in a mission school, and looks down

on the ordinary native, but he seemed rather intrigued with what the old man was saying. Peter grunted and grinned, and gave him a few annas when we went off. I asked Peter what he'd talked about, and Peter said, "Oh, he was telling me a fairy-tale!" and that's all he'd say. But I got it out of Joseph later.'

III.

'And what was the fairy-tale?' inquired the colonel.

'The thrill of it was, that the old man was in it! He began, Joseph said, by hoping the sahib would get out of the hills before dark. Peter told him there was a government notice near Mohand, warning drivers that they mustn't go through the pass after dark. He said, yes, but sahibs did go through too late, in spite of it, and sometimes their motors and gharries had an accident, and they were obliged to spend a night in the hills. Peter told him he'd spent many nights in the Siwaliks, camping; and the old man said, "The sahib is afraid of nothing, but may I tell him a true tale?" Then he said that when he was a small boy, he and some other boys from a village went one evening to stone down mangoes in a grove not far from a byroad. They hadn't meant to be out late, but it came on to rain hard, and they sheltered under the trees. A terrific thunderstorm broke over the grove, and they daredn't move. They were huddled against a tree-trunk, when, in a lightning flash, they saw "big, hairy men" coming at them from the jungle. They ran as fast as they could, but it was dark, and one little fellow was lame, and he fell. They heard him scream, but they were too terrified to stop till they got to the village. No one would go out that night—not even the lame boy's father. The next morning he and some other men went to the mango-grove. The boy wasn't there, and they thought he'd been carried off by a tiger or a leopard. After a while they found him. All his clothes had been torn off, and were shredded on the ground, but there was no blood, and he wasn't dead—not even wounded. He was "like dead," Joseph said. Some doctor was camping for shooting, not far off; he heard about the boy, and had him carried to his tent. The doctor did all he could to bring him to, but he died. I thought, perhaps, the "hairy men" were bears; but Joseph said there are none in the Siwaliks, and suggested dacoits. I told him there had been no dacoits there for eighty years, and anyway they wouldn't go for small boys; and then we got to the club.'

'I wouldn't put much faith in that yarn,' said the colonel; 'all natives exaggerate in telling you an occurrence. It's possible the boys saw langurs—those big, gray monkeys, and by lightning they looked bigger than they were. Probably the lame boy was delicate, and natives can be killed by sheer fright. I once had a

case of death from snake-bite; the snake wasn't poisonous, but the man believed it was!

'That's a comforting explanation of yours!' sighed Arminel. 'Mrs Penell says that the absolute belief of the natives, through thousands of years, that gods and devils lived in those hills has—I forget how she put it——'

'Made them alive there?' suggested Buxton.

'Something like that. Laid a sort of spell on the place, and conjured up evil things. She says that ages ago hermits and ascetics were the only people who dared to live in the Siwaliks. They intensified the spell by concentrating on devil-spirits and on their horrible gods and goddesses. . . . That those old ascetics had weird powers—black magic. But I don't believe in that sort of thing, or in "thought-forms" of heathen gods. It's the creepy feeling that the whole place—something that pervades it—is waiting to catch you unawares and destroy you. And somehow I know that *if* you're frightened, the danger comes nearer.'

The colonel nodded slowly, but smiled a little.

'You're very contradictory,' said Arminel reproachfully; 'you behave as if you do believe and yet don't!'

'Believe in what—Shiva and Co.?'

'Well, in whatever "It" is!'

'I'm afraid I always want proof before I say "I believe," Mrs Peter. Until then, I'm an agnostic—which means, "It may be so: I don't know."'

'That's all very fine, but at the beginning of this cheery chat you said you felt the same as I do about the uncanniness. You must have some sort of theory——'

'I think I shall call you "Mrs Portia," not "Mrs Peter,"' fenced Buxton, twinkling.

Leyton, tall, alert, and muscular, in khaki uniform, stood smiling between the door-curtains.

'Hullo, Peterkin!' greeted his wife; 'you're dreadfully late! I've been telling them about the things we saw in the Siwaliks, and—no, I forgot about those three lovely langurs in a tree!'

'That was the chief feature of interest, so far as I remember,' commented Leyton dryly.

'Yes, please; some fresh tea. You've an uncommon gift for telling a story, dear—always improves it to leave out the only purple patch.' They laughed in perfect understanding, and Arminel said, 'You're in a horrid temper, Peter, because you want your tea!'

IV.

Buxton gave Leonard a lift to the club when they left the Leytons' bungalow; he fancied the boy had looked at him as though he wanted his private ear.

'Odd—Mrs Leyton hearing that story,' he said as they started. 'As a matter of fact I

believe it's true, in the main. I had it when I was a youngster, from an I.M.S. colonel named Cole, a very senior man, who was in Lahore with me. He was the doctor who was camping in the Siwaliks when the thing happened. The boy was a weakling—epileptic, Cole thought. But there were curious features in the case. The child had unaccountable marks on him when found. I suggested lightning—it does freaky things—strips off clothing sometimes; but there was no trace of singeing. He was in an epileptic coma—had evidently had a fit, and died without becoming conscious. I purposely didn't tell Mrs Leyton I'd heard the story.'

'Of course not, sir; she's jumpy enough already about those beastly hills.'

'Why "beastly"?' asked Buxton, glancing at the lad.

'Well, sir, you'll think me no end of an ass, but I'd like to tell you something I've never told a soul till now.'

'Go ahead,' said the colonel kindly.

'It's . . . some more about this Siwalik business. I'm never nervy, and I'm A1. healthy, but from the first moment I got into those hills, I felt pretty much what Mrs Leyton feels. I go there just the same—I won't be scared off—but I don't like it. I've sat up for tiger there, three times. The first time was with Jenkins of the Piffers, and a thunderstorm came on—it was in the Christmas rains. We both saw . . . something rummy, like . . . well, like very big apes, by the flashes of lightning. Jenks fired both barrels at them—it was as real as that. Poor old Jenks was killed in the last Afghan show, you know.'

'Yes,' said Buxton absently; and added, 'Better not tell any one that yarn. It might get round to Mrs Leyton.'

'Rather not, sir. As I say, I haven't let on to a soul but you, and it happened over three years ago. After a bit I began to believe it was a what-d'you-call-it—hallucination—nerves dicky; though if it was that, it's my one-and-only. And I knew if I told the yarn I'd be ragged out of my life. But it's not only what Jenks and I saw—and the story about the boy. There've been other rummy things.'

'What sort of things?'

'Oh, accidents on the Mohand road that have never been properly accounted for; horses bolting, and so on. But of course that might have been leopards. . . . I've wanted badly to get that yarn of my own off my chest, and somehow, after that talk at tea, I thought you might throw some light on it—X-ray light, sir!' He laughed.

'Well, I can't, Leonard. There are queer enough things on this earth, let alone other regions—and perhaps queerest of all in this India of ours. Better stick to the hallucination theory. See you again later—I'm going to play Bridge.'

'Right, sir—and thanks awfully for not rotting me!' said the boy, with a quick smile.

'Nothing to rot about,' smiled back the colonel; 'even "hallucinations" aren't matter for rotting, you know—except for fools!'

CHAPTER II.

I.

THE Leytons had started for the Mohand Forest bungalow in clear weather, about four in the afternoon. For the last few days there had been heavy thunderstorms, but what promised to be a break in the rains had followed, and Arminel, tired of being cooped in the house, was eager for a change. They had planned to go to Luchiwalla, but had been told that a tree was down across the road, and Leyton had said, 'Let's go to Mohand—it's farther, and the roads are pretty bad now, but it's some view, looking over the plains from the bungalow.'

A couple of miles beyond the Mohand tunnel a terrific thunderstorm burst in the Siwaliks. In a few minutes the car was ploughing through running water, the deluge of rain streaming off the hood, and blowing in on the weather-side. Ear-splitting detonations seemed actually to shake the hills, the reverberations hurled across, bounding and rebounding, like the explosion of

twelve-inch guns in a pent area, and wicked lightning stabbed from the inky sky.

Down the river-like road the car splashed cautiously, for some of the turns were of the hairpin order, and at last drew up on the level, at the steep bank on which the bungalow was perched. Damp but undaunted, Arminel and Leyton climbed up by a short-cut, Joseph and the caretaker carrying the tea-basket.

Tea was a merry meal, the facetious entries in the bungalow visitors' book contributing to its mirth. Before tea was over the storm circled back, and Leyton was for starting in spite of it, but Arminel pleaded to wait until the worst had passed; she wanted to see the panorama of the great plains. They did wait, and she saw the famous view, for the plains were clear; and at about half-past six they started for home.

The storm had worked up the Ganges, and was now travelling along the Himalayas. Distant thunder rumbled at intervals, and lightning throbbed in the northern sky. The car was taking the stiff gradients gallantly, and Leyton was saying that so far he had only twice used second speed, when a pistol-like explosion announced a burst front tire. The Stepney was fixed in ten minutes, and they had gone on for about half a mile, when bang went a back tire, and Leyton used a strong word regarding the state of the roads.

(Continued on page 163.)

THE NEW BALTIC STATES.

IV.—THE FREE CITY OF DANZIG.

By ROBERT MACHRAY.

I.

DANZIG has many claims on our interest. There is, of course, the political question which is associated with it, and is the main subject of this article. Under the style and title of a free city, Danzig, with the territory immediately surrounding it, now takes its place as a sovereign state in the list of the new Baltic States by the side of Esthonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, states of which I have already written at some length in this magazine.¹

But Danzig has other and, in a more broadly human sense, higher claims. It is a city of singular charm, of a magic all its own. From the first it casts a spell over every one who visits it, and the spell, instead of dying away with repetition, grows stronger with each visit. Casts a spell is exactly the right expression for what Danzig does. Probably no other of the world's cities, great or small, at any rate in Europe, has quite the same effect. Parts of

other cities are places of like enchantment, such as the Tower of London and Holyrood in Edinburgh, to mention two familiar instances. In the case of Danzig, however, it is all Danzig that bewitches and delights. Why is this?

Well, the secret of its fascination is an open one; anybody with eyes, illumined ever so slightly by the spirit, can read it for himself. It is that while Danzig is a 'business town,' pure and simple, existing in fact as nothing else and dependent for its existence on its being nothing else, it is a city whose streets and buildings, with their interiors, its canals and quays, not only suggest but preserve the veritable air, the poetry and romance, the 'velvet and bright iron,' to quote Stevenson's flashing phrase, of the Middle Ages. Even its newest houses have been built on the lines beloved by its old architects, and blend harmoniously with the most ancient. The counting-house of the Danzig merchant of to-day has everything of the most modern in its appliances and methods, but the counting-house itself belongs to the fifteenth or sixteenth century. It is this very unusual

¹ See March 1921 issue for Esthonia, May 1921 for Latvia, and October 1923 for Lithuania.

combination everywhere of contrasts—the up-to-date and the medieval—which at once makes and emphasises Danzig's extraordinary appeal.

It is not as if Danzig were a small place; it is no mean city. With nearly 200,000 inhabitants it covers an extensive area of land and water—in its rivers and canals it has so large and so picturesque a feature that it disputes with Stockholm the right to be called the Venice of the North. It is a very considerable commercial centre. For centuries the chief port of the lower Eastern Baltic, it has had a trade which no doubt has fluctuated a good deal with the changing years, but has always been notable for its volume and value. Nor could it well be otherwise. Situated at the mouth, or rather on one of the mouths, of the Vistula, it has as its hinterland the whole vast basin of that magnificent waterway, which is 700 miles in length—a tributary region that includes something like 125,000 square miles of territory, and is larger than that of the Rhine or the Elbe. Of this immense tract Danzig is virtually the sole outlet to the sea, and this tract is Polish—is, in brief, Poland, a fact which is merely noted here, as its political implications will be considered farther on in this article. Grain and timber are Danzig's principal exports, as might be expected from the general character of the hinterland—a well-watered plain of fields and forests. These exports have varied in quantity and quality as conditions have varied.

For some years past, as everybody knows, conditions all over the world have not been favourable, and Danzig, like other cities and ports whose life is trade, has suffered. Yet its prosperity is growing again. During the year 1922–23 a distinct advance was recorded, as compared with the years following the Armistice; upwards of 3000 vessels entered its harbour, their total tonnage being well above one and a half millions. Indeed, strong tides of commerce flow and ebb in Danzig almost as if it were a bustling, hustling Western town, but all that side of it can easily be forgotten when one walks its storied thoroughfares and breathes its romantic atmosphere. Without an effort one steps back three, four, five hundred years, and not just here or there, as in most cities with a past, but at all points. As Baedeker, in his *Northern Germany*, issued shortly before the Great War, somewhat primly phrased it, 'The appearance of the streets, with their narrow, lofty, and richly-decorated gable-facades, is still very antiquated.' Quite true, as a way of putting it. Thank heaven, Danzig remains 'very antiquated,' and is likely to continue long to present that 'appearance,' to the joy of all beholders.

II.

Although often nowadays termed the Danger Spot of Europe, and in a great measure rightly

so termed, Danzig is a place of peace. It has lost its old-time warlike character; for centuries it was always fighting at home or abroad; time was when it was no better, in fact, than a nest of pirates—to be fair, let us remember Bristol and Plymouth.

In the chapel of St Dorothea, in the Marienkirche, which is the dom or cathedral of Danzig, there is to be seen as curious a survival of the period of the freebooters as can be found anywhere on earth. It takes the shape of Memling's famous painting, 'The Last Judgment.' This painting is Danzig's greatest treasure, but how did the city acquire it? By piracy on the high seas. The picture is a large altar-piece with wings; on the outside of the wings are portraits of Angelo Tani, a Florentine, for whom the picture was painted at Bruges, and his wife, their intention being to present the piece to a church in Florence. According to the story, the painting was shipped for Italy from Bruges by way of England, but the vessel, which was laden with much other treasure, was captured by the Danziger pirate, Paul Beneke, commanding the *Peter*, and taken in to Danzig, where it passed into the possession of the ecclesiastical authorities, who no doubt discovered plenty of good reasons for keeping it. All this happened towards the end of the fifteenth century. In 1807 the French carried the painting off to Paris, but it was restored to Danzig after the close of the Napoleonic wars.

Mention of the French in this connection may remind some of my readers that much of Henry Seton Merriman's fine romance, *Barlasch of the Guard*, is staged in Danzig, as it existed during its occupation by Napoleon's troops. The house in the Frauengasse, the quaintest of all the city's quaint streets, in which Barlasch was supposed to live, is pointed out to visitors—in this way Danzig, it may be, has made Merriman immortal. In those days Danzig was a walled town, with several great gates, locally known as Tors; coming down to our own time, it was a fortress city and the headquarters of a German Army Corps, with the Crown Prince at its head. The great Tors still stand, but the walls have disappeared, and Danzig is no longer a fortress, nor do its streets echo the march of armed men. Peace broods over the city, whose pursuits are certainly those of peace, and whose interests, therefore, demand peace above everything else. But is this peace real?

Here we come up against the political question, and the first thing to do by way of clearing the ground, if haply the ground can be cleared, is to consider the history of Danzig, which, fortunately for brevity, falls into well-marked periods. Though of immemorial importance from its situation in the delta of the Vistula, Danzig's recorded history dates from about a thousand years ago, when it was quite definitely and admittedly a Slav settlement—that is, it was

inhabited by some tribe or tribes belonging to that part of the Slav race later identified as Polish. From that date up to 1814 Danzig, through all changes of fortune, was always conscious, sometimes more and sometimes less so, of its Polish origin, connections, and affinities. In the long and bitter struggle between the Slav and the Teuton on the shores of the Baltic, Danzig played a considerable part. In the old Slav days it was called Gdansk, which is the name the Poles still give it. Early in the fourteenth century, after much fighting, in the course of which Danzig had various alien as well as home-grown masters, it passed under Germanic rule, which continued for about a hundred and fifty years, and the city began to be known as Danzig or Dantsic, evidently corruptions of its Slav appellation.

Next comes the Hanseatic period, when Danzig, having shaken off the tyranny of the Teutonic Knights, figures as a Free City, but under the aegis of Poland, on whose second partition, in 1793, it became Prussian. A little later it fell under the sway of Napoleon, but in 1814 it was ceded to Prussia. There can be small doubt that up to that date Danzig was far more Polish than anything else, certainly far more Polish than German. Those interested in this subject will find it very fully discussed in M. Simon Askenazy's book, *Danzig and Poland*, an English version of which was published in London in 1921. Naturally some discount must be made for Polish bias in this volume, but its conclusions may be taken as in the main correct. For more than a century after 1814 Danzig underwent Prussification in its most intensive form. It ranked as the capital of the province of West Prussia, and if part of its natural trade was diverted by German policy to Königsberg on the east and Stettin on the west, it found some compensation in a vastly enlarged ship-building industry, of which the Schichau dock-yard was the most important factor. And German Danzig remained till 1919, when it was made a Free City under the League of Nations.

III.

Is Danzig Polish or German? As its history shows, it has been both. During the Prussification period, 1814-1914, German colonists displaced many Danzigers, and at the time of the Armistice the city was probably more German than it had ever been before, for as the Great War went on, it developed into a centre of munition industries, which were staffed and manned by thousands imported from elsewhere in the German Empire. Up till 1814 the population of Danzig must have been a good deal mixed. Besides Polish and German elements there was an English strain, typified by the beautiful English House, a sixteenth-century building in the Brodbänkengasse; and

there was a much stronger Scottish strain, which gave (and still gives) the names of Old Scotland and New Scotland to two of the city's suburbs. English or Scottish descent can be traced plainly enough in the names of some of Danzig's inhabitants. But to-day one has to be in the town for only a few minutes to be sure that to most intents and purposes the city is German. It speaks German and transacts its business in German. The vast majority of the shops display German names and signs above them. Not one person in twenty talks Polish. At the elections to the Volkstag or Parliament of the Free City held in November, 1923, the Poles were able to poll only 4600 votes out of a total of 165,000 cast, and to secure but 5 seats out of a total of 120.

To be just, I am bound to add that among representative Danzigers I found a dislike of and a certain contempt for the Poles—which may or may not be well-grounded, but seemed to me to be built very largely on the assumption that Poland is an unstable quantity politically, and may even perish as it did before. However that may be, it is quite impossible to ignore the numerous landmarks the Poles have left in Danzig of their former rule and intimate contact with the whole life of the city. For example, the White Eagle of Poland spreads its wings in the Council Chamber of the Rathaus or Town Hall, which has a graceful spire, on whose summit stands a statue of the Polish king, Sigismund Augustus; while on the lower part of the façade of the Artushof, near by, are medallion portraits of Sigismund III. and his son Ladislaus IV. The works of Polish artists, notably of Stryowski, himself a Danziger, hang in the galleries and decorate the public buildings. There is a significance in the fact that these Polish landmarks are taken good care of, as it demonstrates that Danzig in the past had no reason to complain of Polish sovereignty. It undoubtedly is the case that the city attained its golden age when Poland was its suzerain. What fate is in store for Danzig now?

Articles 100 to 108 of the Treaty of Versailles provide that Danzig, with the adjoining territory, shall be a Free City, controlled by a High Commissioner appointed by the League of Nations, and shall have a Constitution guaranteed by the League. The area of the Free City is 745 square miles, and its population about 365,000. Besides Danzig, Zoppot, a gay and fashionable watering place, with some 18,000 residents, is the only town of importance, but there are two or three little towns. The Free City has a seafront of 35 miles, on which there are no fewer than nine or ten bathing resorts—which, in its way, is surely a record! One or two tiny islands are being thrown up in Danzig Bay by the silt from the Vistula, and the Free City has promptly determined to annex them. In 1920 Danzig was proclaimed a Free City, and

a Constitution was drawn up, and approved and guaranteed by the League of Nations.

The charter of Danzig contains, however, certain reservations in favour of Poland, of which, perhaps, the most striking is, that the foreign relations of the Free City are to be conducted by Poland. Danzig is included within the Polish Customs frontiers. Poland is guaranteed the free use of and right to develop and improve all waterways, docks, basins, wharves and other works within the Free City, as well as given specific rights on the Vistula, and over the whole railway system of Danzig. Above all, the Free City is bound by the Treaty to show no unfavourable discrimination with respect to the Poles. Two treaties, or rather conventions, embodying the foregoing points have been negotiated between Danzig and Poland, but there has been considerable friction nevertheless. The Free City has a parliament, consisting of a popular chamber of a hundred and twenty members, and a senate of twenty-two members, of whom one is the President and another is the Vice-President, the former directing the routine of the administration. But the real power is exercised by the High Commissioner, appointed by the League of Nations. He acts as referee or arbiter, and decides disputed matters as between the Danzigers and the Poles; he has had the support of the League in his efforts to hold the scales even, and the feeling is general that he has been strictly impartial. It is worthy of note that all the High Commissioners so far have been British. The port of Danzig is administered by a Harbour Control Commission of five Danzigers and five Poles, with a neutral as chairman—at present a Swiss engineer fills the post.

IV.

Although the arrangements which have been come to since 1920 by the parties concerned work more or less smoothly, they satisfy neither the Danzigers nor the Poles. If the Free City were genuinely independent and absolutely Danziger—neither German nor Polish—a good defence could be offered of the present régime. The trouble is that Danzig, call it sovereign state, Free City, or what you like, remains in its outlook nothing more or less than an outpost of Germany. Its local government is frankly of the Junker type, which is so strong in the neighbouring East Prussia, and the parties in its Volkstag are much the same as those of the Reichstag. Its President is a former German official, and is more than suspected of being in closest touch with Berlin or even with Ludendorff and the Extremists. It would be different if it were under Poland, but as things are Danzig looks to Germany. And it does this despite the great governing fact of the economic situation, though it is by that it will finally stand

or fall. As I have already said, the hinterland of Danzig is Poland, and there is no other. If the Poles will not trade with or through the port Danzig will shrink into a small, moribund place.

Except on the sea the Free City is almost entirely surrounded by Polish territory—the 'Corridor,' the tract of land lying between Germany and East Prussia, which was given back to Poland by the Versailles Treaty. I say given back, for before the partitions this Corridor was in existence, its sole port being Danzig. Under the treaty the Corridor reaches the Baltic, but does not contain a port, for Danzig has been excluded from it. So dissatisfied are the Poles that they have actually begun the construction of an entirely new port at Gdynia, just outside the frontier of the Free City on the north-west. The threat to Danzig is obvious, and needs no elaboration. The new port, which will have to be dug out of the solid ground, just as Libau, Tsarist Russia's naval base in the Baltic, was dug out, will cost many millions, but very strong French iron and steel interests are already engaged in the undertaking. A Polish friend tells me that the intention regarding Gdynia is to complete, not to compete with, Danzig, but I question whether the Danzigers will regard it quite in that way, though they appear at the moment to make light of it.

A few miles higher up the Baltic lies the port of Memel, which presents a certain analogy to Danzig. In the dim past Memel was Lithuanian, but at the time of the Armistice, as for many years previously, it was as German or Germanised a place as Danzig. Immediately around it was a small block of territory, which may conveniently be called Memelland, that in the main retained its Lithuanian character. Naturally that was taken into account, but was not the chief reason why Lithuania was recently given sovereignty over Memel—it was the fact, as stated by the Allied and Associated Powers to the German Delegation at Versailles on 16th June 1919, 'the port of Memel is the only sea outlet for Lithuania.' Memelland, including Memel, has been given autonomy under the Government of Lithuania; it is not a sovereign state. Now, Memel is not only Lithuania's sole outlet to the sea, but it has no hinterland apart from Lithuania.

How similar is the position with regard to Danzig and Poland. Parity of reasoning infallibly suggests a similar political accommodation respecting them. Had Danzig been united to Poland, as Memel to Lithuania, its economic interests, which, as already indicated, are Polish, would have worked in a perfectly natural way for closer and closer union, as, I think, will be the case with Memel and Lithuania. But orienting itself to Germany, Danzig pulls away from Poland, in defiance of its plain economic interests. It is an unfortunate situation, and contains a real menace to peace. Danzig thus continues

to be the Danger Spot of Europe. There is another point on which I merely touch. As a sovereign state Danzig maintains a host of officials, which would not be necessary were it under Poland; consequently, taxation is very heavy and the cost of living proportionately high.

My personal hope is that the Free City, following the example of her prototype in the Middle Ages, will one day voluntarily place herself under the sovereignty of Poland, and for much the same compelling cause—her vital interests. What has she to expect from Germany?

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

By JOHN BUCHAN, Author of *John Burnet of Barns*, *Greenmantle*, &c.

CHAPTER V.—continued.

NIGHT fell, cool and cloudless, and the gillies went on their patrols. Carnmore was their only beat, and they returned one at a time to snatch a few hours' sleep. At dawn they went out again—with the colonel, but without Alan, who was to follow after he had had his ration of sleep. It was arranged that the two girls and Junius Bandicott should spend the day on Carnbeg by way of extra precautions, though if a desperate man made the assault there, it was not likely that Junius, who knew nothing of deer, and had no hillcraft, would be able to stop him.

Janet woke in low spirits, and her depression increased as the morning advanced. She was full of vague forebodings, and of an irritable unrest to which her steady nerves had hitherto been a stranger. She wished she were a man and could be now on Carnmore, for Carnbeg she was convinced was out of danger. Junius, splendid in buckskin breeches and a russet sweater, she regarded with disfavour; he was a striking figure, but out of keeping with the hills, the obvious amateur, and she longed for the halting and guileful Sir Archie. Nor was her temper improved by the conduct of her companions. Agatha and Junius seemed to have an inordinate amount to say to each other, and their conversation was idiotic to the ears of a third party. Their eyes were far more on each other than on the landscape, and their telescopes were never in use. But it mattered little, for Carnbeg slept in a primordial peace. Only pipits broke the silence; only a circling merlin made movement in a spell-bound world. There were some hinds on the west side of Craig Dhu, but no stag showed—as was natural, the girl reflected, for in this weather, and thus early in the season, the stags would be on the high tops of Carnmore. John Macnab had chosen rightly if he wanted a shot, but there were three gillies and her father to prevent him from getting his beast away.

At luncheon, which was eaten by the Cail-leach's Well, Junius took to quoting poetry, and Agatha to telling, very charmingly, the fairy-tales of the glens. To Janet it all seemed wrong; this was not an occasion for literary

philandering, when the credit of Glenraden was at stake. But even she was forced to confess that nothing was astir in the mossy wilderness. She climbed to the top of Craig Dhu, and had a long spy, but, except for more hinds and one small knobber, living thing there was none. As the afternoon drew on, she drifted away from the two, and they, being engrossed with each other, did not notice her departure.

She wandered through the deep heather of the Maam to where the great woods began that dipped to the Raden glen. It was pleasant walking in the cool shade of the pines on turf which was half thyme and milkwort and eye-bright, and presently her spirits rose. Now and then on some knuckle of heath-covered rock which rose above the trees she would halt, and, stretched at full length, would spy the nooks of the Home beat. There was no lack of deer there. She picked up one group and then another in the aisles and clearings of the woods, and there were shootable stags among them.

A report like a rifle shot suddenly startled her. Then she remembered old Mr Bandicott down in the haugh, and, turning her glance in that direction, saw a thin cloud of blue smoke floating away from the Piper's Ring.

Slowly she worked her way downhill, aiming at the haugh about a mile upstream from the excavators. Once a startled hind and calf sprang up from her feet, and once an old fox slipped out of a pile of rocks and revived thoughts of Warwickshire and her problematical hunter. Soon she was not more than three hundred feet above the stream level, and found a bracken-clad hillock where she could lie and watch the scene. There was a roebuck feeding just below her, a roebuck with fine horns, and it amused her to see the beast come nearer and nearer, since the wind was behind him. He got within five yards of the girl, who lay mute as a stone; then some impulse made him look up and meet her eye, and in a second he had streaked into cover.

Amid that delicious weather and in that home of peace Janet began to recapture her usual mirthfulness. She had been right; Carnmore was the place John Macnab would select, unless

his heart had failed him, and on Carnmore he would get a warm reception. There was no need to worry any longer about John Macnab. Her thoughts went back to Agatha. Clearly Junius Bandicott was in love with her, and probably she would soon be in love with Junius Bandicott. No one could call it anything but a most suitable match, but Janet was vaguely unhappy about it, for it meant a break in their tiny household and the end of a long and affectionate, if occasionally tempestuous, comradeship. She would be very lonely at Glenraden without Agatha, and what would Agatha do when transplanted to a foreign shore, Agatha for whom the world was bounded by her native hills? She began to figure to herself what America was like, and as her pictures had no basis of knowledge they soon became fantastic, and merged into dreams. The drowsy afternoon world laid its spell upon the girl and she fell asleep.

She woke half-an-hour later with the sound of a shot in her ear. It set her scrambling to her feet till she remembered the excavators at the Piper's Ring, who were out of the sight of the knoll on which she stood, somewhat on her right rear. Reassured, she lazily scanned the sleeping haugh, with the glittering Raden in the middle distance, and beyond, the wooded slopes of the other side of the glen. She noticed a small troop of deer splashing through the shallows. Had they been scared by Mr Bandicott's explosion? That was odd, for the report had been faint and they were up wind from it.

They were badly startled, since they raced through the river and disappeared in the farther woods. . . . Suddenly a thought made her heart beat wildly, and she raked the ground with her glass.

There was something tawny on a patch of turf in a little hollow near the stream. A moment of anxious spying showed her that it was a dead stag. The report had not come from Mr Bandicott's dynamite, but from a rifle.

Down the hillside like a startled hind went Janet. She was choking with excitement, and had no clear idea in her head except a determination that John Macnab should not lay hand on the stricken beast. If he had pierced their defences, and got his shot, he would at any rate not get the carcass off the ground. No thought of the stakes and her hunter occurred to her—only of Glenraden and its inviolate honour.

Almost at once she lost sight of the place where the stag lay. She was now on the low ground of the haugh, in a wilderness of bogs and hollows and overgrown boulders, with half a mile of rough country between her and her goal. Soon she was panting hard. Presently she had a stitch in her side, her eyes dimmed with fatigue, and her hat flew off and was left behind. It was abominable ground for speed, for there were heather-roots to trip the foot, and mires to

engulf it, and noxious stones over which a runner must go warily or break an ankle. On with bursting heart went Janet, slipping, floundering, more than once taking wild tosses. Her light shoes grew leaden, her thin skirts a vast entangling quilt; her side ached and her legs were fast numbing. . . . Then, from a slight rise, she had a glimpse of the Raden water now very near, and the sight of a moving head. Her speed redoubled, and miraculously her aches ceased—the fire of battle filled her, as it had burned in her progenitors when they descended on their foes through the moonlit passes.

Suddenly she was at the scene of the dark deed. There lay the dead stag, and beside it a tall man with his shirt-sleeves turned up and a knife in his hand. That the miscreant should be calmly proceeding to the gralloch was like a fiery stimulant to Janet's spirit. Gone was every vestige of fatigue, and she descended the last slope like a mænad.

'Stop!' she sobbed. 'Stop, you villain!'

The man started at her voice, and drew himself up. He saw a small dishevelled girl, hatless, her fair locks fast coming down, who, in the attitude of a tragedy queen, stood with uplifted and accusing hand. She saw a tall man, apparently young, with a very ruddy face, a thatch of sandy hair, and ancient disreputable clothes.

'You are beaten, John Macnab,' cried the panting voice. 'I forbid you to touch that stag. I—'

The man seemed to have grasped the situation, for he shut the knife and slipped it back in his pocket. Also he smiled. Also he held both hands above his head. '*Kamerad!*' he said. 'I acknowledge defeat, Miss Raden.'

Then he picked up his rifle and his discarded jacket, and turned and ran for it. She heard him splashing through the river, and in three minutes he was swallowed up in the farther woods.

The victorious Janet sank gasping on the turf. She wanted to cry, but changed her mind and began to laugh hysterically. After that she wanted to sing. She, and she alone, had defeated the marauder, while every man about the place was roosting idly on Carnmore. Now, at last, she remembered that hunter who would carry her in the winter over the soft Warwickshire pastures. That was good, but to have beaten John Macnab was better. . . . And then just a shade of compunction tempered her triumph. She had greatly liked the look of John Macnab. He was a gentleman—his voice bore witness to the fact, and the way he had behaved. *Kamerad!* He must have fought in the War, and had no doubt done well there. Also, he was beyond doubt a sportsman. The stag was just the kind of beast that a sportsman would kill—a switch-horn, going back in condition—and he had picked

him out of a herd of better beasts. The shot was a workmanlike one—through the neck. . . . And the audacity of him! His wits had beaten them all, for he had chosen the Home beat, which every one had dismissed as inviolable. Truly a foeman worthy of her steel, whom like all good fighters after victory she was disposed to love.

Crouched beside the dead stag, she slowly recovered her breath. What was the next move to be? If she left the beast might not John Macnab return and make off with it? No, he wouldn't. He was a gentleman and would not go back on his admission of defeat. But she was anxious to drain the last drops of her cup of triumph, to confront the idle garrison of Carnmore on its return with the tangible proof of her victory. The stag should be lying at the Castle door, and she herself waiting beside it to tell her tale. She might borrow Mr Bandicott's men to move it.

Hastily doing up her hair, she climbed out of the hollow to the little ridge which gave a prospect over the haugh. There before her, not a hundred yards distant, were the old cart and the white pony of Fish Benjie, looking as if they had been part of the landscape since the beginning of time.

Benjie had wormed his way far into the moss, and was more than half a mile from the road. It appeared that he had finished his day's work on the besoms, for his pony was in the shafts, and he himself was busy loading the cart with the fruits of his toil. She called out to him, but got no reply, and it was not till she stood beside him that he looked up from his work.

'Benjie,' she said, 'come at once. I want you to help me. Have you been here long?'

'Since nine this mornin', lady.' Benjie's face was as impassive as a stump of oak.

'Didn't you hear a shot?'

'I heard a gude wheen shots. The auld man up at the Piper's Ring has been blazin' awa'.'

'But close to you? Didn't you see a man—not five minutes ago?'

'Ay. I seen a man. I seen him crossin' the water. I thought he was a gentleman from the Castle. He had a gun wi' him.'

'It was a poacher, Benjie,' said Janet dramatically. 'The poacher I wanted you to look out for. He has killed a stag, too, but I drove him away. You must help me to get the beast home. Can you get your cart over that knowe?'

'Fine, lady.'

Without more words Benjie took the reins and started the old pony. The cart floundered a little in a wet patch, tittuped over the tussocks, and descended with many jolts to the neighbourhood of the stag—Janet dancing in front of it like an Israelitish priest before the Ark of the Covenant.

The late afternoon was very hot, for down in the haugh the wind had died away. The stag

weighed not less than fifteen stone, and before they finished Janet would have called them tons. Yet the great task of transhipment was accomplished. The pony was taken out of the shafts, and the cart tilted, and after some strenuous minutes the carcass was heaved and pushed and levered on to its floor. Janet, hanging on to the shafts, with incredible exertions pulled them down, while Benjie—a tiny Atlas—prevented the beast slipping back by bearing its weight on his shoulders. The back-board was put in its place, the mass of brooms and heather piled on the stag, the pony restored to the shafts, and the cortege was ready for the road. Benjie had his face adorned with a new scratch and a quantity of deer's blood, Janet had nobly torn her jumper and one stocking, but these were trivial casualties for so great an action.

'Drive straight to the Castle, and tell them to leave the beast before the door. You understand, Benjie? Before the door—not in the larder. I'm going to cut home through the woods, for I'm an awful sight.'

'Ye look very bonny, lady,' said the gallant Benjie as he took up the reins.

Janet watched the strange outfit lumber from the hollow and nearly upset over a hidden boulder. It had the appearance of a moving peat-stack, with a solitary horn jutting heavenwards like a withered branch. Once again the girl subsided on the heather and laughed till she ached.

The highway by the Larrig side slept in the golden afternoon. Not a conveyance had disturbed its peace save the baker's cart from Inverlarrig, which had passed about three o'clock. About half-past five a man crossed it, a man who had descended from the hill, and who had used the stepping-stones where Sir Archibald Roy-lance had come to grief. He was a tall man with a rifle, hatless, untidy, and very warm, and he seemed to desire to be unobserved, for he made certain that the road was clear before he ventured on it. Once across, he found shelter in a clump of broom, whence he could command a long stretch of the highway, almost from Glenraden gates to the bridge of Larrig.

Mr Palliser-Yeates, having reached sanctuary—for behind him now lay the broken hill-sides of Crask—mopped his brow and lit a pipe. He did not seem to be greatly distressed at the result of the afternoon. Indeed he laughed—not wildly like Janet, but quietly, and with philosophy. 'A very neat hold-up,' he reflected. 'Gad, she came on like a small destroying-angel. . . . That's the girl Archie's been talking about. . . . A very good girl. She looked as if she'd have taken on an army corps. . . . I suppose that was the right way for the thing to end. . . . Jolly romantic ending—might have come out of a novel. Only it should have been Archie, and a prospect of wedding bells—

what? . . . Anyhow we'd have won out all right but for the girl, and I don't mind being beaten by her——'

His meditations were interrupted by the sound of furious wheels on the lone highway, and he cautiously raised his head to see an old horse and an older cart being urged towards him at a canter. The charioteer was a small boy, and above the cart sides projected a stag's horn.

Forgetting all precautions, he stood up, and at the sight of him Benjie, not without difficulty, checked the ardour of his much-belaboured beast, and stopped before him.

'I've gotten it,' Benjie whispered hoarsely; 'the stag's in the cairt. The lassie and me histed him in, and she tell't me to drive to the Castle; but when I was out o' sight o' her, I took the auld road through the wud, and here I am. We've gotten the stag off Glenraden ground, and we can hide him up at Crask, and I'll slip down i' the cairt afore mornin' and leave him ootby the Castle wi' a letter from John Macnab. Fegs, it was a near thing.'

Benjie's voice rose into a shrill pean, his disreputable face shining with unholy joy. And then something in Palliser-Yeates's eyes cut short his triumph.

'Benjie, you little fool, right about turn at once. I'm much obliged to you, but it can't be done. It isn't the game, you know. I chucked up the sponge when Miss Raden challenged me, and I can't go back on that. Off you go to Glenraden and hand over the stag. Quick,

before you're missed . . . And look here—you're a first-class fellow, and I'm enormously grateful to you. Here is something for your trouble.'

Benjie's face grew very red as he swung his equipage round. 'I see,' he said. 'If ye like to be beat by a lassie, dinna blame me. I'm no' wantin' your money.'

The next moment the fish-cart was clattering in the other direction.

To a mystified and anxious girl, pacing the gravel in front of the Castle, entered the fish-cart. The old horse seemed in the last stages of exhaustion, and the boy who drove it was a dejected and sparrow-like figure.

'Where in the world have you been?' Janet demanded.

'I was run awa' wi', lady,' Benjie whined. 'The auld powny didna like the smell o' the stag. He bolted in the wud, and I didna get him stoppit till verra near the Larrig brig.'

'Poor little Benjie! Now you're going to Mrs Fraser to have the best tea you ever had in your life, and you shall also have ten shillings.'

'Thank you kindly, lady, but I canna stop for tea. I maun awa' down to Inverlarrig for my fish.' But his hand closed readily on the note, for he had no compunction in taking money from one who had made him to bear the bitterness of incomprehensible defeat.

(Continued on page 173.)

THE LOST ATLANTIS.

FRESH LIGHT ON THE PROBLEM.

By LEWIS SPENCE, Author of *The Problem of Atlantis*.

I.

RECENT volcanic disturbances in the bed of the Atlantic Ocean have caused submarine upheavals so widespread and so profound that the more conservative school of geologists, who once airily dismissed the arguments of those who believed in the destruction of the lost Atlantis by similar agencies, may now be hard put to it to maintain their attitude of indifference. In August 1923 a vessel belonging to the Western Union Telegraph Company was searching for a lost cable which had been laid twenty-five years before, and the responsible officers found to their amazement, on taking soundings at the exact spot where it had been laid down, that the surface of the ocean-bed there had risen during that time by nearly two and a quarter miles.

The bed of the Atlantic is, indeed, the most unstable portion of the earth's surface. Its eastern region, says M. Pierre Termier, Director

of Science of the Geological Chart of France, is a great volcanic zone. In its European-African depression sea-volcanoes and insular volcanoes are abundant. Its islands are largely formed of lava. The same formation occurs in its American or western region. The bed of the Atlantic, says M. Termier, is still in movement in the extreme eastern zone for a space of about 1875 miles in breadth, which embraces Iceland, the Azores, the Canaries, Madeira and the Cape Verde Islands. In any part of this area unrecorded submarine cataclysms may be taking place at any time.

M. Termier is only one of a growing band of geologists who devoutly believe that a great Atlantean continent formerly existed. With the gradual collection of new evidence relative to the geology and the biology of the Atlantic region the theory concerning the existence of such a land-mass has taken on an entirely new complexion. The evidence in question does not depend upon the misty surmises of visionaries

or the dogmatic assertions of that type of antiquary who twists tradition and philology into the semblance of testimony, but on considerations the most rational and credible. That an Atlantean continent once occupied the present oceanic gulf between Europe and America is a scientific truth now accepted by geologists of all shades of opinion, and the only question of debate which still remains has reference to the precise period in geological history at which this continent flourished.

M. Termier believes that 'a North Atlantic continent comprising Russia, Scandinavia, Great Britain, Greenland, and Canada, to which was added later a southern band made up of a large part of Central and Western Europe and an immense portion of the United States,' formerly existed. 'There was also,' he says, 'a South Atlantic, or African-Brazilian, continent, extending northward to the southern border of the Atlas, eastward to the Persian Gulf and Mozambique Channel, westward to the eastern border of the Andes and to the sierras of Colombia and Venezuela. Between the two continents passed the Mediterranean depression, that ancient maritime furrow which has formed an escarp about the earth since the beginning of geologic time, and which we see so deeply marked in the present Mediterranean, the Caribbean Sea, and the Sunda or Flores Sea. A chain of mountains broader than the chain of the Alps, and perhaps in some parts as high as the majestic Himalayas, once lifted itself on the land-enclosed shore of the North Atlantic continent, embracing the Vosges, the Central Plateau of France, Brittany, the south of England and of Ireland, and also Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and, in the United States, all the Appalachian region.'

The end of this continental era, thinks M. Termier, came during the Tertiary Period, when the mass, bounded on the south by a chain of mountains, was submerged long before the collapse of those volcanic lands of which the Azores are the last vestiges. The South Atlantic ocean was likewise occupied for many thousands of centuries by a great continent now engulfed beneath the sea. These movements of depression probably occurred at several periods. In the Europe of the Tertiary era the movement was developing which gave rise to the Alpine mountain chain. How far did this chain extend into the Atlantic region? Did some fragments of it rise high enough to lift themselves for some centuries above the waters? This question M. Termier answers in the affirmative.

He believes that the geology of the whole Atlantic region has singularly changed in the course of the later periods of the earth's history. During the Secondary Period there were numerous depressions, the Tertiary Period saw the annihilation of the continental areas, and subsequently there appeared a new design,

the general direction of which was north and south. Near the African continent, he holds, there have certainly been important movements during Quaternary times, when other changes undoubtedly took place in the true oceanic region. 'Geologically speaking,' he says, 'Plato's theory of Atlantis is highly probable. . . . It is entirely reasonable to believe that long after the opening of the Strait of Gibraltar certain of these emerged lands still existed, and among them a marvellous island, separated from the African continent by a chain of other smaller islands. One thing alone remains to be proved—that the cataclysm which caused this island to disappear was subsequent to the appearance of man in Western Europe. The cataclysm is undoubted. Did men then live who could withstand the reaction and transmit the memory of it? That is the whole question. I do not believe it at all insoluble, though it seems to me that neither geology nor zoology will solve it. These two sciences appear to have told all they can tell, and it is from anthropology, from ethnography, and, lastly, from oceanography that I am now awaiting the final answer.'

II.

Professor R. F. Scharff of Dublin, who has perhaps contributed more valuable data to the literature of Atlantean research than any other living scientist, concludes that Madeira and the Azores were connected with Portugal in Miocene times, when man had already appeared in Europe, and that from Morocco to the Canary Islands and thence to South America stretched a vast land which extended southward as far as St Helena. This great continent, he believes, began to subside before the Miocene or late Tertiary Period. But he holds that its northern portions persisted until the Azores and Madeira became isolated from Europe. 'I believe,' he says, 'that they were still connected in early Pleistocene (Ice Age) times with the continents of Europe and Africa, at a time when man had already made his appearance in Western Europe, and was able to reach the islands by land.'

Among those modern geologists who uphold the Atlantean theory is Professor Edward Hull, whose investigations have led him to conclude that the Azores are the peaks of a submerged continent which flourished in the Pleistocene period. 'The flora and fauna of the two hemispheres,' says Professor Hull, 'support the geological theory that there was a common centre in the Atlantic where life began, and that during and prior to the glacial epoch great land-bridges north and south spanned the Atlantic Ocean.' He adds: 'I have made this deduction by a careful study of the soundings as recorded on the Admiralty charts.' Dr Hull also holds the view that at the time this Atlantic continent existed there was also a great Antillean continent or ridge shutting off the

Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico from what is called the Gulf Stream.

These considerations would appear to sustain the contention of modern geologists that the bed of the Atlantic has undergone constant change, and that, indeed, it may have risen and sunk many times since the period of the last Ice Age, as Sir William Dawson believed. In the summer of 1898, a ship employed for the laying of the cable from Brest to Cape Cod was trying to fish up a broken strand at a point about 500 miles north of the Azores, and at a depth of about 1700 fathoms. The grappling-irons drew up soil and broken pieces of rock, which established the fact that the bottom of the sea at this latitude presents the characteristics of a mountainous country with high summits, steep slopes and deep valleys. They were evidently being caught on hard rocks, and drew up coarse striæ and small mineral splinters, fragments of an actual outcropping, sharp and irregular, a vitreous lava or tachylite, now preserved at the Musée de l'Ecole des Mines, at Paris. This species of lava, as is well known, can solidify into such a condition only under atmospheric pressure. If formed under 3000 metres of water it would have become crystallised, as has been proved by the researches of Lacroix, who examined the lava of Mont Pelée in Martinique, which was vitreous when it congealed in the open air, but became crystallised when cooled under a mass of previously solidified rocks. The inference is that the bottom of the Atlantic 562 miles north of the Azores was, therefore, covered with lava which was once above water, and the ruggedness of this shows that the sinking of the land to 3000 metres below the sea followed suddenly upon the emission of lava. Otherwise atmospheric erosion would have levelled inequalities and planed down the entire surface. This region is set in the zone of Atlantic instability, therefore it is a fair conclusion that it was recently submerged, probably during the epoch which the geologists call the present, says Termier, because it is so recent.

From such an array of geological evidence it may be conceded that we are justified in concluding that the hypothesis of a formerly existing land-mass in the Atlantic Ocean is by no means based on mere surmise. The fact that geologists of distinction have risked their reputations by testifying in no uncertain manner to the reality of a former Atlantean continent should surely give pause to those who impatiently refuse even to examine the probabilities of the arguments so ably upheld. But the most significant consideration which emerges is that this expert evidence is almost entirely in favour of the existence of a comparatively recent land-mass or masses in the Atlantic, and if we take into consideration the whole of the evidence, and the nature of its sources, it does not seem beyond the bounds

of human credence that at a period probably no earlier than that mentioned by Plato in his *Critias*, viz. 9600 B.C., this ancient continent was still in partial existence, but in process of disintegration—that an island of considerable size, the remnant, perhaps, of the African 'shelf,' still lay opposite the entrance to the Mediterranean, and that lesser islands connected it with Europe, Africa, and, perhaps, with our own shores.

III.

But we have even more valuable evidence from other sources than from geology alone. The evidence afforded from biological research is even more remarkable. Professor Scharff has made it clear that the larger mammalia of the Atlantic islands were not imported, and states that his endeavours to trace 'the history of their origin on the islands point rather to some of them, at any rate, having reached the latter in the normal way, which is by a land-connection with Europe.'

In the case of the rabbit, for instance, the presence of large hawks or buzzards observed by the discoverers of the Azores in 1439 led to the islands receiving the name of Açores, or Hawk Islands. Such birds usually live on mice, rats, and young rabbits. Indeed, it seems to be substantiated that the existence of the Azores had already been known to earlier navigators, for in a book published in 1345 by a Spanish friar the Azores are referred to, and the names of the several islands given. On an atlas dated 1385, and published at Venice, some of the islands are indicated by name, as Capraria, or Isle of Goats, now San Miguel; Columbia, or Isle of Doves, now Pico; Li Congi, Rabbit Island, now Flores; and Corvi Marini, or Isle of Sea Crows, now Corvo. Drouet has directed attention to the goat of San Miguel, with its antelope-like horns. This nomenclature given prior to the discovery—the 'official' discovery of the islands, that is—seems to justify the assumption that mammals such as the wild goat and the rabbit flourished there at that period, and reached the islands from Europe by a land-connection.

Certain zoologists recognise a distinct division of the marine area of the globe as consisting of the middle portion of the Atlantic, which they called 'Mesatlantic.' Two genera of mammals are assigned as characteristic of this region—the Monachus, or Monk Seal, and the Sirenian Manatus. Neither of these animals frequents the open ocean. Their several species inhabit the Mediterranean, the West Indies, and the coasts and estuaries of the West African and East South American sea-boards. The range of these marine animals seems to many zoologists to imply that their ancestors have spread along some coast-line which formerly united the Old World and the New at no very distant period.

The reptilian fauna of the Atlantic islands is almost entirely European in character. Among

the lizards, a North African and a Chilian form are allied. The large family of the burrowing *Amphisbænidae* is absolutely confined to America, Africa, and the Mediterranean region. In his monograph of the mollusca of the Atlantic islands, Mr T. V. Wollaston drew attention to the fact that the Mediterranean element is much more traceable in the Canaries than in the other groups of islands. He believes that the Atlantic islands have originated from the breaking-up of a land which was once more or less continuous, and which had been inter-colonised along ridges and tracts now lost beneath the ocean.

Professor Simroth, writing on the similarity between the slugs of Spain, Portugal, North Africa, and the Canaries, concluded that there was probably a broad land-connection between these four countries, and that it must have persisted until comparatively recent times. Dr W. Kobelt, who formerly ridiculed the Atlantean theory, later altered his views. Comparing the European with the West Indian and Central American faunas, he points out that the land shells on the two opposite sides of the Atlantic certainly imply an ancient connection between the Old World and the New, which became ruptured only toward the close of the latter part of the Tertiary Period. Dr von Ihering lays stress on the fact that no malacologist nowadays could explain the presence of these continental molluscs on the Atlantic islands in any other way but by their progression on land. He is also strongly in favour of the theory of a former connection between Brazil and Africa on biological grounds.

Sixty per cent. of the butterflies and moths found in the Canaries are of Mediterranean origin, and twenty per cent. of these are to be found in America. Some crustaceans afford excellent proof of the justice of the Atlantean hypothesis. The genus *Platyarthrus* is represented by three species in Western Europe and North Africa, one in the Canaries and one in Venezuela. 'There is,' says Scharff, 'another group of crustacea which yields such decisive indications of the former land-connection between Africa and South America that scarcely

anything else is needed to put that theory on a firm basis. The group referred to is that of the fresh-water decapods, the species on both sides of the Atlantic showing a most remarkable affinity.'

The occurrence of earth-worms is a peculiarly reliable datum in fixing the former geographical relationship of any given region. The ocean is an insuperable barrier to earth-worms, and when it is found that those of the Atlantic islands are identical with European and North African forms, little more remains to be said as regards a former land-connection.

Experiments have shown that certain snails cannot withstand prolonged immersion in sea-water. Yet these species are found alike in Europe, America, and the Canary Islands. It is therefore manifest that they must have progressed thence by land. Many similar parallels could be drawn from plant life, if space permitted.

And what of the presence of man on the lost Atlantis? The greatest caution is, of course, necessary in dealing with this particular phase of the Atlantean theory. But it is by no means impossible that the Guanches of the Canary Islands, when discovered by the Spaniards, represented the last vestiges of Atlantean man. The origin of the Crô-Magnon race, which entered Europe by way of the Biscay region about 25,000 years ago, is unknown, and good reasons have been advanced to show that this people, who possessed a very high degree of art and civilisation, may have been immigrants from the land-mass of Atlantis, then in a condition of slow disintegration, and that they reached Europe by way of a still existing land-bridge. However that may be, the Guanches of the Canaries were classed by the late Lord Abercromby, René Verneau and others as undoubted Crô-Magnons, similar to those whose remains are found in early Pleistocene deposits in France and Spain. It is out of the question that they could have drifted to the Canaries from Europe, and it seems much more probable that, like the animals and plants of the islands they inhabited, they were marooned on the island-peaks of the drowned continent.

N A T - K A.

A TALE OF THE ESKIMO.

By CAPTAIN H. T. MUNN.

TRAGEDIES sometimes happen amongst the laughing, forgetful denizens of the Arctic, and sometimes murders are committed, which are none the less murders because they are unproven and unprovable. But all these things are soon forgotten by the Eskimo, unless a boy comes to manhood and has been taught how and by

whom his mother was done to death. Perhaps he does not care. Perhaps, on the other hand, he exacts the full blood penalty; but if so, stealthily, quietly, and alone—the others may suspect, but they say nothing.

'Tabow-eetay' (good-bye), said the trader, as the whale-boat pushed off from the landing;

'and remember, I want to get fox-skins for those rifles, the ammunition, tobacco, and supplies; foxes and plenty of them, or there will be trouble.'

Old Koik-shadu nodded. 'We will try,' he said—'we will try very hard.' The trader turned and walked thoughtfully back to the little house; he was an American, who had had many winters' experience amongst the Eskimo of Roes Welcome and Repulse Bay. 'Old Koik-shadu is straight enough,' he said to himself, 'and he'll probably keep the other two in line, though they are both bad scoundrels; but I think I was a fool to give them so much debt, all the same.' Sail was hoisted, and the Eskimo were soon under way on the forty-five mile crossing of Roes Welcome, from Point Fullerton to Southampton Island. Old Koik-shadu, the leader of the party, was at the helm. The other men were one-eyed Oo-look-see, who tended the sheet, a scowling, shifty-looking rascal, his appearance accentuated by his missing eye, and Shook-aloo, who sat forward the mast, a good-looking Portuguese half-breed, the adopted son of Koik-shadu, and half-brother to Oo-look-see, also a Portuguese half-breed. Amidships were the women, the children, and the dogs. Man-ee-to, the wife of Koik-shadu, was a middle-aged woman, with two young children, and said to be the worst scold and most evil-tongued Eskimo on the coast. Beside her sat old In-ny-to, her mother, second only to the daughter in vituperation, a withered, hideous old beldame. On the next thwart sat Nat-ka, Man-ee-to's daughter, a woman about twenty-five years of age, quiet and sad looking, for reasons to be set forth later; on her knee sat her boy, a lad of five or six years old. These sat aft the mast, women and children huddled together. Between the next thwarts sat Oog-na-lan, now Shook-aloo's wife, a big, ugly woman, with a forceful will; and with her were Ar-tee-targ, Oo-look-see's wife, her two children, and her wrinkled old mother, Oyar-arg-lan.

Nat-ka had reason to look sad. Till lately she had been Shook-aloo's wife; but he had tired of her and given her back to her mother with her boy, taking Oog-na-lan as wife in her place. It was said that Oog-na-lan was the one who had effected the change by putting a charm on Shook-aloo, and she was certainly far too jealous of the younger woman to allow him to keep her as his second wife, even if he wanted to. Twenty dogs, four tents, some sleds, deerskins, supplies, cooking utensils, and camp gear, completed the cargo of the overcrowded boat.

The cross between Portuguese and Eskimo is a common one to meet on the coast of Roes Welcome, for the American whalers frequented these waters in the 'seventies and 'eighties with their nondescript and often shanghaied crews. There are plenty of Portuguese sailing out of New Bedford yet to the Southern whaling

waters. The mixture of blood is a bad one; the callous cruelty, violent temper, and faithlessness of the Portuguese, added to the fickle, easily-swayed character of the Eskimo, makes the most undesirable and unreliable half-breed in the Arctic.

The journey commenced badly. A gale of wind came away as they neared the Southampton shore, and in beaching the boat it was badly stove—some of the gear was washed away and more damaged. It was mid-October, a stormy month in these latitudes; the ground was already covered with a light snow-fall and frozen hard. Here it was old Koik-shadu made his fatal mistake.

Finding no cariboo on the flat land which comprises the southern part of the island, he decided to keep north along the coast and depend on the few seal they could get, till the snow was hard enough for the dog-sleds. Had he but started across to the eastern side of the island, packing the dogs and taking as little as possible beyond food and ammunition, all would have been well, for the wet swampy lands and small lakes were frozen, and the snow was but light. It was 120 miles to the east side, where they knew other Eskimo, their relatives of the same tribe, would be found, and but 80 or 90 miles to a small trading-station, established the previous year, at which were some natives and a white man. But to the north old Koik-shadu thought he would find deer yet lingering on the low-lands, and if there were no other Eskimo trapping there this would be the place to take foxes; so northwards they travelled, by very short stages, getting an occasional deer or seal, but with hunger ever dogging their footsteps.

A month passed and the outlook was bad. They were about forty miles inland now, at the foot of the range of hills which form the northern and eastern sides of Southampton Island, but many dogs had died of starvation, and some had been killed for food. When an Eskimo kills a dog for food, he is very hungry, for on the dogs depends most often the possibility of obtaining cariboo. The children wailed incessantly for food, and Man-ee-to and old In-ny-to kept up a ceaseless railing, abusing Koik-shadu day and night, till the toupik and later the igloo, or snow-house, became unbearable, and the old man would wander about outside, preferring the cold and darkness to their bitter tongues.

The younger men got a few deer occasionally, far back in the hills, but it is doubtful if they were dividing them fairly with the rest, their own wives and children and Ar-tee-targ's old mother getting the larger share. Perhaps Shook-aloo might have wanted to give more to Nat-ka and her boy, possibly he did not care; some are like that, especially Portuguese half-breeds.

Old Koik-shadu was at his wits' end; his wits

indeed were leaving him under the lash of the two older women's merciless tongues. One morning he harnessed five skeleton-like dogs to a small sled, and started back to the boat, where some blubber had been cached. It was said he did not enter the igloo the previous night, but talked to himself and the Spirits, outside in the bitter cold. The kindly, gentle, old man never came back, for the railing tongues and crying children had done their work. Maybe he drove out on the moving pack to what a sane man must know would be certain death, in the mad hope of getting across to the station for food and help—God knows! Neither he nor his dogs were ever seen again.

The young men spent a few days looking for Koik-shadu in vain, and then returned to the igloo. What talk passed between them that night, only they ever can tell: but that Oo-look-see and Oog-na-lan's voices cast the die against the rest, there is little doubt. The man hated the old women in the other igloo for their evil tongues, and he was, be it remembered, a Portuguese half-breed. The woman hated her younger rival; she too was determined, callous, and savage for her children, as only a savage can be.

Next day it blew a blizzard, but stealthy preparations went forward in the larger igloo. A discarded wife rarely speaks to her late husband and never to her rival, nor will she enter their igloo, but Nat-ka seems to have divined their thoughts. Perhaps her mother-love helped her.

The following morning Oo-look-see and Shook-aloo came into the old women's igloo. It was Oo-look-see who spoke—'We are going back into the hills for deer,' he said. 'You must stay here, for we cannot all move together with so few dogs, but we will return with meat as soon as we kill any. We leave you an old rifle, in case a bear should come here. We shall not be away long.' The old women were silent. They had been told—they knew well—it was their doing that the old man had been driven away, and now they were afraid, and perhaps a little ashamed. Only Nat-ka spoke. Kissing her boy, she gave him to Shook-aloo, saying, 'Take him with you; he is small and will not make much difference, and he cannot wait for food much longer. Ar-tee-targ will keep him if—if Oog-na-lan does not want him. Ah, you *must* take him. Is he not your son, too?' Shook-aloo nodded. 'Yes,' he said, unsteadily. 'I will take him; it is better for him to come with us.'

Nat-ka stood outside her igloo when the party started. She did not speak to Oog-na-lan, but she called Shook-aloo to come to her, a very unusual thing, as has been shown, for a deserted wife to do. Looking him in the eyes, she said tensely, 'If my boy—our boy—dies, my spirit will never leave you in peace till you

are dead too. It is your life as well as his you have to guard. You will not return. Let me finish,' she said quickly, for he would have denied the terrible accusation. 'Oo-look-see and Oog-na-lan settled it last night, though Ar-tee-targ tried to stop them. See, she is crying over there now. I know I speak the truth—it does not matter.' Shook-aloo's weak, handsome face was working convulsively. 'Go!' she said quietly; 'but remember the words I have spoken to you, if you wish to see many more summers.'

Nat-ka watched them move off. God knows what her thoughts were; she was discarded, deserted, left to starve in this snowy waste, yet she asked nothing for herself. She knew what her life was fated to be in the igloo with Oog-na-lan's venomous hate and stronger arm if she joined the party. Her boy was safe, or at least had a chance of life, for Shook-aloo believed her words implicitly and would look after him. Then some day he would grow big and Ar-tee-targ would tell him, for Nat-ka was her friend. Then let Oo-look-see have a care when he was on a lonely hunt in the hills, or if he and the boy met in their kayaks far out on the bay, where none might see the Law of the North dealt out. Hating the older women for their venomous tongues, and too cowardly to kill them mercifully with a bullet, Oo-look-see had persuaded his weaker brother to leave them to starve, and with characteristic heedlessness of life and callous cruelty, left the unoffending younger woman and the two children to perish with them.

Nat-ka watched as they trailed slowly away, and on a rise of the land she saw them halt. After a minute's eager talk Shook-aloo ran back a few yards and beckoned her violently to come and join them. She stood like a statue watching him, and when, after a last effort, Shook-aloo turned and slowly joined the now moving party, she too turned with a choking sob to the igloo and crept inside.

Within one sleep—two days' travel—of the igloos the party camped, and for four months did not make their presence known to their friends to the eastward, or to the white trader and his Eskimos but two sleeps away. When they knew the deed was done, and the dead could tell no tales, the party came down to the trading-station, with a story—varied in detail from day to day—of their great starvation, which was ugly to hear, but was considerably belied by their appearance.

And what was the story of the igloos when at length they were visited? Man-ee-to had died the last, and the gnawed bones told the usual ghastly tale of a starvation camp: but one skull had a bullet hole in it, which could only have been self-inflicted—a shot through the roof of the mouth. It was Nat-ka's!

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE CULT OF SPORTSMANSHIP.

By A. W. THOMSON.

EXTRAORDINARY though it seems, some folk associate sportsmanship almost entirely with people who go fishing, shooting, hunting the fox, or who have a passion for outdoor life and games generally. Forgotten are those who, by age, or a decree of Providence, or general circumstances, cannot do these things, and yet, in their way, may be the very jolliest of sportsmen. After all, those who indulge in blood-sports (a vulgar term that should be hurled from our language), and the jolly game-lovers, are but lusty tribes of a large family. Surely there must be a finer definition comprehensive enough to be of universal utility and to make a universal appeal to the human heart.

To get nearer the thing, cheek by jowl if possible, if you love life and mankind in a hearty, sincere, and generous fashion, you are in this way sportsman enough. It is a title full of honour, a sort of *noblesse oblige*. Of course, if you belong to the grand army of sports and games devotees, your sportsmanship is popularly apparent: it is of the common or garden everyday type, and needs little comment. Again, if you dearly love to truckle with those righteous uncertainties known, in any or all of their variety, as sporting chances, you are yet another class of sportsman. But, mark you, if you be a sportsman of this category, you will be faced with the truth of the old adage that it is better to be born lucky than rich. This type really must scramble over its fences somehow, and, as it were, finish respectably within the hunt. Otherwise, quite a number of folk, arguing that nothing succeeds like success, will have it that it is a poor enough type after all. If you apply this sort of sportsmanship to affairs, and cannot take your obstacles, you are in some danger of taking a toss into the bankruptcy court, or, as a lighter fall, into some degree of obscurity. As practical life is a thousand times fuller of obstacles than any hunting field, the cult of sportsmanship here presents to you one of its most useful functions, schooling to face and overcome these obstacles.

You may love horses, dogs, guns, fishing-rods, golf, cricket, football, tennis (not to speak of croquet), and your bookmaker so long as he loses, even as you love your wife. In common acceptance you are thus a sportsman of the

deepest dye. Yet you would think that this virtue of passionate large-heartedness, though it makes you very sporting indeed, would have to be combined with other delectable attributes to blossom you as a sportsman-de-luxe. To love those things in fatuous fashion is something like growing the seeds of sportsmanship to wood instead of to flower. Your sportsmanship inclines without care and circumspection to defeat its own end. On the other hand, if you jump from the frivolous right across to the heroic by setting out to climb Mount Everest, or to navigate Niagara, or to cross the Atlantic in a cockle-shell or an aeroplane, you are carrying the thing to another extreme, also not without drawbacks. It is magnificent and heroic practice of the theories of the cult, and you will gain the worship of all noble-minded people; but a good many douce, sound members of the community, who figure two and two to be four and never to be either five or three, will lift you down from your pedestal to regard you with somewhat slanting eyes; a few may even doubt if you are a wholesome member of society, being, they say, too much addicted to romance. In considering both of these extremes you will be more than ever convinced that nothing succeeds like success. Of a truth, the alpha and omega of your cult is success.

It appears that an up-to-date cult of sportsmanship is, or should be, something with a distinct smack of the ancient Roman training of the arena. You could call it a modern adaptation, with the heroic spirit moulded to meet the modern fabric of life. The heroism will be neither so spectacular nor so apparent, being the heroism of the ploughshare rather than that of the sword. But as heroism is still heroism, no matter how it is tilted at, your cult sows the war-like variety to grow as reach-me-down ready-made stuff for use when required. Thus you preserve the dictum that Waterloo was won on the Eton playing-fields. The objective is to turn out real spry, lively fellows, full of fight, grit, honour, sympathy, and intelligence, and loving to take off at lawful obstacles. Kicking a football, hitting a cricket-ball, riding a steeplechase, or even catching a trout, all jolly exercises that you love, have a greater significance, being preliminary

examinations of one sort to justify your entrance to the main thing. In your youth they train you to overcome greater difficulties that lie in wait on your horizon, like thugs and thieves, to pounce on and beset you. And, paradoxically enough, they provide you with relaxation from those difficulties. Sport seems to balance itself by this dual rôle of enabling you to forget your affairs, and, at the same time, gingering and prompting you to tackle them by instinctive combativeness. Quite a jolly thing is this cult of sportsmanship.

To most of us the business of living in comfort, happiness, and citizenship is a pretty tough job, chock-full of thrills and of what Robert Burns called glorious uncertainties. And here comes in perhaps the jolliest and most pleasurable and priceless function of sport, that of fermenting out the indigestible by-products bequeathed to you by your job. It is the jolly bacteria-thing (to be scientific and up-to-date) that raises drooping hope, tired nerves, and gingers up a flagging fighting quality of the soul. The idea is as the yeast of bread raising into wholesomeness the tough dough. The trying, the conquests, and the backslidings, two steps forward and often two back, make up, however, a spicy dish to the fellow who loves the game of his job as a sportsman should. And thus you would jalousie that the spirit of sport is the best and most natural stimulant for the everyday whirligig.

Here is Stevenson's definition of the fellow fitted for the battle of life: 'Now the man who has his heart on his sleeve, and a good whirling weathercock of a brain, who reckons his life to be dashingly used and cheerfully hazarded . . . keeps all his pulses going true and fast, and gathers impetus as he goes, until, if he be running towards anything better than wild-fire, he may shoot up and become a constellation in the end. Lord look after his health, Lord have a care of his soul, says he; and he has at the key of the position, and swashes through incongruity and peril towards his aim. Death is on all sides of him with pointed batteries, as he is on all sides of all of us; unfortunate surprises gird him round; mim-mouthed friends and relatives hold up their hands in quite a little elegiacal synod about his path: and what cares he for all this? Being a true lover of living, a fellow with something pushing and spontaneous in his inside, he must, like any other soldier, in any other stirring deadly warfare, push on at his best pace until he touch the goal.' There is a sportsman for you and no mistake! He has a pretty good dose of the bacteria-thing that gathers him impetus as he goes, like a sum in compound interest or a snowball gathering snow.

You will perceive that the cult of sportsmanship aims at something more than the fascinating study of, and engaging in, actual

sports and games. These are irradiancy from the facets of the thing, beautiful, most lovely materialistic expressions. But you must not be blinded by this light, and make a god of it, for that is like overdosing yourself with French dishes, good liqueurs, health salts, or even good Scotch broth, than which in moderation nothing could be better. Its real utility is to rouse men to action. The whole bias of human weakness goes towards inaction, stagnation, and selfishness; and therefore one should at least try to do one's bit toward making the world a trifle better. Amongst the buds of character aimed at one might mention the promotion of fitness, the principle of *mens sana in corpore sano*, the spirit of co-operation, power to bear failure and success, quick and sound decision, cultivation of excellent habits, special training for any pursuit, object, or calling, the idea that helps lame dogs over stiles and gives a sporting chance to weaker vessels, and, not least, the power of social levelling. These are all variegated outer blooms of the rose of this cult of sportsmanship, a spirit and outlook that humorously regards every difficulty as a jolly good game that should be won. You will thus conclude that the cult carries with it a good deal of the practical sort of religion, and involves, without your altogether realising the fact, a distinct whiff of the Ten Commandments, not to speak of the Shorter Catechism.

Sportsmanship thus brings out some of those qualities loved by the copy-book moralist, and useful to all. You have got a touch of the true elixir, the brightest of halos lights your path, and a very comforting assortment of the real secrets of living and its justification is yours. You are confident of a quaint mastery, quite a worthy conceit, and a power to handle the reins of circumstances; and you fear the side issues of your sports and games, called temptations by some people, no more than you fear such attractions as strong wine, engaging femininity, idolatry of tinsel, or your mother-in-law. It comes home to the mind that the work of life dwells with the play of life not as a lodger, nor even as a brother, but that they go best together like man and wife. Yet some of us find a difficulty in loving work, and others find a difficulty in loving play, even as we find it an effort to love a mother-in-law, though we know all three clearly and justly ought to be loved.

It is true that to become a true sportsman you need not necessarily ever touch a cricket bat, or ride a horse, or shoot a game bird, or even play golf or quoits. If you set out to overcome an obstacle worth while: for example, if you set out to found a business, full knowing that it will either make or break you, you are already as good a sportsman as though you had set out to carry a ball past fifteen other fellows and triumphantly set it down behind the posts.

But—and here is the point and essence of all the potter set out in this paper—if you have learnt to get the better of fifteen other fellows in this way, that will help you enormously to get past lots of other obstacles in whatever undertakings you come up against in your crusade through life. For you shall have a possession that stiffens you against great disasters. You shall be buttressed by your

training to love the noble strife and the long hazard of a life of high endeavour as the Elizabethan Admirals loved the high conquests and unceasing adventure. You shall love it with an endeavour that gathers in impetus as it goes. What more proof than this that the high sports and games are so intertwined with the high works as to justify and ennoble the cult of sportsmanship?

MAN—OR BEAST?

CHAPTER II.—*continued.*

II.

ARMINEL, whose gay mood had vanished, sat on the parapet of a bridge while her husband and Joseph jacked up the car. It was then that she noticed something was wrong with Joseph. He was about twenty-five years old, a thin, willowy Madrassee Christian, with long, nervous hands, every bone articulated under the tight brown skin. Arminel had noticed those hands when he was driving beside her. He drove excellently, and had never yet lost his head, though there had been one or two escapes with a narrow margin. But those hands were neurotic—that womanish face, with its great, soft eyes, was neurotic, behind its mask of a well-schooled servant. She had wondered how he would acquit himself if sudden danger threatened, of which he had no experience, such as the car catching fire, or getting out of its depth while crossing a ford. She hoped Peter might be driving if that sort of thing happened; Joseph might possibly rise to the occasion, but Peter certainly would. He had no nerves, and his brain worked like lightning in an emergency. . . . Her attention was drawn to Joseph now; Peter was annoyed with him.

'You're darned slow—get a move on!' her husband said suddenly. 'We don't want to be here all night!'

'Yes, sir,' agreed Joseph meekly, wrestling with the burst tire while Leyton levered it with the tool. Arminel saw that Joseph's shaking hands were almost useless. A swear-word reached her, and Leyton straightened himself.

'What's the matter with you—got fever?'

'No fever, sir; I want do it quick,' answered Joseph, renewing his efforts.

Early darkness was creeping upon the gorge, the sky was ominous with cloud, and they were a good twelve miles from Dehra. At any moment a fresh storm might wheel upon the hills, and Leyton didn't wish to be caught a second time. Driving on that road at night in a tropical deluge was no joke, with the glass screen obscured by rain; you had to put it down, and then you were drenched. He glanced

at the sky behind, and again tackled the tire. 'Stick to it, you idiot!' he commanded after a minute. 'What are you peeping about for—think something's going to jump on you?'

'Don't rattle him,' pleaded Arminel; 'the poor thing's doing his best. I expect he has a little fever and won't own to it.'

'Fever or not, he's got to pull his weight. Now then, stop gazing at the scenery and get this tire on.'

Between them they accomplished it, the whole job having taken nearly half-an-hour. Dusk had stealthily thickened in the hills, and the flashes of the distant storm pulsed fitfully in the gloom. Leyton put Arminel in the back seat—she would be more protected there if it rained—the lamps were lit, and they started. A couple of miles onward the car slowed and stopped.

'What's the matter?' asked Arminel sharply.

'Engine's not pulling properly. I'm going to have a look.' He shut off the engine.

'Never mind as long as we can get on,' she urged; 'we shall have another storm if we don't hurry.'

'No—not stop,' quavered Joseph, peering oddly to right and left. Leyton, astonished, turned to look at the man's face.

'Oh, *do* go on, Peter!' said Arminel irritably.

During the short halt darkness seemed to have dropped like a pall. Everything was curiously quiet, save for distant growls of thunder. Edging the road, on their left, was a steep, densely-wooded cliff. On the right, topped by a line of aloes in flower, a bank went sharply down to a wide *rhov*, or river-bed, dry but for a small stream in the centre. Between the tall stems of the aloe flowers the *rhov* was visible; there was just light enough to make out the grayness of the shingle, the gleam of water, and blurs of pale grass at the near edge. Suddenly Joseph clutched his master's arm, pointing speechlessly at the *rhov*.

'What is it?' snapped Leyton, looking at the dim tract below in spite of himself. He could see nothing unusual. He reached for the self-starter; as he did so there was a quiver of lightning, and he heard Arminel make a

piteous little sound. Joseph's idiocy had scared her, he thought. He turned round to his wife. 'That priceless fool saw cheetal or something in the *rhov*, that's all. He's stark silly to-night—I'll have to sack him. Why, what's the matter, sweetheart?'

'I saw, too. Do—do cheetal walk on their hind legs?' Her voice shook as if she was shivering with cold.

'Of course not—cheetal are deer; then it must have been langurs. Don't be—'

'Peter,' she interrupted, 'there's . . . something horrid about to-night. I'm not often a coward, but, oh, *do* go on; I'm nervy.'

He peered at her small white face; she looked like a badly-scared child. It was no use arguing, and he silently cursed Joseph. 'All right, darling, we'll cut home; like to sit by me?'

Before she could answer, there was another glare of lightning, and hard upon it, Joseph, with a whimpering, dog-like cry, tumbled out of his seat, wrenched open the door, and shot into the back of the car. Grovelling and clutching Arminel's knees, he habbled through chattering teeth, 'Oh, mem-sahib—tell sahib to drive quick. I stay here—I stay with you. Safe here—they not come for you!'

III.

Leyton, after the first petrified surprise, got out and grabbed the cowering man in savage silence.

'Let him stay here—please, please, Peter—I'll sit by you,' Arminel begged.

Leyton, still in wordless rage, hauled Joseph out by the coat-collar, shaking him roughly; Arminel stumbled out and took her seat by the wheel. With a final shake and a curse, Leyton shoved Joseph onto the floor of the car and slammed the door. As he started the engine and took the wheel there was a brief electric pulsation, and Arminel winced, with a stifled cry. He thought it was caused by the lightning—her nerves must be in shreds. The next moment, in the act of releasing the clutch, he saw what made him stare into the darkness ahead with a pricking at the roots of his hair.

'Sort of hypnotism,' he thought; 'suggestion from the others' jim-jams. I'm seeing things that aren't there!' He slowed, with an instinct to face the music and quell the infection of fear. 'Langurs,' he said calmly. 'Funny how darkness exaggerates things; but they're biggish monkeys—quite harmless, of course—'

The dog-like whimpering of Joseph came from the back.

'I'll give that skunk the hiding of his life,' he rasped. The car slowed still more, and with a misfire or two the engine stopped.

'Not enough gas,' muttered Leyton, altering the regulator and reaching for the starting-handle. His hand dropped; vivid, blue-white light, lasting some seconds, showed three bulky shapes

blotching the road, one a little forward of the others; squat, immensely broad, with hands almost touching ground, limbs and bodies blurred with coarse hair, the huge neckless heads sunk in gigantic shoulders. The faces, intently staring, were all but the brute faces of orang-utans, but not quite. They looked just not apes and just not men, that was the unspeakable horror of them. They *must* be real, thought Leyton; he could see their lambent, yellowish ape-eyes blink at the car lamps—there couldn't be those details if they weren't a fact. Must have broken out of a menagerie! At this sane idea for a moment he forgot his wife, forgot his spasm of fear. Of course they had escaped from some show, and the thought of coming back by daylight with men for a round-up excited him. A voice he hardly recognised rose from beside him, thin and high, 'Peter—Peter!'

'All right, dear; we're off.' To his relief the engine roared and the car jumped forward. 'They've got out from some travelling circus—they'll be scared to fits in a minute—' Even as he spoke, with the tail of his eye he caught sight of more dark, bulky shapes, heads and shoulders, stealthily moving in the undergrowth just below the road, on the bank which sloped to the *rhov*. Surely the faintest blur of light surrounded each shape, outlining it nebulously against the gloom? He forced himself to look squarely. One of the creatures had almost reached the top of the bank; it held to the pole-like stem of an aloe-flower with a long, a horribly long, arm. They *must* be real, his sanity insisted; even though there was a drove of them—even though they glimmered! Something to do with the electrically-charged atmosphere—something in their hair—ugh! He put on speed with a rush, and shot towards the shapes still in the centre of the road, waiting. . . .

'They'll leg it—they're only inquisitive,' he said aloud, determined, if they didn't move, to drive right into them. The car was less than five yards from the three—Leyton could see them disgustingly clearly, when, as the glare of the head-lamps struck them, they faded—there was no other word—faded and apparently were not. As the car passed the spot where they had been visible, Leyton felt a dragging, clawing clutch on his right arm, which slid off as he jerked violently. There followed a scream like a wounded hare from the back of the car. 'Get a knife—tiffin-basket,' Leyton ordered. The basket was at Arminel's feet; steadied by having to act, she found the big bread-knife.

'Hold it ready.' Keeping going as fast as he dared, Leyton looked into the back. He couldn't see Joseph, but he was probably on the floor; something was there, but it seemed to be Arminel's light motoring wrap. 'Look behind—at the road. Can you see him?'

She looked. 'I think he's lying on the road. Peter, we must stop—we couldn't leave him.'

'No . . . if he isn't in the car. Look here, could you drive back to Dehra? I might want men sent out to help with Joseph.'

'I've never driven at night, but I—think I could.'

'Good girl—*my* girl! I bet you do it top-hole. Now, kneel on the seat and make certain he isn't down there.'

She did so. The back was empty.

Leyton slackened speed. 'I don't know if I'm right to go back,' he said, as if thinking aloud; 'I've got you to look after. He must have jumped out and come a mucker—we were going a good pace. Someone's sure to pick him up, and after I've taken you home I'll come straight back—'

'We must go back—now.' Her voice dragged as if intensely tired. 'We've got no choice—we should never forgive ourselves. . . .'

Leyton thrilled with pride in her pluck. 'All right.' He turned and went slowly back. The road was empty.

IV.

'It's no use; he must have hidden somewhere.' Leyton was aware of a feverish desire to be off, not wholly on Arminel's account.

'He wouldn't do that,' she said faintly; 'he would have kept to the road. Sound the horn—he might be farther on—running.'

Leyton squeezed the bulb again and again; the blare was answered from the heights, but the road remained empty. It was all but dark; the lightning was rarer, and an oppressive, listening stillness brooded in the hills. 'Joseph must rip,' said Leyton decisively; 'if those . . . escaped apes have got him I can't help it—I'm going to run you home.'

He prepared to turn. Arminel was straining her eyes towards the *rhov*; at the next flicker of lightning she gripped his arm. 'Down there—oh, Peter, he's down there! They've got him because he was so afraid. . . . You're not afraid—they can't hurt you. . . . Oh, Peter!' It was the piteous pleading of a terrified woman, but one whose pity was greater than her terror, and her belief in him, her husband, greater than either.

'Certain you saw him? Whereabouts?'

'Lying in the *rhov*, nearly in a straight line from here.'

Leyton got out and took the knife, feeling its sharp edge with satisfaction mixed with an acute sense of the absurd. A bread-knife!—still, better than nothing. With utter inconsequence, a verse in the Mohand bungalow visitors' book shot to his mind:

Little skinny chickens,
Little smelly eggs;
'Twould have been the dickens
But for little pegs. . . .

' . . . But for little pegs.' It beat in his head, over and over, and with its repetition his acute tension relaxed. That jingle belonged to a sane

world, a humorous world, and he, Leyton, was going to stay in it. The chap who wrote that would have found something comic even in this damned nightmare.

'Now, look here, dear'—he patted Arminel's hand—'sit tight at the wheel, ready to do exactly what I tell you. I may have to shout orders from down there.'

'Yes. Take the rear lamp—you won't be able to see, except when there's lightning. . . . Peter, do you know . . . what they are?'

'I told you—couldn't be anything else.'

'They're not . . . not alive, like you mean. . . . They're not—like we are.'

'Thank the Lord, no!' He laughed shortly, unhitching the rear lamp.

'Peter, I want you to understand. They're not . . . flesh and blood. I don't believe they can hurt any one unless one's afraid—afraid like Joseph—'

'Don't you worry—I'll be back soon,' he called over his shoulder, and walked to the road's edge, where the aloes grew. He stopped; a faint increasing murmur reached them both from ahead. 'Motor coming—good business!' He ran back and sounded long blasts on the horn. In a few minutes powerful head-lights blazed round a bend, and a large car slowed and stopped alongside theirs. Colonel Buxton got out, followed by a younger man, both in shooting kit.

'Hullo, Peter,' hailed Buxton. 'Car in trouble?—anything we can do? Frome and I have been camping near Roorkee, duck shooting. Why, there's Mrs Peter!' He went to greet her.

'My driver's gone clean off his nut, or what looks like it,' said Leyton. 'He jumped out, and the wife says she's seen him in the *rhov*. Could you and Frome lend a hand with getting him back?'

'Of course,' said the colonel quietly. 'Mrs Peter, you'd better get into our car. Sit by Frome's man—he's an old soldier—a Gurkha—you'll feel quite safe!' He smiled; she put out an ice-cold hand, dumbly, and he squeezed it.

'We'll soon be back,' called her husband; then lower, to Buxton, 'Better bring a gun and a few cartridges—never know what you'll see here at night.'

V.

Buxton, with a keen look at him, fetched and loaded his gun, and stuffed some odds and ends into his big pockets. The three men, Leyton leading with the colonel's electric torch, stepped through the line of aloes, climbed down the steep bank, thick with undergrowth and small trees, and stood in uncertainty on the flat below. Elephant-grass and patches of camel-thorn stretched before them, and then the bare shingle of the *rhov*, vaguely seen in the half-darkness.

'Afraid it's a wild-goose chase,' said Leyton, casting the torch-light as far as possible.

'Arminel couldn't really have made him out from the road.'

Buxton was staring into the gray gloom; after a moment he pointed in silence. Frome, of the Forest Service, and a keen shikari, whispered, 'What—leopard?'

'Men, I think—gathered round something.'

Leyton said nothing.

'There are a few huts near the *rhov*, about half a mile from here,' said Frome; 'perhaps your man shouted and the natives found him.'

Still Leyton said nothing.

Buxton walked on, the others following. A few minutes of stumbling silence, and he stopped. 'Come on in line,' he said shortly.

They had gone a few paces, when a vivid blaze of lightning lit the *rhov*. It lasted some three seconds, and in it the colonel swung up his gun and fired both barrels. The shots echoed in the hills like a blasting explosion; then silence, and a darkness intensified by the previous illumination.

'What was it? Not men, or you wouldn't have fired. Wish I'd brought my gun!' blurted Frome, all agog. Leyton waited tensely for Buxton's answer, which didn't come immediately.

'Hard to tell what it was,' he said at last. 'Come on, there's something there still.'

The something was Joseph, stark naked. He lay on his back, his eyes closed, a sickly, olive-green tinge over the brown of his face, and with froth at the lips. Leyton shone the torch while Buxton knelt to examine him.

'... Had some kind of fit... Ah! arm dislocated... and ankle wrenched—swelling up fast; jumping out of the car, of course. Lucky he didn't break a leg.'

'What's become of his clothes?' queried Frome, peering about. 'Hullo, here's some relics—by Jove, nearly shredded to bits! Could he have been struck by lightning, colonel? I've heard of a man having his boots ripped off by it, and beyond a singeing he wasn't damaged.' He fingered the remnants of khaki drill and white cotton.

'The lightning we've had for the last hour was reflected from over the Himalayas,' said Buxton dryly, unwinding one of his puttees and taking off his boot. Sitting down, he put a stockinged foot under Joseph's armpit. A deft pull, a sickening click, and the arm went into the socket. The man's eyelids never flickered. The colonel felt his heart again; its beat was hardly perceptible. He poured brandy into the cup of his flask and dribbled a little between the clenched teeth.

VL

'I say—I suppose he isn't dead?' said Frome in an awed voice; 'he looks pretty ghastly!'

'So would you, with a shoulder out and a sprained ankle,' answered Buxton, unwinding his other puttee.

All this time Leyton had been silent. Frome

noticed that he stared frequently into the gloom, and that he held the torch unsteadily. 'What's your theory?' he asked, consumed with curiosity. There was something funny about this show... Then he saw that in Leyton's right hand was a big knife.

'What on earth's that for?' he demanded; 'what did you expect to be up against?'

'Oh, thought it might be useful,' answered the other slowly; 'budmashes¹ in some of these villages. Before you came, I thought I might have to intimidate somebody—nothing else to do it with.' Frome gazed at him, intensely puzzled. He had known Leyton for several years, had been tiger-shooting with him, and had heard how he had won his D.S.O. in France. He would have said you couldn't frighten Peter Leyton. To-night he gave the impression of a man who was afraid, but who had a tight hold on himself.

'Now then, Frome,' said the colonel, who had bound Joseph's arm to his body with the puttees, 'I want you to lend your coat, if you will. You're an out-size chap—d'you think you can carry him? It's better for one man to do it.'

Frome gathered up the limp, reedy body with ease, his coat buttoned over it. Leyton went first with the torch, Buxton bringing up the rear. Frome heard the colonel open the breech of his gun and slip in cartridges; and once, during a lightning-flash, he heard him stop, as if he was looking back.

Arminel called the colonel when Joseph had been laid by the roadside, and the other two were rigging up a bed in Frome's car with the camp kit. 'Is he dead?' she asked, almost in a whisper.

'Only in a sort of faint. He injured himself falling out of the car. I think he'll come round when I can see to him properly.'

'I don't think he *fell* out,' she said, very low; 'I think he was pulled out—'

'Well, he came a pretty nasty cropper, however it happened. Now, Mrs Peter, your husband's going to run you home, and I'm going to take your driver to my bungalow; I'd like to have him under my own eye for a day or two.' He helped her out; she could scarcely stand, and he made her drink a little brandy, sitting on the step. Then he got a blanket and wrapped it round her; she was shivering as if with ague, though the night was warm.

Leyton put her into the front seat of their own car, and was about to start. Buxton went round to him. 'Get the wife to bed as soon as you can, and keep her mind off to-night.'

Leyton nodded. 'I want to talk to you, colonel—'

'I know; but wait a day or two, and keep your own mind off it too, if you can. Good-night; I'll let you know how your man goes on.'

¹ Bad men.

(Continued on page 188.)

CANADA'S POTENTIAL MEAT-SUPPLIES. CATTALO, OVIBOS, AND REINDEER.

By ARTHUR P. WOOLLACOTT.

I.

MEAT-EATERS are a pugnacious, quarrelsome lot. Biologists assert that Japanese imperialism began when that nation added meat to its bill of fare. The flesh-pots have often been blamed for the world's indulgence in alcohol. Men of vision for several decades past have been emphasising the alarming fact that the meat-supply of the world is rapidly becoming less, and co-incident with meat depletion was to be observed the growing sentiment in favour of Prohibition. Whether there is a connection between these phenomena is a matter for speculation.

But man is always interfering with the machinery of life. Moreover, he has not yet reached the stage of innocence which regards meat-eating as a major sin, and consequently when the statisticians tell him that the ranges which formerly raised beef animals are now rapidly being given over to field-crops, and that man is increasing more rapidly proportionately than the animals upon which for ages he has been accustomed to feed, he immediately sets to work to put back the clock by devising novel methods of propagating beef animals.

Hence we have three projects in Canada which are of especial interest to those who will still continue to hanker after the flesh-pots.

The branch of animal husbandry of the Department of Agriculture is engaged in producing a strain of cattle by crossing the buffalo with the domestic cow. It is expected that the resulting cattalo will populate the northern prairies and provide in time vast numbers of hardy beef animals.

Again, in the Canadian arctics are large island-areas where, during the long days of summer sunshine, a surprising acreage of fodder plants provides food potentialities of unknown extent. Here within a generation will roam large herds of the domesticated musk-ox or ovibos, the meat of which is said to be equal to the best beef.

Between these two zones are the barren lands of the sub-arctics, the present habitat of caribou, estimated to be anywhere between twenty and forty million in number. These will gradually be supplanted by herds of domesticated reindeer crossed with the wild caribou, which is larger in size but biologically identical, and if all the plans of the Dominion government succeed, there will ultimately exist in northern Canada a meat-supply of vast proportions.

It is officially stated that there is no limit to the possible extension of these industries if gone about properly and on sound lines.

The cattalo project is more or less familiar in its main features. But because the buffalo is better known than either caribou or ovibos a certain amount of romance attaches to the idea of crossing the picturesque bison of the plains with the barn-yard cow. The production of cattalo that can live on the country and thrive in zero temperatures, and yet yield a quantity of beef greater than that from the ordinary steer raised under similar conditions and of equal if not better quality, is a matter well worth the attention of our experts in animal husbandry.

Such a hardy strain would be a great asset to farmers and ranchers throughout the zones where cold winters are a drawback in cattle raising.

II.

That famous company of adventurers trading into Hudson Bay, whose exploits have added so much to the romance of Canadian history, has apparently tried everything once, including the breeding of buffalo, and it is interesting to note that the company is again to the fore as a pioneer, this time in a meat industry that is likely to prove more profitable in the long-run than all its other ventures combined.

As far back as 1842 the servants of the company at Fort Edmonton captured buffalo calves and let them run with the cattle. In a few years the bison increased to a herd of thirty, but, oddly enough, did not cross with the domestic animals. One day a great herd of bison darkened the green undulations in the distance, and the call of the wild became too strong for the semi-domesticated buffalo, which kicked up their heels and vanished with the wild herd.

Since then efforts have been made in the United States and Canada to obtain a new type of beef animal by crossing bison with cattle. Perhaps the most successful efforts were those of Mr Mossom Boyd, of Boycegeon, Ontario, whose herd of twelve hybrids and eight cattalo was taken over by the Dominion government, and is now located in the Buffalo Park at Wainwright, Alberta, under the control and supervision of the branch of animal husbandry of the Department of Agriculture. On account of the age of the animals, however, the experts consider it necessary virtually to begin all over again, and because of certain difficulties encountered in breeding, it has been decided to use the yak as an intermediate factor in the problem. Pure-bred bison bulls and domestic cows produce a hybrid, which in turn beget cattalo, and it is the purpose of all the ex-

periments to fix the type of cattalo. The yak is expected to aid materially in this process. This animal from the cold plateaus of Asia, long since domesticated and the inseparable companion and trusty servant of his Tibetan master, is about the size of the Aberdeen Angus, and is noted as a wonderful ranger, able to withstand the most extreme cold, since it is accustomed to rustle its living through the long severe winters of its habitat. It is not subject to disease, and as it is zoologically the connecting link between bison and cattle, and has so many admirable qualities of its own, it is expected that its introduction into the problem will greatly facilitate the production of a breed of hardy beef animals to populate the colder areas of the Dominion. Travellers through the Rockies are familiar with the sight of the herd of yak confined on a range in Banff Park.

It has been demonstrated that cattalo can thrive on the country without attention from man. They winter through the severest seasons, and are in good flesh in the spring. Their possible range extends from the regions in the plains, where cattle-raising ceases to be profitable by reason of the cold, up as far as the barren lands. This large area, where the climatic conditions are unsuitable to the raising of ordinary cattle, is practically useless for any other purpose than that of grazing. The fodder vegetation, however, is ample in winter as well as summer.

Canada, then, has a large suitable area at present of no value in production; but with a little expenditure in establishing the foundations of a future breed of new cattle to occupy these ranges, the now worthless territory may be made to add millions to the national wealth. With a new race of stock, brought about by the cross-breeding referred to, these cold-ridden lands will assuredly be used for extensive ranching purposes, when, as is now taking place, the present grazing and hay lands are cut up for mixed farming. It is the intention that the fruits of these experiments will later be made available to every farmer and rancher desiring to profit thereby.

The materials involved in these experiments have an interest in themselves.

Canada possesses the largest herds of buffalo to be found anywhere. Seven thousand plains buffalo are confined within the great fenced enclosure at Wainwright, Alberta, and several smaller herds are to be found in other parks, while in northern Alberta and the adjacent territory there are one thousand five hundred wood buffalo ranging freely in their original wild state. These animals are the descendants of those that escaped the Indians of former days and sought refuge in the wooded regions of the north, where they have since thriven unmolested. They are bigger, stronger, finer-looking, and more enduring than the plains bison, with which, however, they are identical.

This wild blood, acclimatised far north, will prove a valuable factor in future cross-breeding. The advantages of hybrids and cattalo over domestic cattle are of such a nature as to make the new stock even more desirable for beef and other purposes than their progenitors.

The hide provides a robe of great durability and is very rich in colour. It has been stated that these hides should fetch a hundred dollars each.

The animals are rugged, and will face the severest storms without drifting like cattle; nor are they ever cast on hillsides, and they are not susceptible to disease. They are remarkably good rustlers, and after wintering out are in higher flesh than domestic cattle. As beef animals they carry an exceedingly high percentage of beef along the back, which is the most valuable part of a beef carcass, and the inheritance of this quality is noticeably present in all cattalo having in them the blood of bison.

Rib-roasts from cattalo have an upper-cut nine inches deep.

The cattalo experiments are still in the initial stages, but already hold a promise of considerable economic value.

III.

The cattalo range of the future may overlap that of the musk-ox or ovibos. Indeed, the cattalo, musk-ox, and reindeer kings will be lords over immense tracts north of Sixty, for in those regions the winter climate is too severe for ordinary cattle and the growth of cereals, and consequently may be regarded as permanent grazing areas where the animals named may range in the open the year round.

The area available is roughly estimated at a million square miles. There is abundant vegetation in summer, which forms nutritious food for grazing animals in winter as well as in summer, as Nature has her own satisfactory way of curing the fodder crops.

There are good grounds for believing that the domestication of ovibos alone may result in the far north becoming a great permanent meat and wool producing area.

For the past few years Professor W. T. Hornaday, curator of the New York Zoological Society, has had a group of ovibos under observation in the Zoological Park in New York City, and he is fully convinced that they can be successfully domesticated on a scale large enough to be commercially profitable.

Readers of books on Arctic exploration have become familiar with the animals' tendency to form a circle, with heads out and calves and cows in the centre, when attacked by man or beast. For ages the improvident Eskimo was in the habit of giving full rein to his blood-lust, and invariably killed off these bands to the last animal. It is evident from their remains, and the reports of early explorers and

travellers, that at one time ovibos roamed over the north half of the continent. To-day they are comparatively few in numbers, being confined almost entirely to a narrow shore strip extending from Hudson Bay to Coronation Gulf. However, they are more plentiful on Melville, North Devon, Axel Heiberg and Ellesmere Islands, and on the north-east coast of Greenland.

Mr Storkor Strokerson, for instance, killed 400 in 1917 on Melville Island for his meat supply, and estimated that there were at least 4000 on the island.

The Arctic lands are the habitat of ovibos; he is at home there, and, unlike the caribou, is not a victim of wander-lust. In this respect he is more like his domestic cousins, remaining indefinitely in areas where food is available. He prefers grass when it is obtainable, but eats as readily lichens, moss, and willow shoots. It is his habit to graze quietly, taking little notice of intruders, and moving when necessary, like cattle. He does not flee from attacks by animals or man, and it is possible to approach quite close before he takes alarm. Even then he will not run far. In one case, after running a little distance from passing travellers, a band, on the second approach of the men, merely looked at them and continued to graze. Thereafter the party passed the band every day and were apparently not noticed, and were certainly not feared.

Ovibos are mild and gentle in disposition except in the rutting season, and then the bulls will take the offensive when the herd is approached. When cows are killed the calves will follow man without any traces of fear.

Explorers, traders, missionaries, and biologists are all of the opinion that there will be no difficulty in domesticating these remarkable animals. They are easily captured and transported, and are quite docile in captivity.

It is the intention of the Dominion government to build up herds on some of the islands in Hudson Bay. Here, with proper protection from the high-power rifles of the Eskimo, and with skilful herding and security from the depredations of wolves, it is expected that they will increase rapidly.

Mr Stefansson claims that the meat of ovibos is practically indistinguishable from beef, and there is much reliable evidence to the effect that it is very nutritious and palatable, and compares favourably with beef, in the opinion of many, being more tender and luscious. The cows give a small quantity of milk of excellent quality. As producers of wool, ovibos are factors to be reckoned with when the experts have succeeded in devising methods of separating the wool from the long hair which runs through it.

In short, the conservation and domestication of the musk-ox are matters of the greatest

importance, and would represent a very important addition to the meat production of the Dominion.

IV.

A glance over the reindeer industry in other countries will enable Canadians to understand that the enormous northern areas which bulk so large on the map will one day be the home of herds of domestic reindeer which should not be less in numbers than the present total of caribou now ranging over that wonderful hinterland.

Time out of mind the reindeer has been of great economic value to the people in the northern parts of Eurasia. The Russian government, however, until awakened by inquiries from America in the early nineties, was not aware of the number or the value of the reindeer within its domain. These animals are indispensable in Siberia and Northern Europe, providing not only food, clothing, and shelter, but excellent transportation as well. They require very little attention; indeed, in reindeer moss, upon which they live entirely, Nature has provided a fodder crop that is inexhaustible.

In Norway and Sweden there are about half a million reindeer, valued at between forty and fifty million dollars. It is only within recent years, in fact during the Great War, that the possibilities of the reindeer meat industry first began to be faintly realised. An excellent market was then developed in those countries for this novel article of diet. As the people became accustomed to its use the price increased steadily with the growing demand until it exceeded that of beef and mutton.

With characteristic enterprise the American government introduced reindeer in Alaska on the suggestion of Dr Sheldon Jackson, General Agent of Education in that territory. In 1890 Dr Jackson found the Alaskan natives in a deplorable condition of poverty, while a few miles across Bering Strait the Siberian Chukchis were rolling in nomadic wealth, enjoying much leisure and remarkably good transportation, all due to their herds of domesticated reindeer.

In the following decade 1080 animals were purchased in Siberia and established in Alaska. The total cost to the United States government in the thirty years following the inception of the project was \$317,000. There are now over 200,000 reindeer in Alaska, valued at over \$5,000,000. The income from the industry during the same period was approximately \$1,750,000. Tens of thousands were killed for meat and shipped out, and an equally large number were required for home consumption. In another quarter-century, at the same rate of increase, there should be between 10,000,000 and 20,000,000 reindeer in Alaska.

The meat was tried in clubs, cafés, and dining-cars, and was found to be an unqualified success. The shipments to Seattle from Nome now

run annually into thousands of carcasses, averaging 150 lb., fetching 28 cents. per lb. f.o.b. Seattle. The Lomen Company, which is the heaviest shipper, owns about 25,000 head of reindeer in the Alaskan territory.

The industry in Norway, Sweden, Russia and Siberia, and the successful development of herds in Alaska suggest that corresponding development may be anticipated in northern Canada.

The wild caribou, which is of the same species, exists in millions—estimates run from twenty to forty million—throughout the Canadian sub-arctics, affording evidence of the suitability of those regions for the maintenance of reindeer herds. During their migrations they are seen in countless numbers scattered over hundreds of miles. 'The buffalo on the plains of long ago would not be a patch on this for numbers,' to quote the words of an old-time inspector of police. Eventually these swarming herds land in the barren grounds, where nobody bothers them.

Sphagnum moss grows in abundance, and is the sole food of the domestic reindeer. Reindeer moss, as it is called—*Cladonia rangiferina*—is grayish-white in its dry state, but has a greenish shade when moist. It derives its nourishment chiefly from the air, greedily absorbing the humidity which makes it swell and become elastic. In a dry condition, however, it is very brittle. It contains flour and gelatin stuff, which make it nourishing to reindeer and cattle.

To begin with, the 1,000,000 square miles of grazing lands are by no means monopolised by the caribou, buffalo, and musk-ox of the present day. Authorities, though chary enough of making forecasts, nevertheless aver that the above-mentioned grazing areas will support from two to three times the number ranging there at present. The wild wood buffalo are almost a negligible quantity, since there are only fifteen hundred near the sixtieth parallel in northern Alberta. Ovíbos on the arctic islands probably number twenty thousand; whereas the caribou, including both the woodland and the barren ground varieties, are believed to number anywhere from twenty to forty million. As time goes on these wild animals will be supplanted by their domesticated descendants, and if these reach the last-named figure they will represent a value running up to a thousand million dollars.

The domestic reindeer and the wild caribou are biologically identical. The latter range over a territory beginning at township Sixty in the prairie provinces and extending to thirty miles from the arctic coast, and from a short distance west of Hudson Bay on the east, to the Alaskan boundary on the west. They are principally of the barren land variety, dressing to about 150 lb. Neither the reindeer nor the caribou seek shelter in extreme weather, as they are perfectly at home in their habitat.

The domestic animal is rather small, weighing from 80 to 300 lb., those used for the trial averaging 100 lb. In reports of school teachers and others in Alaska, who are in charge of herds, appear references to wild male caribou joining the herds in the breeding season and leaving progeny larger and stronger than that from domestic sires. Indeed, the infusion of wild blood really produces magnificent stock fully 100 lb. heavier. There is no reason to doubt that, given proper facilities for restraint, and with intelligent handling, young wild caribou would readily yield to domestication. In Alaska the authorities are now engaged in adding to the weight and stamina of the herds by breeding from wild male caribou. The present herds in that territory, if increased 100 lb. per animal, would have an additional value of \$5,000,000.

Mr Stefansson, in conjunction with the Hudson's Bay Company, has obtained a lease of about half of Baffin Island, where a commercial herd is now being inaugurated. It is to be expected that other interested parties will quickly enter this new field of enterprise. Indeed, one may expect in a very short time a rush to acquire territory. The great fortunes that were piled up in the United States by the meat kings will undoubtedly be duplicated in Canada, unless, of course, the government monopolises the new industry.

A brief survey of the field will convince any one that the north will eventually produce a meat business on a scale that will run into hundreds of millions annually.

Certain islands in Hudson Bay, namely, Southampton, Coats, and Mansell Islands, have been reserved by the authorities as reindeer ranges. The whole of Ungava is well suited for this purpose, as it has an ample supply of suitable vegetation. Reliable people familiar with the arctic coast are unanimous in the opinion that the greater part of the area from Alaska to Kent Peninsula is eminently adapted for the maintenance of reindeer, the vegetation and other conditions being in many ways similar to those which prevail in those parts of Alaska where the reindeer industry has proved most successful.

The attractiveness and palatability of reindeer meat are beyond question. As regards caribou meat, those who know are agreed that it is both nutritious and palatable. At the proper season in the fall and early winter it is excellent, many claiming that it is superior to beef, mutton, and other domestic meats.

In 1908 Dr Grenfell of Labrador fame brought over a herd of 250 reindeer from Lapland to a point near St Anthony's in Newfoundland. In four years the herd increased to 1200. But the financial resources of the mission were not adequate to deal with the matter on a proper scale, and the herd was given to the Canadian government. In 1918 it was located at St

Augustine on the north shore of the Gulf of St Lawrence.

Lapp herders are regarded as indispensable in the early stages, since they take an artistic pride in their skill in herding, training, and general management of reindeer, and, unlike others who have been tried, the Lapp readily adopts suggestions for improvement.

A Chukchi herd in northern Siberia is a sight worth seeing. Here in a glacial valley devoid of trees and shrubs, but tinged with the green of dwarf willows, sedges, and heath-worts, may be seen the skin-covered huts of these primitive plutocrats.

In a typical hut the family consists of father and mother, a red-cheeked girl, and two finely-built boys attired in parka and moccasins—as healthy and rosy and robust a group of children as ever gladdened the heart of Chukchi parents. These lads speed over the ground like trained racers, glorying in their strength.

Of all the tame animals man has gathered about him the reindeer is the tamest. A moving

herd of them coming straight towards you is a sight never to be forgotten—a thicket of antlers, big and little, young and old, led by the strongest, holding their heads low most of the time, as if conscious of the fact that they are carrying big branching horns. The eyes are large, confiding and gentle, with a dreamy expression when the herd is lying down. The limbs are smooth and round. They are trim, delicately moulded animals, with well-poised heads, and beautifully curved antlers—on the whole much finer-looking animals than one expects to see. So tame are they that it is possible to walk in and out among them without disturbing in the slightest their expression of the profoundest comfort.

It is obvious from the foregoing that Canada has a number of highly practical problems to solve, some of which, like the projects just sketched in their main outlines, may with a comparatively small expenditure be brought to the stage where they will add considerably to the national wealth.

THE RISE OF THE SCALE INDUSTRY.

By 'STATERA.'

IN the general interest taken in the development of modern industries a curious neglect is sometimes shown towards certain trades which are essential to the other better known ones, and yet whose products are so familiar to everyone and so widespread that they get overlooked. The old adage about familiarity breeding contempt can be aptly applied to such trades. To this category the industry connected with the manufacture of weighing apparatus belongs, and it has suffered not a little from this oversight in popular knowledge, probably owing to the total absence of spectacular attractions, such as are furnished by the products of other industries—for instance, the blast furnace and the locomotive.

One need only pause to consider how important in every branch of material human activity is the ascertainment of weight, and the key position of the industry will be realised. In the household, as in the largest factory, weights are vital factors. The decision of the thrifty housewife as to the best way of laying out her available housekeeping money and the enterprises of the captains of industry depend equally on weight. Sir William Petty, the 'Father of Statistics,' stated in the seventeenth century that he aimed at expressing himself in terms of 'number, weight, or measure.' Of these three categories weight is by far the most important, and is at the same time intimately connected with the other two. In fact, the ascertaining of weight and number is to-day in some industries carried out by one machine, which weighs and counts simultaneously.

To the average person the term 'weighing apparatus' or 'weighing machine' brings to mind a pair of scales or a steelyard. These are the forms with which he is brought into daily contact—an equal-armed beam with pans suspended from it, or a steelyard with a movable weight, together with the ordinary scale with two pans above the beam seen on tens of thousands of shop counters. This last type is of recent origin, but the others can claim an unbroken, universal, and unchanged descent not rivalled by Tut-ankh-Amen himself. On old Egyptian paintings we see beam scales similar to those in use to-day. It is recorded of Abraham that he weighed out 400 shekels of silver for the cave of Macpelah, and the famous phrase, *Væ victis!* originated in a transaction connected with the weighing out of bullion, in all probability on a beam scale. The steelyard was in use in the great days of Rome, and is known as the Roman steelyard to distinguish it from later types. The French word 'romaine,' and the Spanish 'romana' are indicative of its origin. The museums, such as the Guildhall Museum, contain specimens which are almost identical with the modern article.

Until the eve of the industrial revolution these two types, the beam and the steelyard, remained predominant, and were the only instruments on which weights could be obtained for all purposes. Like other implements of industry, the weighing 'machine' was radically changed through the effects of that great series of events which introduced the industrial era.

It is worth while considering briefly why these old types should have maintained their supremacy for such a length of time. Before the eighteenth century, industry, as it is understood to-day, did not exist. All manufacture was organised on an individual basis, and the dimensions of the product of any trade were no larger in the United Kingdom in, say, the sixteenth century than in the days of the Roman Empire. Manual work was the fundamental and determining factor in both ages, and manual work has its limits rigidly fixed by the human anatomy. It required no more complicated apparatus to weigh the product of the land and the loom in Elizabethan England than in Imperial Rome. One thing is certain, that no man can be credited with the discovery or invention of the balance. It is one of those products of man's ingenuity whose origin lies behind the mists of antiquity.

The industrial revolution did not miss the weighing 'machine.' In spite of its respectable antiquity the inventive spirit extended even to it, and completely new forms were introduced. The old types were no longer sufficient for the needs of industry, which was multiplying the size both of individual businesses and their products. The modern iron age was presenting man with bigger products than ever before, and these had to be weighed. The importance of the time factor in trade began to make itself felt with steam power, and the old methods were inadequate for the demands now being made on them.

In the second half of the eighteenth century the principle of compound levers was applied to weighing, and the first modern weighing-machine proper came into existence. By means of a platform supported on knife-edges in levers which transferred the pressure of the load to a beam on which was a movable weight or weights waggons and large and heavy objects could be weighed speedily, and without the inconvenience of unloading and using quantities of heavy weights. At first constructed partly of wood and partly of wrought iron, the development of the heavy iron industry led to the new machines being made of cast iron, which could carry the heavier loads of the rapidly-increasing industries. The same principle of compound levers was applied to smaller loads in shops and warehouses, the 'platform' scale was evolved, and the even-armed beam scale became the exception rather than the rule. The discovery of a method of supporting pans above the beam, which was introduced in the eighteenth century (although known in the seventeenth century), and which has given us the familiar shop scale, helped further in rendering the old types obsolete.

The advent of the railroad introduced another factor—ability to stand up to the heavy wear and tear caused by steam-propelled vehicles of greater weight and size than any previously-

known means of transport. The new machines had been developed sufficiently by the time that the railways had become commercial propositions, and the railway industry is now the largest single user of weighing-machines in the country. This great industry depends on the efficiency of its weighing-machines for its own business success. One has only to look at the statistics of transport, both land and sea, to realise the importance to it of reliable weighing-machines.

The weighing-machine industry is not in the true sense of the word a pioneer industry. It does not open up new fields of advantage like the transport and metallurgical industries. It is, however, so intimately related to these that it must keep abreast of the demands made on it for still more efficient and rapid means of ascertaining weight. Should it not do so, a 'bottle-neck' may be created which will check the development of other trades in their efforts to improve methods of organisation. In keeping step in the industrial march of progress it has changed its organisation entirely. Formerly it was in the hands of skilled craftsmen working for themselves and scattered over the country. When the demand arose for heavier and larger machines, the factory system of production was applied to it, and the making of weighing-machines became a section of general engineering.

Owing to the skilled nature of the workmanship required to produce a finished weighing-machine, the craftsman could not be displaced entirely by semi-skilled labour aided by machinery; and this is still true in a lesser degree, although it is a far cry from the crude productions of the early days of engineering to the accurate machine-work of the present day.

This development led to the gradual concentration of the industry in the hands of a few firms, in whose factories the cumulative skill of generations of these workers was assembled. The vast majority of all weighing devices in use in this country are produced by a small number of firms, the names of one or two being almost household words. The largest of them employs thousands of workers in its establishments, and has a history covering 200 years.

This concentration of skill and resources has enabled the weighing-machine industry to keep pace with the demands made on it by the other industries. Towards the end of the nineteenth century new methods of handling the huge quantities of raw materials liberated by the mechanical inventions were introduced, and these in their turn enabled the output of these materials to be still further increased. The grain supplies from America and Russia, and the increased coal output, provide good examples. Most staple commodities go by weight, especially those which can be graded. The production of weighing-machines to weigh automatically, continuously, and rapidly was tackled and attained successfully. The most thorough application of

these machines has been made in the United States, but they are in general use in all industrial countries.

The latest development has been the application of the automatic and time-saving scale to the retail trades, a sphere in which the old types had remained supreme, with the addition of the well-known shop scale, introduced about the same time as the compound lever weighing-machine. The new method was first adopted in the United States, where it is the general practice. The rapidly extending use of the automatic scale, which shows the exact weight on a dial or chart, has made it a familiar object to every one. It is undoubtedly in this direction that the future evolution of the weighing-machine is to be looked for.

The industry occupies a position apart from the other metal and engineering industries on account of the peculiar relations between it, through its products, and the general public, through the state. From the earliest days of organised communities, governments have considered it their duty to supervise the standards of weight and measure. The Law of Moses is strict on this point, and the accusation of giving false weight was made by the Prophets at a later date in the history of the Jews. In our own country particular attention was given in the Middle Ages to the accuracy of weights used in trade, as is exemplified by the various 'Assizes.' Unfortunately attention was paid only to the weights themselves, the scale or balance being apparently considered of minor importance. With the widening sphere of governmental activity and interference in commercial life more attention was paid to the control of weights and measures in the nineteenth century, but it is an interesting fact that

weighing instruments and machines were not brought properly under state control by legislation till late in last century. Even now, although the most important part of the inspector's work is the supervision of weighing-machines, he is still designated 'Inspector of Weights and Measures.'

By means of this quasi-public control the weighing-machine industry enjoys a variety of 'protection' against cheap, shoddy productions both at home and from abroad. Owing to the necessity for all weighing apparatus for trade use to pass certain tests of accuracy, machines made abroad in countries with different regulations are less likely to prove serious competitors of the home-manufactured article, and at home this control ensures that the latter shall be reasonably good.

Divergent opinions exist as to the best method of organising state control, and the problem has yet to be settled. The present system is a good example of the British method of compromise. The local authorities exercise the supervision of weights and measures through their inspectors, subject to a rather undefined control by the Board of Trade, which issues the regulations to be followed by these inspectors. The general trend seems to be in favour of a centralised organisation which will avoid inequalities such as exist to-day in different parts of the country. The present system, in spite of weaknesses, combined with the efficiency of the manufacturers, is sufficient to provide this country with the most reliable and accurate instruments for weighing that can be found in any part of the world. The excellence of the British product is substantiated by the favour which it finds in overseas markets where reliability is a fundamental requirement.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER VI.—THE RETURN OF HARALD BLACKTOOTH.

MISS JANET RADEN had a taste for the dramatic, which that night was nobly gratified. The space in front of the great door of the Castle became a stage, of which the sole furniture was the body of a deceased stag, but on which event succeeded event with a speed which recalled the cinema rather than the legitimate drama.

First, about six o'clock, entered Agatha and Junius Bandicott from their casual wardenship of Carnbeg. The effect upon the young man was surprising. Hitherto he had only half believed in John Macnab, and had regarded the defence of Glenraden as more or less of a joke. It seemed to him inconceivable that, even with the slender staffing of the forest, one man could enter and slay and recover a deer. But when he heard Janet's tale he became

visibly excited, his careful and precise English, the bequest of his New England birth, breaking down into college slang.

'The man's a crackerjack,' he murmured reverently. 'He has us all rocketing around the mountain tops, and then takes advantage of my dad's blasting operations and raids the front yard. He can pull the slick stuff all right, and we at Strathlarrig had better get cold towels round our heads and do some thinking. Our time's getting short, too, for he starts at midnight the day after to-morrow.—What did you say the fellow was like, Miss Janet? Young, and big, and behaved like a gentleman? It's a tougher proposition than I thought, and I'm going home right now to put old Angus through his catechism.'

With a deeply preoccupied face Junius, de-

clining tea, fetched his car from the stableyard and took his leave.

At seven-fifteen Colonel Raden, bestriding a deer pony, emerged from the beech avenue, and waved a cheerful hand to his daughters. 'It's all right, my dears. Not a sign of the blackguard. The men will remain on Carnmore till midnight, to be perfectly safe, but I'm inclined to think that the whole thing is a fiasco. He has been frightened away by our precautions. But it's been a jolly day on the high tops, and I have the thirst of all creation.'

Then his eye fell on the stag. 'God bless my soul!' he cried. 'What is that?'

'That,' said Janet, 'is the stag which John Macnab killed this afternoon.'

The colonel promptly fell off his pony. 'Where—where?' he stammered.

'On the Home beat,' said Janet calmly. The situation was going to be quite as dramatic as she had hoped. 'I saw it fall, and ran hard and got up to it just when he was starting the gralloch. He was really quite nice about it.'

'What did he do?' her parent demanded.

'He held up his hands and laughed, and cried, "Kamerad!" Then he ran away.'

'The scoundrel showed a proper sense of shame.'

'I don't think he was ashamed. Why should he be, for we accepted his challenge? You know he's a gentleman, papa, and quite young and good-looking.'

Colonel Raden's mind was passing through swift stages from exasperation to unwilling respect. It was an infernal annoyance that John Macnab should have been suffered to intrude on the sacred soil of Glenraden, but the man had played the boldest kind of hand, and he had certainly not tailored his beast. Besides, he had been beaten, beaten by a girl, a daughter of the house. The honour of Glenraden might be considered sacrosanct after all.

A long drink restored the colonel's equanimity, and the thought of their careful preparations expended in the void moved him to laughter. 'Pon my word, Nettie, I should like to ask the fellow to dinner. I wonder where on earth he is living. He can't be far off, for he is due at Strathlarrig very soon. When did young Bandicott say the day was?'

'The day after to-morrow. Mr Junius feels very solemn after to-day, and has hurried home to put his house in order.'

'Nettie,' said the colonel gravely, 'I am prepared to make a modest bet that John Macnab gets his salmon. Hang it all, if he could outwit us—and he did it, confound him!—he is bound to outwit the Bandicotts. I tell you what, John Macnab is a very remarkable man—a man in a million—and I'm very much inclined to wish him success.'

'So am I,' said Janet, but Agatha announced

indignantly that she had never met a case of grosser selfishness. She announced, too, that she was prepared to join in the guarding of Strathlarrig.

'If you and Junius are no more use than you were on Carnbeg to-day, John Macnab needn't worry,' said Janet sweetly.

Agatha was about to retort, when there was a sudden diversion. The elder Bandicott appeared at a pace which was almost a run, breathing hard, and with all the appearance of strong excitement. Fifty yards behind him could be seen the two Strathlarrig labourers, making the best speed they could under the burden of heavy sacks. Mr Bandicott had no breath left to speak, but he motioned to his audience to give him time and permit his henchmen to arrive. These henchmen he directed to the lawn, where they dropped their sacks on the grass. Then, with an air which was almost sacramental, he turned to Colonel Raden. 'Sir,' he said, 'you are privileged—we are privileged—to assist in the greatest triumph of modern archæology. I have found the coffin of Harald Blacktooth, with the dust of Harald Blacktooth inside it.'

'The devil you have!' said the colonel. 'I suppose I ought to congratulate you, but I'm bound to say I'm rather sorry. I feel as if I had violated the tomb of my ancestors.'

'You need have no fear, sir. The dust has been reverently restored to its casket, and to-morrow the Piper's Ring will show no trace of the work. But within the stone casket there were articles which in the name of science I have taken the liberty to bring with me, and which will awake an interest among the learned, not less, I am convinced, than Schliemann's discoveries at Mycenæ. I have found, sir, incredible treasures.'

'Treasures!' cried all three of his auditors, for the word has not lost its ancient magic.

Mr Bandicott, with the air of one addressing the Smithsonian Institute, signalled to his henchmen, who thereupon emptied the sacks on the lawn. A curious jumble of objects lay scattered under the evening sun—two massive torques, several bowls and flagons, spear heads from which the hafts had long since rotted, a sword-blade, and a quantity of brooches, armlets, and rings. A dingy enough collection they made to the eyes of the onlookers, as Mr Bandicott arranged them in two heaps. 'These,' he said, pointing to the torques, armlets, and flagons, 'are, so far as I can judge, of solid gold.'

The colonel called upon his Maker to sanctify his soul. 'Gold! Those great things! They must be prodigiously valuable. Are they mine, or yours, or whose?'

'I am not familiar with the law of Scotland on the matter of treasure trove, but I assume that the State can annex them, paying you a percentage of their value. For myself, I gladly

waive all claims. I am a man of science, sir, not a treasure-hunter. . . . But the merit of the discovery does not lie in those objects, which can be paralleled from many tombs in Scotland and Norway. No, sir, the tremendous, the epoch-making value is to be found in these.' And he indicated some bracelets and a necklace which looked as if they were made of queerly-marked and very dirty shells.

Mr Bandicott lifted one and fingered it lovingly. 'I have found such objects in graves as far apart as the coast of Labrador and the coast of Rhode Island, and as far inland as the Ohio basin. These shells were the common funerary adjunct of the primitive inhabitants of my country, and they are peculiar to the North American continent. Do you see what follows, sir?'

The colonel did not; and Mr Bandicott, his voice thrilling with emotion, continued: 'It follows that Harald Blacktooth obtained them from the only place he could obtain them, the other side of the Atlantic. There is historical warrant for believing that he voyaged to Greenland; and now we know that he landed upon the main North American continent. The legends of Eric the Red and Leif the Lucky are now verified by archæology. In you, sir, I salute, most reverently salute, the representative of a family to whom belongs the credit hitherto given to Columbus.'

Colonel Raden plucked feebly at his moustache, and Janet, I regret to say, laughed. But her untimely merriment was checked by Mr Bandicott, who was pronouncing a sort of benediction.

'I rejoice that it has been given to me, an American, to solve this secular riddle. When I think that the dust which an hour ago I touched, and which has lain for fifteen centuries under that quiet mound, was once the man who, first of Europeans, trod our soil, my imagination staggers. Colonel Raden, I thank you for having given me the greatest moment of my not uneventful life.'

He took off his hat, and the colonel rather shamefacedly removed his. The two men stood looking solemnly at each other till practical considerations occurred to the descendant of the Viking.

'What are you going to go with the loot?' he asked.

'With your permission I will take it to Strathlarrig, where I can examine and catalogue it at my leisure. I propose to announce the find at once to the world. To-morrow I will return with my men and remove the traces of our excavation.'

Mr Bandicott departed in his car, sitting erect at the wheel in a strangely priest-like attitude, while the two men guarded the treasure behind. He had no eyes for the twilight landscape, or he would have seen in the canal-like stretch of the

Larrig belonging to Crask, which lay below the rapids, and was universally condemned as hopeless for fish, a solitary angler, who, as the car passed, made a most bungling amateurish cast, but who, when the coast was once more clear, flung a line of surprising delicacy. He could not see the curious way in which that angler placed his fly, laying it with a curl a yard above a moving fish, floating it dry till after it had passed the fish, and then sinking it with a dexterous twist; nor did he see a quarter of an hour later the same angler land a fair salmon from water in which in the memory of man no salmon had ever been taken before.

Colonel Raden and his daughters stood watching the departing archæologist, and as his car vanished among the beeches, Janet seized her sister and whirled her into a dance. 'Such a day,' she cried when the indignant Agatha had escaped and was patting her disordered hair. 'Losses—one stag, which was better dead. Gains—defeat of John Macnab, fifty pounds sterling, a share of unknown value in Harald Blacktooth's treasure, and the annexation of America by the Raden family.'

'You'd better say that America has annexed us,' said the still flustered Agatha. 'They've dug up our barrow, and this afternoon Junius Bandicott asked me to marry him.'

Janet stopped in her tracks. 'What did you say?'

'I said "No," of course. I've only known him a week.' But her tone was such as to make her sister fear the worst.

Mr Bandicott was an archæologist, but he was also a business man, and he was disposed to use the whole apparatus of civilisation to announce his discovery to the world. With a good deal of trouble he got the two chief Scottish newspapers on the telephone, and dictated to them a summary of his story. He asked them to pass the matter on to the London press, and he gave them ample references to establish his good faith. Also he prepared a sheaf of telegrams and cables—to learned societies in Britain and America, to the great New York daily of which he was the principal owner, to the British Museum, to the Secretary for Scotland, and to friends in the same line of scholarship. Having left instructions that these messages should be dispatched from Inverlarrig at dawn, he went to bed in a state of profound jubilation and utter fatigue.

Next morning, while his father was absorbed in the remains of Harald Blacktooth, Junius summoned a council of war. To it there came Angus, the head-keeper, a morose old man nearly six foot four in height, clean-shaven, with eyebrows like a pent-house; Lennox, his second-in-command, whom Leithen had met in his reconnaissance; and two youthful watchers, late of Lovat's Scouts, known as Jimsie and

Davie. There were others about the place who could be mobilised if necessary, including the two chauffeurs, an under-footman and a valet, but as Junius looked at his formidable quartet, and reflected on the narrow limits of the area of danger, he concluded that he had all the manpower he needed.

'Now, listen to me, Angus,' he began. 'This poacher Macnab proposes to start to-morrow night at twelve o'clock, and according to his challenge he has forty-eight hours to get a fish in—up till midnight on September the third. I want your advice about the best way of check-mating him. You've attended to my orders and let nobody near the river during the past week?

'Ay, sir, and there's nobody has socht to gang near it,' said Angus. 'The countryside has been as quiet as a grave.'

'Well, it won't be after to-morrow night. You've probably heard that this Macnab killed a stag on Glenraden yesterday—killed it within half a mile of the house, and would have got away with it but for the younger Miss Raden.'

They had heard of it, for the Glen had talked of nothing else all night, but they thought it good manners to express amazement. 'Heard ye ever the like?' said one. 'Macnab maun be a fair deevil,' said another. 'If I had just a grip of him!' sighed the blood-thirsty Angus.

'It's clear we're up against something quite out of the common,' Junius went on, 'and we daren't give him the faintest outside chance. Now, let's consider the river. You say you've seen nobody near it.'

'There hasn't been a line cast in the watter forby your own, sir,' said Angus.

'I just seen the one man fishin' a' week,' volunteered Jimsie. 'It was on the Crask watter below the brig. I jaloused that he was one of the servants from Crask, and maybe no' very right in the heid. He had no notion of it at all, at all.'

'Well, that's so far good. Now, what about the river outside the park? Our beat runs from the Larrig bridge—what's it like between the bridge and the lodge? You've never taken me fishing there.'

'Ye wad need to be dementit before you went fishin' there,' said Angus grimly. 'There's the stretch above the brig that they ca' the Lang Whang. There was never man killed a saumon in it, for the fish dinna bide, but rin through to the Wood Pule. There's fish in the Wood Pule, but the trees are that thick that ye canna cast a flee. Though I'll no' say—' he added meditatively, 'that ye couldna cleek a fish out of it. I'd better put a watcher at the Wood Pule.'

'You may rule that out, for the bargain says "legitimate means," and from all I know of Macnab he's a sportsman and keeps his word. Well, then, we come to the park, where we've

the five pools—The Duke's, the Black Scour, Davie's Pot, Lady Maisie's, and The Minister's. We've got to keep our eyes skinned there . . . What about the upper water?'

'There's no fish in it,' said Lennox. 'They canna get past the linn above The Minister's. There was aye talk o' makin' a salmon ladder, but naething was done, and there's nocht above The Minister's but small broun trout.'

'That makes it a pretty simple proposition,' said Junius. 'We've got just the five pools to guard. For the form of the thing we'll keep watchers on all night, but we may take it that the danger lies only in the thirty-four hours of daylight. Now, remember, we're taking no chances. Not a soul is to be allowed to fish on the Strathlarrig water till after midnight on September the third. Not even I or my father. Macnab's a foxy fellow, and I wouldn't put it past him to disguise himself as Mr Bandicott or myself. Do you understand? If you see a man near the river, kick him out. If he has a rod in his hand, lock him up in the garage and send for me. . . . No, better still. Nobody's to be allowed inside the gates—except Colonel Raden and his daughters. You'd better tell the lodge-keeper, Angus. If anybody comes to call, they must come back another day. These are my orders, you understand, and I fire any one who disobeys them. If the third of September passes without accident there's twenty dollars—I mean to say, five pounds—for each of you. That's all I've got to say.'

'Will we watch below the park, sir?' Angus asked.

'Watch every damned foot of the water from the bridge to the linn.'

Thus it came about that that day, when Janet Raden took her afternoon ride past the Wood of Larrimore, she beheld a man patrolling the bog like a policeman on duty, and when she entered the park for a gallop on the smooth turf she observed a picket at each pool. 'Poor John Macnab!' she sighed; 'he hasn't the ghost of a chance. I'm rather sorry my family ever discovered America.'

(Continued on page 182.)

SONNET.

BELOVED, who dost lavish still thy store
Of most rich love and presence ev'n on me,
What wonder if, love's pauper, now I be
Love's miser, and each day into the sure
Fond secret coffers of remembrance pour
The fancied silver seconds ruefully,
Or the great golden hours with such a glee
As rises in my heart, but may no more?

Yea, I am poor, whose proper affluence is
Mere coin of dreams and faith and will; and this
Wide want of mine is now become so deep,
Thy love supplies my dire deficiencies
Only by filling up the untold abyss
And heaping high thereon the precious heap.

H. A. VAUGHAN.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

IN THE VALLEY.

By CHARLES SIDDLE.

I.

GRIMSDON pushed his hair up from the front of his eyes with a filthy hand, and tried to moisten his dry lips with the end of a swollen tongue. Lord! if he could only get a drink! Oh! if the sun would go down on this endless day. He was getting light-headed, and out there, down the ravine, those blasted police-troopers were waiting, waiting, patient as Judgment Day—and as certain to get him in the end. Well—the sooner the better, now. He had sent two of them to glory, anyway; and before he went himself he'd put another two or three of 'em to sleep. Maybe they'd got Bill Grimsdon where they wanted him at last, but by gee! they'd have to pay for their seats at the final show-down, and no movie stunt at that. No! He laughed harshly. No darned movie man to see that the villain's gun missed fire and the heroes escaped unhurt. Not in this show. And they'd have to come and take him.

That was the cream of the jest. The last two they sent for him had found the job too much for them, and now these two were skulking down there, afraid to come on. But they'd have to, before night. With the first cover of night he'd be off, and they knew it. And here he was, behind his rock, and there they were, somewhere down there, under cover. And between them a hundred yards of bare valley without cover for a rabbit; and behind him, curse it, a stretch of three hundred yards of the same. The little rock where he crouched was the only cover in all that waste—and he was full in the blaze of the sun. A fair show-down, with all the cards in the other hand, except one. Except one, and that was the joker. They had to come for him before dark!

A rifle spoke, down the valley, and a piece of rock, chipped off by the bullet, flew past his ear. He replied automatically, firing at the flash—more to let them know he was watching than from any hope of doing damage. He had plenty of ammunition, and he could wait. But they couldn't. Not too long, or he'd be away again. And by God! he might do it yet. Barring the chance of a lucky shot, they couldn't get him without coming for him, and he reckoned on

getting them before they crossed that patch—with luck he ought to get 'em both. And they knew it. Well, it was their move, anyway.

II.

Corporal Berry was worried. His orders were to bring Grimsdon in, and he meant to do it. He knew Inspector Gordon well enough to anticipate his reception if he went back minus his man and explained that the fellow held him at bay all day in this God-forsaken valley and slipped away at night. He talked it over with Manning. 'I've half a mind to let him break away when it gets dark,' he said, 'and run the risk of losing him. We might nip him some other time when the conditions are not so darned expensive.'

Manning replied without lifting his head or taking his eyes from that solitary splash of cover up the valley. 'He's a slippery cuss, corporal,' he said; 'and he got Graham and Bevan. We owe him one for that.'

Berry frowned, perplexed. 'I know,' he said. 'But confound it, Manning, there isn't cover for a coney, and his guns are right on the spot.' He looked up at the walls of the valley—sheer towering masses of smooth rock: 'And there's no way of flanking him, short of going seventy miles.'

Manning nodded, and spat calmly. 'Well, I guess it's gotta be done, corp.,' he said. 'Mebbe we'll get it in the neck, but we gotta try. That's right, ain't it? We just got to.'

'Ay—we've just got to,' said Berry gloomily. He was in charge, and he meant to get Grimsdon. A long record in the Mounted cleared him of the remotest suspicion of cowardice—but he couldn't help seeing that to advance up that valley in full day-light was suicide. The only chance was to wait for the tricky light which followed sundown. Maybe Grimsdon wouldn't see so well, or aim so true. Of course it cut the other way as well, but—

The sound of hooves on the rock behind the turn in the valley was an amazing interruption. 'Hang on there, Manning—watch him—I'll see what the tarnation this is,' Berry whispered, and slid away, keeping carefully under cover until the wall of rock hid him from Grimsdon's guns. Then he stood up and gaped in absolute amaze-

ment at what he saw. In this remote mountain valley, nothing was more unlikely than an eruption of tourists—but that was what it looked like. Picking their way up the valley came two tired horses and a pack-mule. On the foremost horse was an obvious guide; on the other was a more than obvious Easterner—if not an Englishman.

'Now, what the blazes!' said Berry explosively, and hurried down to meet them. 'You better get out of this, pretty damn quick,' he shouted, when he got within hail. 'This place isn't healthy for strangers.'

The foremost rider stopped. 'Guess you'd better talk to Alphonso,' he said, jerking his thumb over his shoulder. 'It's his funeral, red jacket, not mine.'

The very remarkable figure in the complete hunting outfit of an enterprising London tailor slid stiffly from the saddle and stretched his limbs with irrepressible groans of anguish. Even in the midst of his worry, Corporal Berry was compelled to smile. The man was such a perfect example of his kind. Fitted out with a complete set of backwoods paraphernalia, supplied with a horse and a guide, here he was, suffering agonies from saddle-soreness and the penalties of soft living. He spoke, and Berry's suspicion that he was English was confirmed. 'Am I addressing Corporal Berry of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police?' he asked.

'You are,' said Berry.

'Then permit me to present a letter from Inspector Gordon, containing my credentials; and when you have read it, I will, with your permission, explain my no doubt unexpected intrusion. But first—you'll pardon my anxiety—you haven't—Grimsdon isn't dead yet?'

Berry stared at him open-mouthed. 'No—but I wish to God he was,' he said.

'Ah!' The man's relief was evident. 'Please read the letter.'

Still gaping at the amazing stranger, Berry broke the seal and opened his letter. Then at last he dragged his eyes from the hopeless task of piercing the mystery, and read what his chief had to say:

'DEAR BERRY,—The bearer of this is a Mr Jonathan Grimsdon. He is a brother of the man you are after; but far from being the same kind. There is no doubt of his credentials. I have had them thoroughly tested. He has been the valet, or something like that, of Lord Osmanthorpe, the Colonial Secretary, for thirty years, and we are to give him all the assistance in our power.

'This is not an official note. The whole thing is deuced irregular, and I'm not going to interfere with your discretion. You are to get your man, and that's all the official orders you will receive. But if you can do anything for the other Grimsdon without danger to your job—

mind that, Berry—without danger to your job, you can do so. He has big influences behind him, and we don't want to upset him if we can help it. But first of all—get your man.

'I nearly came up with him—I know he'll introduce complications—but I can't get away. So do your best not to be too hard on him, and—get your man. THOMAS GORDON.'

Berry read the note twice, and then looked at the bearer, with even more bewilderment than before. 'You—you are Grimsdon's brother?' he gasped.

Jonathan Grimsdon nodded, with down-cast eyes. 'Unfortunately, William is my brother,' he said. 'It has been a great grief to us, corporal. A great grief!'

'I should think so,' said Berry dryly. 'He's a real wrong 'un, is Bill. Wanted for three murders, and Lord knows how many other things. And now he's added two good troopers to his bag, and is lying in there waiting for a chance to get some more.'

Jonathan groaned. 'Oh, terrible!' he said. 'Terrible! How my dear mother came to bear such a child is a mystery no amount of thought can solve. A better woman never lived, corporal, and she died with a message of forgiveness and love on her lips.'

Corporal Berry shuffled uneasily. Himself, he was not feeling like discussing sympathy and love for Bill Grimsdon.

'That is why I am here,' said Jonathan calmly, speaking as if it were the most reasonable thing in the world. 'I accepted a sacred trust—to find my brother and carry that message to him. I swore that nothing but death should prevent its reaching him. And here I am.'

Berry was not a callous man, but this was rather too much for him to swallow. 'Oh, come off it,' he said. 'You are not going to tell me that's all you want here?'

Jonathan opened his eyes with simple surprise. 'But isn't that enough?' he said. 'A mother's dying command?'

'But, my dear fellow,' said Berry, 'don't you understand that this precious brother of yours is lying up there behind a gun waiting for the last hand—that he has killed until he doesn't give a damn how many more he adds to his account—and that any time now I may be one of his victims myself? This is no Sunday-school picnic, and I'd advise you to get out while the going's good. There'll be hell to pay in this valley before dark. The only thing we are waiting for is sundown and a tricky light. It might give us a sporting chance. Bad shooting light.'

'Nevertheless,' said Jonathan stubbornly, 'I must go to him first and tell him.'

'Cut that right out,' said Berry. 'I'm having no monkey tricks here. You may be all right,

but no one's going up that valley unless I go with him. Get that?'

Jonathan Grimsdon smiled calmly. 'I've come four thousand miles to deliver a message,' he said, 'and shall a hundred yards from my goal see the abandonment of my quest? Listen, corporal. I promise——'

They talked there for a very long time.

III.

Bill Grimsdon was becoming uneasy. They were very quiet down there. Much too quiet. Not likely they were going to leave him alone till dark with the idea of catching him on the run. Not likely! They knew him too well for that. Good enough men in their way, but Berry had tried a game of hide-and-seek with Bill Grimsdon too often in these hills to want to try another. But anyway, what the devil were they waiting for? Didn't think he'd go to sleep?

He emptied the magazine of one gun rapidly, firing at the rocks. There was nothing else to be seen. And then silence. Why didn't they reply? Trying to kid him into showing himself, were they? Think he was a kid, by gee? Or perhaps one of them was riding round by Blue Valley, hoping to cut him off? Not likely! Seventy miles of bad going before they circled round to the top end of this valley. Berry knew the game too well to try that card. No; they were down there somewhere. He kept a sharp look-out and waited. But he was uneasy. It looked as if they had a new card out there; and he had no guess whether it was a dud or a joker.

Some one moved down there, and Bill fired with the automatic rapidity of reflex action. Not a shot replied. He waited, puzzled to the pitch of acute anxiety, and then a handkerchief shot up on the end of a stick, and waved slowly about in the breeze. For a full half minute it remained there, and then a man stood up, boldly, and walked forward, carrying the improvised white flag.

This was just idiocy. Didn't the fools know he was too desperate to risk any chin-wagging? What in God's name did they think he could talk about? His end was certain; there were no terms for him to make. And if they thought he cared about their darned white flag. . . . He aimed carefully at the advancing enemy, and his finger quivered on the trigger. Then the gun fell to the ground, and he sat back, breathless. In the minute focus of the back-sight he had recognised that it was no police trooper who threw his life so recklessly on the hazard of a white flag. It was Jonathan—of all men the least expected! After a moment he stood up, fearless of police rifles now. A white flag meant nothing to him, but those fools down there would respect it. He was glad of the chance to stretch his limbs. But Jonathan—the whitest lamb of the flock—here on this day just in time

for the final curtain. If that didn't beat the band! He sat down on his rock and rolled a cigarette.

'Well, my sorrowing brother,' he said, when Jonathan came within reach, 'how's the upper servants' hall getting on without you?'

'William, this is a sad day for any one who cares for you,' said Jonathan gloomily. 'A sad day—and a sad end to a life so full of promise as yours was once.'

'Now, I call that real friendly of you, Jonathan,' said Bill, 'to come along this way to cheer me up; it was a kind thought. But then you always were kind, Jonathan—especially to pretty parlour-maids!'

Jonathan flushed deeply. 'This frivolity is out of place,' he said heavily. 'Remember, William, you are, as it were, on your death-bed. Listen. I have a message for you, and a question to ask. Our mother——'

IV.

Corporal Berry watched the distant figures of the two brothers with gloomy intensity. How on earth he ever came to allow that ridiculous Jonathan fellow to over-persuade him? The man had a tongue like greased leather. Talk! He'd talk a woman off her feet. And there he was, pow-wowing with Bill Grimsdon. Lord knows what about. And if anything happened, Inspector Gordon would just about take Berry's wig off—although he'd practically written orders to let the Jonathan man have his own way. But, of course, that wouldn't be anything. If aught happened, it hadn't been orders. That was the way of it. A man got no mercy for a mistake. Some day, somewhere, one of them had to get Bill Grimsdon. That was the law and the prophets. But this Jonathan man—this fool from England—Berry couldn't place him. And he was worried.

Easy to take a pot-shot at Grimsdon now as he sat there talking. And why not? The fellow was an out-and-out wrong 'un, and ten to one he'd get a few more good fellows before he was laid out. Berry looked round at Manning, standing about clear of cover now. It must be right to save the life of such a grand fellow. His fingers twitched on his rifle, but he didn't raise it. Confound it! Treacherous murdering dog though he was, Grimsdon was going to get fair play from the force. They'd get him, but they'd get him fair.

'Time that fellow was coming back,' said Manning. 'Sun'll be down inside an hour.'

Berry nodded. 'Yes,' he said; 'I'll give him another ten minutes, then I'll signal him. Can't have him hanging around too long.'

Manning grunted. 'You swallow that yarn about dying mothers, and all that?' he asked.

Berry laughed. 'Not me,' he said. 'But the chap has some big 'uns behind him, and whatever he's after he meant to get it. If anything goes

wrong I'll get it in the neck for letting him go up there,' he nodded up the valley; 'but if I hadn't I reckon I'd have caught it worse.'

'That's so,' said Manning calmly, as one accepting the follies of a well-loved organisation; 'but I'd like to know what his game really is.'

'So would I,' said Berry. 'I know one thing: if he wants to do it on Bill Grimsdon, he's got some job on.'

'That's so,' said Manning again.

They stood silent, looking up the valley at the two men, who were almost as unlike as brothers could be. And then Jonathan Grimsdon left his brother and walked quickly back towards the waiting troopers, while Bill Grimsdon, calmly secure, sat on his rock, a fair target, and waited.

v.

Berry looked down at Bill Grimsdon as he sat smoking a cigarette and idly kicking his heels in the sun. This, then, was the end of the long chase. Surrender on terms. Well, he was jolly glad to be rid of that last charge up the valley. Jolly glad!

'Come on, now, Grimsdon,' he said. 'Spit it out; what's the big idea? You know I can't do much for you. Short shrift and a quick death—that's about the mark.'

Bill Grimsdon laughed. 'Sure,' he said. 'I'm not asking you for anything, Berry. We've had a long tussle, you and me, and I guess I know when the game's up. What I want you up here for is to listen to a little yarn before we go.'

Berry stood stiffly, his hand on his gun. He had left Manning down there in response to Bill Grimsdon's message—but he was not running any unnecessary risk. Bill was a tough card, and not above finessing a trick. As for this Jonathan fellow—well, he wasn't explained yet, not by a long chalk. So Corporal Berry stood and kept his hand on his gun. And Jonathan Grimsdon stood, too—but he didn't carry a gun. As for Bill Grimsdon, he sat on his rock and smoked cigarettes, his guns lying beside him on the ground.

'Spit it out,' said Berry. 'I've no time to waste.'

Bill Grimsdon pushed his hands into his pockets. 'I won't keep you,' he said. 'The yarn tells itself in quick time. I don't suppose you swallowed brother Jonathan's yarn about dying messages, Berry?'

Berry shook his head. 'Not me,' he said. 'But it was good enough for publication.'

Grimsdon nodded. 'Ay,' he said. 'Well, it was right enough so far. He is my brother, though I don't calculate he'd have published the banns just to deliver a message.—Would you, Jonathan?'

Jonathan smiled feebly. He was worried and

anxious. Bill's latest move upset his plans. For a man of his tendencies he was unusually quiet. He was thinking hard.

'Oh well,' said Bill, 'let that pass. Jonathan had his reasons for coming. He wants something, and he's not going to get it. But I'm going to give it to you, Berry, and you are going to promise me that you'll communicate with the proper authorities, and see that a helpless woman gets her rights. And in return for that promise I'm going to come like a good boy.'

'Listen. Twenty years ago this brother of mine fell in love with a girl I fancied myself. An old story that. She married him. He had a good job, and I hadn't. As a matter of fact, I was in trouble even then about a few pheasants and an odd hare or two. But never mind that. She married him, and I cleared out to Canada.'

'Have a good look at him, Berry. He's a model servant, Jonathan is. In one family all his life. Worth a good bit as he stands to them that like his kind. I don't. Neither did Milly. She stood it for a few years, and then she left him. He never divorced her.—Did you, Jonathan?'

Jonathan shook his head. 'No,' he said. 'Scandal is not looked on kindly in the servants' hall.'

'You see, Berry?' continued Bill with fierce scorn. 'Always an eye for what was right, Jonathan had. He made that girl's life a hell—but that was on the Q.T. When it came to open scandal, it wouldn't do. So he never divorced her.'

'She came to me. Silly, wasn't she? Black sheep of the family—that was me. But she knew I wouldn't hurt her. And she came to me, but it was too late then. I'd gone all to pieces; I wouldn't let her stop with a man wanted by the police for all sorts of things. Besides, she was my brother's wife. It didn't seem right, somehow—and I wasn't thinking of the scandal, neither.'

'But now, just you listen to this, Berry. Funny how things work out; Milly's father got on a bit, and he's left a tidy bit of money.—How much, Jonathan?'

Jonathan moved restlessly. 'About twenty thousand,' he said.

'Fancy that, Berry,' said Bill. 'Twenty thousand, and all left to Jonathan's lawful wedded wife. And the only man who knows whether she's still alive is bad Bill Grimsdon. Funny, isn't it?'

Corporal Berry dropped his hand from his gun at last, and relaxed slightly. He began to see the meaning of all this.

Bill Grimsdon winked at Berry.

'You've forgiven her, haven't you, Jonathan?' he asked.

Jonathan frowned heavily. 'This is not matter for joking,' he said. 'My relations with

my wife are my affair. But it is your duty, William, to help in getting her back where she can claim her legacy.'

'That's right,' said Bill. 'So it is. But mark this, Berry: if anything happens to Milly, the money goes to her lawful wedded, and, as I'm going under right away, I can't look after her. And I'm not trusting brother Jonathan. And that's where you come in.'

He took a sheet of paper from his pocket. It was worn and dirty, and showed evidences of long association with the odds and ends of things in his pockets. He handed it to Berry. 'There you are,' he said. 'Her name and address is written down there. You're a decent sort, Berry—be careful with it. That's a real woman, that is. Too good for either Jonathan or me. You'll see things right for her?'

Berry took the paper. 'Right you are, Grimsdon,' he said. 'I'll see to it.'

Grimsdon nodded cheerfully. 'Right you are,' he said. 'That's all—except I just want two words with brother Jonathan alone. And then I'm ready. You won't mind standing a bit away, Berry. You can watch with your gun out if you like.'

Berry hesitated. 'Well, look here,' he said. 'There's been——'

'I know, Berry. But this is the last. Just two minutes.'

Berry nodded, and walked about thirty paces away and then stood watching. His suspicions were considerably softened, but he was not forgetting the chance of a trick.

'Well, Jonathan, you don't look pleased,' said Bill. 'What's the matter. Berry'll see to that.'

Jonathan nodded with an attempt at cheerfulness. 'Yes,' he said. 'But it isn't very nice to be distrusted by my own brother.'

Bill laughed. 'Oh, come off it,' he said. 'I know you, and you know me. That glory hallelujah business doesn't go. Do you think I don't know what you meant to do? Well, you won't do it. That girl wouldn't have had a minute's peace—if you decided to let her live. Even now, you'll be on her track as soon as she handles the money.'

He tossed his cigarette away and stood up slowly. 'Milly told me a few things,' he said. 'Just a few. Not half of what there was to tell; but enough for me. I don't suppose you'll ever know what you did to her. But I do. And you are not going to do it again. She's going to be free of you for ever.'

His tone had changed and deepened. His eyes were stern and cold. Jonathan Grimsdon shivered.

'I swear to you, William,' he said, 'that I'll not——'

'Don't lie,' said Bill. 'You can't keep away from money. And you can't help being a bullying, cowardly hypocrite. But you made a mistake when you came here. I'm done, but I can still see that Milly has a chance. And I'm going to, now.'

Something warned Jonathan. With a startled squeak he began to run. At the same moment Corporal Berry realised that something was wrong, but he was just too late. His gun flashed a fraction of a second after Bill Grimsdon's, and Bill fell almost simultaneously with Jonathan. Both bullets went true. The brothers went to their account together.

THE MENTA INDUSTRY OF PIEDMONT.

By EUSTACE REYNOLDS-BALL.

THERE is a wide stretch of country between the foot-hills of the Cottian Alps and the river Po, near Villafranca-Piemonte, which is transformed every August into a perfumed paradise; in more prosaic language, this region is mainly given up to the cultivation of that most aromatic of flowers, the peppermint plant.

The scientific name of the cultivated species is *Mentha piperita*, popularly known as peperina—not to be confounded with peperone (cayenne-pepper plant), whose golden bulbous spheres make such a brilliant show on the vegetable stalls on market-days in the country towns of Piedmont.

Peperina is not indigenous, but was imported from England. It is not sown, but planted from saplings in the spring and autumn. It grows very quickly, sending out long creepers which take root, and, under favourable conditions, the plant will reach a height of three

feet or more. After the planting, unlike vines, it requires little attention.

The principal centres of this industry are Lombriasco, Casalgrasso, Pancalieri, Polonghera, and Vigone, ancient river-side villages which have made their mark in the history of Piedmont and the House of Savoy. These historic villages, situated on the borders of the territories then belonging to the county of Savoy and the marquisate of Saluzzo (ceded by the French to the Duke of Savoy in 1601), were of considerable importance, though ignored by the guide-books.

Lombriasco has still some relics of its pristine grandeur in an ancient castle, which is included among Italy's 'National Monuments.' It gives its name also to the treaty made in 1319 between Philip of Acaia and the Viscount of Milan.

Pancalieri was taken from Ludovic, Marquis

of Saluzzo, by Carlo I. of Savoy in 1486. At Polonghera is to be seen an ancient castle containing some remarkable frescoes. Vigone was the seat of the States-General of the Duchy of Savoy in 1522, in the reign of Carlo III.

Pancalieri is the most important centre of the peppermint culture, and here are to be found nearly a dozen distilleries. About the middle of August all these distilleries are in full swing.

The menta fields are mown in the same manner as hay; as a rule, this is done either in the early morning or after sunset. Then the menta is tied into sheaves and taken at once to the distillery, as it deteriorates if left in the open to dry. Generally the harvest takes place in the first fortnight of August.

The huge vats (partially filled with water) are crammed to the brim with the tightly-packed bundles of menta, and then the lids are hermetically closed down. From these receptacles the vapours of the essential oil are condensed in refrigerators, and then conducted into collectors, where the essence, being lighter, is easily separated from the water.

The essential oil, which passes drop by drop, is of a pale straw colour (which gets darker as it is exposed to the air), with a very pungent, but not unpleasant, smell, and a distinctly aromatic flavour. This oil is used not only in the manufacture of the well-known *Crème de Menthe* (the ladies' liqueur par excellence), but in medicine and perfumery. In common with all aromatic plants, but in a greater degree than most, it possesses useful anti-spasmodic and stimulating properties.

The period of distilling lasts from twenty to twenty-five days. With a still capable of holding some 700 to 800 lb. (roughly 320 to 365 kilogrammes) of the menta plants, the distilling would be completed in a little over two hours,

and the average of essential oil produced would vary from about 1 lb. to 2 lb.; so when it is remembered that the menta plants cost only 30 to 35 centimes the kilo., while the oil fetches from 200 to 250 lire a kilo., it will be realised that there is usually a considerable profit.

One of the most modern stills, working uninterruptedly for twenty-four hours, would produce as much as twelve kilo. of oil. In Pancalieri alone there are no fewer than eighty stills in operation.

The distilling takes place in open sheds, so that the whole country round is impregnated with the delightful aromatic fragrance. Indeed, a visit to a Piedmontese menta factory does not in any way offend the most sensitive olfactory organs, which, as tourists know to their cost, is by no means the case when visiting the flower distilleries at Grasse.

A few statistics will show the importance of this industry. The whole world's output of essence of peppermint is 1,200,000 kilo., of which formerly Great Britain was the chief producer. Now Japan (over 100,000 kilo.) and the United States supply the most.

Commercially, the essence is graded according to the proportion of *mentolo*, the essential principle. The highest grade is produced by Japan with a percentage of 90 per cent. of mentolo; the English (Surrey) variety shows from 50 to 70 per cent.; while the Piedmontese has about 50 per cent. The French and Russian varieties are deficient in mentolo, but very little of these is exported, the output being used for home consumption.

The annual production of the Piedmontese essence has, since the War, varied from 20,000 to 25,000 kilo., for which France and South America are the chief markets. The total value exceeds 50,000,000 lire.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER VI.—continued.

NEXT day, the first of September, the Scottish Press published a short account of Mr Bandicott's discovery, and the *Scotsman* had a leader on it. About noon a spate of telegrams began, and the girl who carried them on a bicycle from Inverlarrig had a weary time of it. The following morning the Press of Britain spread itself on the subject. The *Times* had a leader and an interview with a high authority at the British Museum; the *Daily Mail* had a portrait of Mr Bandicott and a sketch of his past career, a photograph of what purported to be a Viking's tomb in Norway, and a chatty article on the law of treasure trove. The *Morning Post* congratulated the discoverer in the name of science, but lamented in the name of patriotism that

the honour should have fallen to an alien—views which led to an interminable controversy in its pages with the secretary of the Pilgrims' Club and the president of the American Chamber of Commerce. The evening papers had brightly written articles on Strathlarrig, touching on the sport of deer-stalking, Celtic mysticism, the crofter question, and the law dealing with access to mountains. Straightway the special correspondents had begun to arrive from all points of the compass, so that the little inn of Inverlarrig had people sleeping in its one bathroom and under its dining-room table. By the morning of 2nd September the glen had almost doubled its male population.

That morning, after some rain in the night,

broke in the thin fog which promised a day of blazing heat. Sir Edward Leithen, taking the air after breakfast, decided that his attempt should be made in the evening, for he wanted the Larrig waters well warmed by the sun for the type of fishing he proposed to adopt. Benjie had faithfully reported to him the precautions which the Bandicotts had adopted, and his meditations were not cheerful. With luck he might get a fish, but only by a miracle could he escape unobserved. His plan depended upon the Lang Whang being neglected by the watchers as not worthy of their vigilance, but, according to Benjie's account, even the Lang Whang had become a promenade. Leithen had lost now any half-heartedness in the business, and his obstinate soul was as set on victory as ever it had been in a case in the law courts. For the past four days he had thought of nothing else; his interest in Palliser-Yeates's attack on Glenraden had been notably fainter than that of the others; every energy he had of mind and body was centred upon killing a fish that night and carrying it off. With some amusement he reflected that he had dissipated every atom of his ennui, and he almost regretted that apathy had been exchanged for this violent preoccupation.

Presently he turned his steps to the arbour to the east of the garden, which formed at once a hiding-place and a watch-tower. There he found his host busied on the preparation of his speech with the assistance of Lamancha, who was also engaged intermittently in the study of the ordnance map of Haripol.

'It's a black look-out for you, Ned,' said Sir Archie. 'I hear the Bandicotts have taped off every yard of their water, and have got a man to every three. Benjie says the place only wants a piper or two to be like the Muirtown Highland Gathering. What are you going to do about it?'

'I'm going to have a try this evening. I can't chuck in my hand, but the thing's a stark impossibility. I hoped old Bandicott would be so excited at unearthing the Viking that he would forget about precautions, but he's as active as a beaver.'

'That's the young 'un. He don't give a damn for Vikings, but he's out to protect his fish. You've struck the American business mind, my lad, and it's an awful thing for us casual Britons. I suppose you won't let me come down and watch you. I'd give a lot to see a scrap between you and that heathen Angus.'

At that moment Benjie, wearing the waterproof cape of ceremony, presented himself at the arbour door. He bore a letter, which he presented to Sir Archie. The young man read it with a face which was at once perplexed and pleased.

'It's from old Bandicott. He says he has got some antiquarian swell—Professor Babwater I think the name is—coming to stay, and he

wants me to dine to-night; says the Radens are coming too. . . . This is the devil. What had I better do, Charles?'

'Stay at home. You'll put your foot in it somehow if you go. The girl who held up old John will be there, and she's bound to talk about John Macnab, and you're equally bound to give the show away.'

'But I haven't any sort of excuse. Americans are noted for their politeness, and here have I been shutting the door in the face of the poor old chap when he toiled up the hill. He won't understand it, and people will begin to talk, and that's the quickest way to blow the gaff. Besides, I've got to give up this lie about my ill-health if I'm to appear at the meetin' the day after to-morrow. What do *you* say, Ned?'

'I think you'd better go,' Leithen answered. 'We can't have the neighbourhood thinking you are plague-stricken. You'll be drinking port while I'm being carted by the gillies into the coal-hole. But for Heaven's sake, Archie, go canny. That Raden girl will turn you inside out if you give her a chance. And don't you try and be clever, whatever happens. If there's a row, and you see me being frog-marched into captivity, don't trouble to create a diversion. Behave as if you had never seen me in your life before. . . . You hadn't heard of John Macnab except from Miss Raden, and you're desperately keen to hear more, you understand. Play the guileless innocent, and rack your brains to think who he can be. Start any hare you like—that he's D'Annunzio looking for excitement . . . or the Poet Laureate . . . or an escaped lunatic. And keep it up that you're in delicate health. Oh, and talk politics—they're safe enough. Babble about the meeting, and how the great Lamancha's coming up for it all the way from the Borders.'

Archie nodded with a contented look in his eyes. 'I'm goin' to take your advice.—Where did you get this note, Benjie? From Mactavish at the lodge? All right, I'll give you a line to take back with you.—By the way, Ned, what's your get-up to-night? I'd better know beforehand in case of accidents.'

'I shall look the basest kind of poaching tramp. I've selected my costume from the combined wardrobes of this household, and I can tell you it's pretty dingy. Mrs Lithgow is at present engaged in clouting the oldest pair of Wattie's breeks for me. . . . My only chance is to be a regular ragamuffin, and the worst I need fear then is a rough handling from the gillies. Bandicott, I take it, is not the sort of fellow to want to prosecute. If I'm caught—which is fairly certain—I'll probably get a drubbing, and spend the night in the cellar, and be given my breakfast next morning and kicked out. It's a different matter for you, Charles, with the legally-minded Claybody.'

'What odds are you offerin'?' Sir Archie

asked. 'John backed himself, and I took a tenner off him. What about an even fiver?'

'I'll give you three to one in five-pound notes that I win,' said Leithen grimly. 'But that's pride, not conviction.'

'Done with you, my lad,' said Sir Archie, and departed to write an acceptance of the invitation to dinner.

Fish Benjie remained behind, and it was clear that he had something to communicate. He caught Lamancha's eye, who gave him the opening he sought by asking what was the news from Strathlarrig. Benjie had the instinct of the ballad-maker, and would begin his longer discourses with an epic flourish of the 'Late at e'en drinkin' the wine' style.

'It was at fower o'clock this mornin' they started,' he announced, 'and they're still comin'.'

'Coming? Who?' Leithen asked.

'Jornalists. The place is crawlin' wi' them. I seen six on bicycoles and five in cawrs and twa in the Inverlarrig dowie-cairt. They're a wantin' to see auld Bandicott, but auld Bandicott will no' see them. Mactavish stops them at the lodge, and spiers what they want, and they gie him cairds wi' their names prentit, and he sends them up to the Hoose, but he'll no' let them enter. Syne the message comes back that the maister will see them the day after the morn, but till then naebody maun put a fit inside the gates.'

'What happened then?' Leithen asked with acute interest.

'It hasna happened—it's still happenin'! I never in my life heard sic a lot o' sweer words. Says ane, "Does the auld dotterel think he can defy the British Press? We'll mak his life no' worth leevin'." Says another, "I've come a' the gait frae London, and I'll no budge till I've seen the banes o' that Viking!" Ane or twa went back to Inverlarrig, but the feck o' them just scattered like pairicks. They clamb the wall, and they waded up the water, and they got in by the top o' the linns. In half an hour there was half-a-dizzen o' them inside the Strathlarrig policies. Man——' here he fixed his glowing eye on Leithen—'if ye had been on the Lang Whang this mornin' ye could have killed a fish and naebody the wiser.'

'Good Lord! Are they there still?'

'Na. They were huntit oot. Every man about the place was huntin' them, and Angus was roarin' like a bull. The young laird thoct they were Bolshies, and cam doun wi' a gun. Syne the auld man appeared and spoke them fair, and telled them he was terrible sorry, but he couldna see them for twa days, and if they contentit themselves that lang he would hae them a' to their denner and show them every-thing. After that they gaed awa, but there's aye mair arrivin', and I'm expectin' mair riots. They're forritsome lads, thae jornalists, and a

dour crop to shift. But they're kind folk, and gie'd me a shillin' apiece for advisin' them.'

'What did you advise?'

'I advised them to gang doun to Glenraden,' said Benjie, with an elfin smile. 'I said they should gang and howk in the Piper's Ring and they would maybe find mair treasure. Twa-three o' them got spades and picks and startit off. I'm thinkin' Macpherson will be after them wi' a whup.'

Leithen's brows were puckered in thought. 'It looks as if my bet with Archie wasn't so crazy after all. This invasion is bound to confuse Bandicott's plans. And you say it's still going on? The gillies will be weary men before night.'

'They will that,' Benjie assented. 'And there's no' a man o' them can rin worth a docken, except Jimsie. Thae jornalists was far soopler.'

'More power to the Press. Benjie, back you go and keep an eye on Strathlarrig, and stir up the jornalists to a sense of their rights. Report here this afternoon at four, for we should be on the move by six, and I've a lot to say to you.'

In the course of the morning Leithen went for a walk among the scaurs and dingles of Crask Hill. He followed a footpath which took him down the channel of a tiny burn and led to a little mantelpiece of a meadow, from which Wattie Lithgow drew a modest supply of bog-hay. His mind was so filled with his coming adventure that he walked with his head bent, and at a turn of the path nearly collided with a man.

Murmuring a gruff 'Fine day,' he would have passed on, when he became aware that the stranger had halted. Then to his consternation he heard his name uttered, and had perforce to turn. He saw a young man in knickerbockers and heavy nailed boots, who smiled diffidently, as if uncertain whether he would be recognised.

'Sir Edward Leithen, isn't it?' he said. 'I once had the pleasure of meeting you, sir, when you lunched with the Lobby journalists. I was then on the Lobby staff of the *Monitor*. My name is Crossby.'

'Of course, of course. I remember perfectly. Let's sit down, Mr Crossby, unless you're in a hurry. Where are you bound for?'

'Simply stretching my legs. I was climbing rocks at Sligachan when my paper wired me to come on here. The Press seems to have gone mad about this Viking's tomb—think they've got hold of a second Tutankhamen. So I got a fisherman to take me and my bicycle over to the mainland and bicycled the rest of the road. I thought I had a graft with old Bandicott, for I write for his paper—the *New York Bulletin*, you know—but it appears there's nothing doing. Odd business, for you don't

often find Americans shy of the Press. But I think I've found out the reason, and that makes a good enough story in itself. Perhaps you've heard it?

'No,' said Leithen, 'but I'd like to, if you don't mind. I'm not a journalist, so I won't give you away. Let's have it.'

He stole a glance at his companion, and saw a pleasant, shrewd, boyish face, with the hard sunburnt skin of one in the prime of physical condition. Like many others of his type Leithen liked journalists as much as he disliked men of letters—the former had their corners smoothed by a rough life, and lacked the vanity and spiritual pride of the latter. Also he had acquired from experience a profound belief in the honour of the profession, for at various times in his public career he had put his reputation into their hands, and they had not failed him. It was his maxim that if you tried to bamboozle them they were out for your blood, but that if you trusted them they would see you through.

'Let's hear it, Mr Crossby,' he repeated. 'I'm deeply interested.'

'Well, it's a preposterous tale, but the natives seem to believe it. They say that some fellow, who calls himself John Macnab, has dared the magnates in these parts to prevent his killing a stag or a salmon in their preserves. He has laid down pretty stiff conditions for himself, for he has to get his beast off their ground and hand it back to them. They say he has undertaken to pay five hundred pounds to any charity the owner names if he succeeds, and one thousand pounds if he fails—so he must have money to burn; and it appears that he has already paid the five hundred pounds. He started on Glenraden, and the old Highland chief there had every man and boy for three days watching the forest. Then on the third day, when everybody was on the mountain tops, in sails John Macnab and kills a stag under the house windows. He reckoned on the American's dynamite charges in his search for the Viking to hide his shot. And he would have got away with it too, if one of the girls hadn't appeared on the scene and cried 'Desist!' So what does this bandit do but off with his hat, makes his best bow, says "Madame, your servant," and vanishes, leaving the chief richer by a thousand pounds? It's Bandicott's turn to-day and to-morrow, and the Strathlarrig household is squatting along the river banks, and the hard-working correspondent is chivvied away till the danger is past. I'm for Macnab myself. It warms my heart to think that there's such a sportsman alive. It's pure Robin Hood.'

Leithen laughed. 'I back him too. Are you going to publish that story?'

'Yes, why not? I've written most of it, and it goes by the afternoon post.' Mr Crossby pulled out a note-book and fluttered the leaves.

'I call it "The Return of Harald Blacktooth." Rather neat, I think. The idea is that when they started to dig up the old fellow his spirit reincarnated itself in John Macnab. I hope to have a second instalment, for something's bound to happen at Strathlarrig to-day or to-morrow. Are you holidaying here, Sir Edward? Crask's the name of this place, isn't it? They told me that that mad fellow Roy-lance owned it.'

Leithen nodded. He was bracing himself for another decision of the same kind as he had taken when he met Fish Benjie. Providence seemed to be forcing him to preserve his incognito only by sharing the secret.

'But of course,' Mr Crossby went on, 'my main business here is the Viking, and I'm keen to find some way to get over Bandicott's reticence. I don't want to wait till the day after to-morrow and then come in with the ruck. I wonder . . . would it be too much to ask you to give me a leg up? I expect you know the Bandicotts?'

'Curiously enough, I don't. I am not sure how far I can help you, Mr Crossby, but I rather think you can help me. Are you, by any happy chance, a long-distance runner?'

The journalist opened his eyes. 'Well, I used to be. South London Harriers, you know. And I'm in fairly good condition at present after ten days on the Coolin rocks.'

'Well, if I can't give you a story, I think I can put you in the way of an adventure. Will you come up to Crask to luncheon and we'll talk it over?'

CHAPTER VII.—THE OLD ETONIAN TRAMP.

SIR ARCHIE got himself into the somewhat ancient dress-coat which was the best he had at Crask, and about half-past seven started his Hispana (a car in which his friends would not venture with him at the wheel) down the long hill to the gates of Strathlarrig. He was aware that somewhere in the haugh above the bridge was Leithen, but the only figure visible was that of Jimsie, the Strathlarrig gillie, who was moodily prowling about the upper end. As he passed the Wood of Larrigmore, Benjie's old pony was grazing at tether, and the old cart rested on its shafts. The embers of a fire still glowed among the pine needles, but there was no sign of Benjie. He was admitted after a parley by Mactavish the lodge-keeper, and when he reached the door of the house he observed a large limousine being driven off to the back premises by a very smart chauffeur. Only Haripol was likely to own such a car, and Sir Archie reflected with amusement that the host of John Macnab was about to attend a full conclave of the enemy.

The huge ugly drawing-room looked almost

beautiful in the yellow light of evening. A fire burned on the hearth, after the fashion of Highland houses even in warm weather, and before it stood Mr Acheson Bandicott with a small clean-shaven man, who was obviously the distinguished professor in whose honour the feast was given, and Colonel Raden, a picturesque figure in kilt and velvet doublet, who seemed hard put to it to follow what was clearly a technical colloquy. Agatha and Junius were admiring the sunset in the west window, and Janet was talking to a blonde young man, who seemed possessed of a singularly penetrating voice.

Sir Archie was unknown to most of the company, and when his name was announced every one except the professor turned towards him with a lively curiosity. Old Mr Bandicott was profuse in his welcome, Junius no less cordial, Colonel Raden approving, for indeed it was not in human nature to be cold towards so friendly a being as the laird of Crask. Sir Archie was apologetic for his social delinquencies, congratulatory about Harald Blacktooth, eager to atone for the past by an exuberant neighbourliness. 'Been havin' a rotten time with the toothache,' he told his host; 'I roost up alone in my little barrack, and keep company with birds. . . . Bit of a naturalist, you know. . . . Yes, sir, quite fit again, but my leg will never be much to boast of.'

Colonel Raden appraised the lean athletic figure. 'You've been our mystery man, Sir Archibald. I'm almost sorry to meet you, for we lose our chief topic of discussion.

You're fond of stalking, they tell me. When are you coming to kill a stag on Glenraden?'

'When will you ask me?' Sir Archie laughed. 'I'm still fairly good on the hill, but just now I'm sittin' indoors all day tuggin' at my hair and tryin' to compose a speech.'

Colonel Raden's face asked for explanations.

'Day after to-morrow in Muirtown. Big Conservative meetin', and I've got to start the ball. It's jolly hard to know what to talk about, for I've a pretty high average of ignorance about everything. But I've decided to have a shot at foreign policy. You see, Charles——' Sir Archie stopped in a fright. He had been within an ace of giving the show away.

'Of course. 'Pon my soul, I had forgotten you were our candidate. It's an uphill fight, I'm afraid. The people in these parts, sir, are the most obstinate reactionaries on the face of the globe, but they've been voting Liberal ever since the days of John Knox.'

Mr Bandicott regarded Sir Archie with interest. 'So you're standing for Parliament?' he said. 'Few things impress me more in Great Britain than the way young men take up public life as if it were the natural coping-stone to their education. We have no such tradition, and we feel the absence of it. Junius would as soon think of running for Congress as of keeping a saloon. Now I wonder, Sir Archibald, what induced you to take this step?'

But Sir Archie was gone, for he had seen the beckoning eyes of Janet Raden.

(Continued on page 196.)

ROTTEN ROW: A PUZZLING PLACE-NAME.

By DAVID MACRITCHIE.

IT is stated by Sir John Lindsay, Town Clerk of Glasgow, in his historical sketch of the city, that 'in 1611 James VI. made the city a royal burgh, and two years later added to it the lands of Rottenrow.' The name of these lands is still commemorated by the street so called, adjacent to the Cathedral; and no doubt the street crosses part of the estate made over by King James. This curious and unpleasant name is found in other parts of Scotland, as the following examples show.

Among the writs of the lands and barony of Oughtterlony, *alias* Kelly, in the county of Forfar, according to an inventory of 6th January 1561, is a Renunciation by Christina Bowack of Rottenraw. (See page 230 of the *Proceedings*, 1916-1917, of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.) This is the earliest mention of the name known to the present writer. An examination of the writs referred to would probably indicate a much earlier date. Dr John Milne, in his *Gaelic Place Names of the*

Lothians, furnishes two other examples, one in Midlothian and the other in East Lothian, but unfortunately he does not define their situation in more precise terms. It may be that his East Lothian specimen ought to be identified with the 'Rodenrow' at Pressmennan, a few miles south-west of Dunbar, which appears on the map of 1654 executed by John and Cornelius Blaeu. So far, these are the only examples noted by me in Scotland. The famous Rotten Row of Hyde Park, London, is pretty obviously in the same category. It may be assumed that, if one takes in the whole of Great Britain, the list can be largely extended, and that in nearly all the instances, if not in all, the name can be traced to one source.

Various surmises have been made with regard to this source. Beginning with the London instance, we find that Edward Walford (*Old and New London*, Vol. IV., pages 386 and 398), referring to a map of Hyde Park, about the year 1736 or 1737, states that it shows 'the two

roads running parallel to the Serpentine on the south, marked respectively as "The King's Old Road, or Lamp Road," and "The King's New Road"; the former corresponding nearly with the Rotten Row of our time, and the latter running, as now, inside the Park, close to the Knightsbridge Road and Kensington Gore. . . . It has been suggested that the name itself is a corruption of *Route du Roi* (the king's road); but Mr John Timbs says, "the name *Rotten* is traced to *rotteran*, to muster; a military origin which may refer to the Park during the Civil War." If we admit that *Route du Roi* might become corrupted into *Rotten Row*, that theory seems to derive support from the circumstance that the road in question, or one very near it, was known as 'The King's Old Road' in 1736. But the acceptance of this solution would mean that the English name had given place to a French equivalent after 1736, which latter, with great rapidity, and by a process difficult to follow, had assumed the shape of 'Rotten Row' during the eighteenth century. Sheridan's reference to 'the hack Bucephalus of Rotten Row,' in his play of *Pizarro*, shows that the present name was then (1799) well established.

The compilers of the *New English Dictionary* regard *Rotten Row* as 'apparently' a compound of the ordinary adjective 'rotten' and the noun 'row.' They add that 'the name was formerly applied to various streets in different towns, the reason for the application being usually obscure. In Scotland and the north of England the older form is usually *ratton raw* (see *RATTON* and *ROTTAN*), and thus apparently of different origin.' The former of these statements was made in ignorance of the fact that in Glasgow, in 1613, the name first occurs in connection with an estate, and that in the Forfarshire instance of 1561 it would seem also to have denoted an estate, and never to have been applied subsequently to a street. As for the suggestion that the spelling *ratton* points to a different origin from *rotten*, that carries little weight; for the suggestion is based on the fact that *ratton* means 'a rat,' as far back as the fourteenth century at least. But this meaning is also represented by the spelling *rottan*, and there is no vital difference in the various spellings and pronunciations of this word. However, the 'rat' explanation has been frequently advocated. Rats are still called *rattons*, *rottens*, or *rottens*, by dialect-speakers in Lowland Scotland and the northern half of England as far south as Cheshire. The advocates of this interpretation assume that the streets thus denominated were or are the homes of poor and miserable people, and that the contemptuous name of 'Rat Row' was bestowed upon such streets in allusion to their dirt and squalor. Now, although the rat theory may not satisfactorily explain 'Rotten Row,' it cannot be lightly dismissed. It may, for example, account

for the name of Rotten Calder Water given to the lower part of Calder Water in Lanarkshire. The Calder does not receive that prefix until after its conflux with the Rotten Burn as it enters the parish of Blantyre. The name, therefore, originates with the Burn, which, it is not unreasonable to assume, may have been infested with rottens or rats. Then, there is Rotten Cleuch in East Lothian, which may have been so called for the same reason.

Yet another theory is that the true explanation is to be found in the fact that the *rowan*, or berry of the mountain ash, is pronounced as *rodden* in some districts; notably in Caithness, Inverness-shire, Moray, and Banffshire, where people commonly talk of *roddens* and *rodden-trees*. The shades of pronunciation, vocalic or dental, are of no real importance. Thus, although the Lancashire dialect-speaker calls a rat a *rodden*, and not a *rotten*, he is not using a word that is essentially different from the latter form. There is, perhaps, more to be said for the mountain-ash (*Pyrus Aucuparia*) theory than any other. A special virtue used to attach to the rowan-tree and its berries, as a protective against witchcraft. 'I have tied red thread round the bairns' throats, and given ilk ane of them a riding-wand of rowan-tree, forby sewing up a slip of witch-elm into their doublets,' says Dame Glendinning to Father Eustace; 'and I wish to know of your reverence if there be any thing mair that a lone woman can do in the matter of ghosts and fairies?' 'Rowan-tree and reid threed gar the witches tyne their speed' is an old saying in Scotland. And the same superstition is found in England, from Northumberland to Kent. 'Witches have no power where there is rowan-tree wood' is a Yorkshire belief; and the Lincolnshire peasant plants several rowan-trees in his garden to ward off evil. Suppose this practice to be extended from cottages and farms to hamlets and villages, and a plausible enough explanation can be found for the existence of *rotten-rows* in every county of Great Britain.

Mention may also be made of what seems to be a secondary meaning of the word in its sense of 'rat.' The *English Dialect Dictionary* reports that in Banffshire *rottan* is applied to 'a person of small stature, often with the idea of a dark complexion and a profusion of hair.' With this meaning in view, *Rotten Row* might be regarded as an analogue of the *Tinkler Row* found in more southern localities.

It is recognised by all students of place-names that the first thing to do is to try to discover the earliest form of the word in question. Place-names have a knack of getting so corrupted in the course of time that their true meaning becomes quite obscured. Time, patience, and united effort are therefore all required before the correct solution of many names can be arrived at.

MAN—OR BEAST?

CHAPTER III.

I.

FIVE men and their host sat round Colonel Buxton's shining mahogany dinner-table. The naked-footed servants in their broad red belts, white clothes and turbans, had vanished, leaving the sahibs to their wine.

'Yes,' said Professor Peddle, the well-known anthropologist, in reply to a remark of Frome's, 'it was extremely lucky that I was in Bombay, and that you, Buxton, read the announcement of my arrival in the *Pioneer*.' He paused to add iced water to his port, to the secret mirth of the rest, even of the colonel, whose wines were the best in the station.

'I would gladly have travelled another thousand miles to inspect that find of yours,' Peddle continued, in his rather high-pitched, meticulously careful voice; 'I had always wished to examine the Siwalik Hills; the South Kensington Museum has interesting fossil remains obtained from them. But I never had leisure to come so far up-country, until your letter arrived telling me of the find, and so kindly offering to put Hart and myself up, just when we had some time to spare before our expedition to Burma. The colonel and I were at Cambridge together,' he added to his neighbour, Leyton.

'What do you make of these fossils, professor? We haven't heard much,' said Frome.

Peddle, well-fed, and wiping watered port from his lips, turned benignly on the questioner, his fox-coloured beard fluffing slightly in the wind from the over-head fan. 'I will try not to be too technical,' he smiled, as if at a schoolboy; 'they were the fossilised skeletons of one of the earliest types of the human race. They date from—I suppose it would mean little to you in geological ages—from the period when the British Isles, as such, did not exist, since they were part of the vast tract of tropical swamp and forest now called Europe. The unusually heavy rains you have had this season no doubt caused the landslide which exposed portions of the remains, fossilised in the limestone. What is peculiar is the fact that the creatures appear to have been herded together in a cave—eight of them. The cave had fallen in—earthquakes were frequent in those ages—but I found traces of its existence; and in my opinion it was the lime-drip from its roof which so perfectly preserved the remains.' He looked round the attentive circle, blinking. 'It is possible that these semi-apes—one can scarcely call them men—were almost the last survivors of their kind lurking in the fastnesses of the Siwaliks; and that a slightly higher type had evolved—from them, of course—a type

distinguished by having discovered the making of fire.'

'Can you account for so many dying in one place?' asked Buxton.

'I can only conjecture, my dear colonel,' answered the professor, leaning back with his finger-tips together. 'The ape-men of those times were arboreal, like the orang-utans of the Malay forests to-day. They built shelters in trees, and lived in them, not in caves. A natural forest fire may have driven these—ahem!—ancestors of ours into the cave. But possibly, though not probably, their slightly superior descendants, finding their progenitors' savagery inconvenient, set the jungle alight, and blocked the cave when their relations had taken refuge inside.'

'Ah,' said Buxton thoughtfully, 'then they'd have died frenzied with rage against the fire-makers.'

Peddle looked at him as if he thought the remark rather childish.

II.

'By the way, Major Leyton,' said the professor, 'I heard something about your seeing unaccountably large monkeys not far from the landslide; that your chauffeur saw them also, and was killed by jumping out of the car in a panic. Is that correct?'

'More or less,' said Leyton, glancing cryptically at the colonel.

'They would have been langurs,' settled Peddle, refusing the itinerant port with a deprecating hand; 'no larger monkeys than those remain in the Siwaliks, of course. Strange that your man should have been alarmed by them; I imagined natives were used to monkeys.'

Again Leyton looked at the colonel.

'Well, they weren't—quite ordinary monkeys, you know,' supplied Buxton, lighting a fresh cigarette. 'One of them sprang at the car—Leyton felt it claw his arm. His driver was either hauled out or jumped out, and was somehow taken down the *khud* and into the *rhoo* below. We found him with a dislocated shoulder and a badly sprained ankle. He couldn't possibly have got where we found him by his own locomotion, if he'd been all night about it.'

'Dear me—dear me,' remarked Peddle, stroking his beard, as if trying to keep it tidy. 'Very strange . . . but—forgive me, Buxton—you know we men of science are trained in a strict school—he looked across at his junior colleague, Hart—'and one or two—er—debatable points occur to the factual scientific

mind, without the faintest reflection on your accuracy, major!' He smiled, blinking his near-set eyes at Leyton.

'Let's have the points, professor,' said the latter pleasantly. But there was no need for encouragement—Peddle was marshalling his arguments.

'The whole affair—the chauffeur's panic, injuries and death—are satisfactorily explained by assuming that he saw a group of langurs in the road. Their size was exaggerated by the semi-darkness, and in an access of fear he sprang from the car and rolled down the bank to the river-bed. As to the monkeys—wild animals, dazzled by the lights, have been known to leap on a car. No doubt one of the langurs did so leap, and it was its paws which you felt on your arm.' He swept the circle, as if to say, 'How about that for unanswerable commonsense?'

'A very sound and likely theory,' said Buxton mildly; 'but I'd like to supply one or two facts which haven't been mentioned.'

John Leonard sat watching intently; he was the youngest member of the party, and the most obviously intrigued.

'By all means, my dear colonel,' invited Peddle, helping himself to iced water; 'I hope I can always keep an open mind.'

'Well, one curious point is, we found the driver mother-naked. Frome picked up bits of his clothes, mere rags.'

'Got 'em here,' announced Frome, pulling some white and khaki pieces from his pocket; 'thought they might be useful as evidence.'

The professor glanced at the rags. 'To that "evidence,"' he said, with a twist of his lips, 'I reply that either the thorns he rolled through tore his clothes to ribbons, or, more likely, mad with fear, he tore them himself.'

'Ever torn khaki drill to bits with your hands?' said Leyton, with a grin.

'Madmen,' instructed Peddle, 'as is well known, have supernatural strength.'

'One more point,' continued Buxton; 'there were some very curious marks on the poor chap's flesh—contused bruises. The only others I've seen like them were those on a Malay who'd been handled by an orang-utan. The beast had been caught in a net, and the man had come too near. It grabbed him by the leg and was pulling him towards the net. He'd have been dismembered if some one hadn't held a burning stick to its paw.'

The professor gazed at Buxton. 'Do you mean to tell me,' he uttered solemnly, 'that you believe the chauffeur was carried off, and his clothes ripped from him, by *monkeys*—monkeys the size of orang-utans? My dear fellow, I'm afraid you've all been hypnotised! The unfortunate man, of course, was the victim of what I believe is known by psychologists as a veridical hallucination.'

'Which is a contradiction in terms, isn't it?'

said Buxton lightly; 'veridical meaning "true," and hallucination, "an unfounded and mistaken notion," so my dictionary says.'

'As to the marks on the skin,' pursued Peddle, ignoring the interruption, 'you, as a doctor, surely know that there are attested cases where the subjects' minds have induced imprints, even wounds, on their bodies, in keeping with the character of their obsession—the stigmata, for example.'

'That's true, but it wasn't done in a short time. It was the result of long and tremendous concentration. The human mind can do weird things to its body, but so far as I'm aware, it can't bring out the prints of gigantic hands in the space of half-an-hour.'

'One doesn't know—one doesn't know . . .' murmured the professor, frowning up at the fan as if he had just discovered what was taking liberties with his beard; 'the human mind is a wonderful thing. . . .' He took a toothpick from his waistcoat pocket and put it to its intended use, with the air of having nothing better to do for the moment.

'Shall we sit outside?' suggested Buxton; 'it's fairly cool out there.'

III.

They settled in a semi-circle of basket-chairs in the wide, electric-lit veranda, and the servants served coffee. The little throbbing lights of fireflies drifted among the giant bamboos in the garden; a small owl swooped to the gravel and vanished with some insect prey. The professor, who had refused coffee and smokes, sat slouched, apparently watching the fireflies, while the others discussed the usual topics of an Indian station. Suddenly he sat up, blinking at Buxton.

'I should like to return to our muttons—or rather our monkeys—that is, if no one objects?' he said suavely. 'I feel it is a pity to leave the subject undetermined. I have a passion for truth; Hart will endorse that.' Hart nodded loyally. 'I confess I should like to sift . . . shall we say—er—the illusory?—from the real, in this matter.'

'Same here,' said Leyton; 'but how are you going to do it?'

'First, by asking who, besides the chauffeur, can testify that he actually saw these—magnified monkeys. Mr Frome, you were there, I am told. Did you see them?'

'No,' admitted Frome, 'but——' He stopped.

'Pardon me, "but" what?'

'I believe they were there.'

Peddle sighed gently. 'Why do you believe it?'

'I'd rather not say at present. I'll leave it to the colonel to do the arguing.'

'I pass on,' submitted Peddle resignedly. 'You, captain—er—Leonard, were not there.'

The boy next to Buxton got very red. 'No, sir,' he jerked, 'but another time, in the

Siwaliks—sitting up for tiger—I saw them, by lightning. . . . Long before I'd heard a word about them.'

'Stout feller!' said the colonel, for Leonard's ear only.

Peddle glanced at the youngster with a slight, indulgent smile and no remark. He turned to Leyton. 'You were there, major; you felt a paw; did you *see* anything?'

Leyton blew out cigarette smoke with energy. 'I had the same silly hallucination as the rest,' he said dryly. 'I drove right into three of the devils—they simply vanished—didn't clear out of the way. Something gave me a very useful claw. I saw several more down the *khud*, and one holding to an aloe by the roadside.'

Peddle blinked at him. 'Your wife was there, I heard. Did she see them?'

'She saw what I did. We talked it over next day—couldn't keep off it. She was uncommonly plucky; insisted on going back to look for our man, though she was ill with fright. I don't mind saying I was in a blue funk myself.'

'Just so. Naturally, you were both affected by your man's behaviour. There remains you, colonel, who saw nothing, but believed on the testimony of the others and the condition of the injured man—'

'You're going a little too fast, Peddle,' put in Buxton, smiling. 'Did I say I didn't see anything?'

'I assumed—'

'But one mustn't assume in cross-examination, you know; assumption isn't evidence.'

The professor bowed, smiling a trifle wryly. 'I am corrected, my dear Buxton; I assume—nothing! Did you see the phantom apes?'

'I did.' The colonel's voice was casual. There followed a pregnant silence. Peddle blinked hard at his host.

'After the major had told you what he had seen?'

'He told me nothing until the next day, except that his man had jumped out of the car, and Mrs Leyton had seen him in the *rhov*. Perhaps it was thought-reading?'

'Telepathy; it is just possible,' enunciated Peddle. 'Now, Buxton, I should like to hear precisely *what* you . . . saw?'

'I'll tell you. I saw a bunch of what at first I took to be natives round some object in the *rhov*. What non-plussed me was, they were very faintly luminous. Then, during a longish blaze of lightning, I saw for certain that they weren't human, in the ordinary sense. They were like big, powerful apes. Most of them were upright, their hands reaching nearly to the ground; two of them seemed to be pawing a prone figure. The hallucination was strong enough to **make me fire**, not exactly in the hope of **hitting them**, but in case it might scare the brutes off. It was when I was ex-

amining the cliff on the far side of the *rhov* a few days later, for traces of shot, that I came upon the land-slide and the partly exposed fossils.'

'And when you reached the chauffeur, the "brutes" *had* been scared off?'

'There was nothing visible but the man, until Frome was carrying him back. When we were nearly at the bank below the road, I looked behind during a flash of lightning. The creatures were standing in the *rhov*, about where I'd first seen them; they seemed to be watching us.'

'Did you question the man when he regained consciousness?'

'He never did. I worked at him, on and off, for nearly two days, but he was in a cataleptic state, and died from shock.'

'Ah, *cataleptic*!' stressed Peddle; 'a neurotic subject.'

'High-strung, but otherwise quite normal. A mechanic brother of his, whom I saw after the death, told me Joseph had never had any sort of seizure, and was perfectly healthy.'

Peddle nodded politely. 'I give it up, my friends; I am only a poor man of science, and what am I among so many believers!' His tone was facetious, but there was the faint trace of a sneer.

IV.

'Let's get off the spooks,' said Frome; 'they give me the creeps.' He caught Buxton's eye, and the latter gave an almost imperceptible nod.

'Get the colonel to tell us about some of his experiments, professor,' Frome added. 'He showed me some queer results the other day.'

'I shall be charmed, Buxton,' responded Peddle, his benignity restored; 'anything concerned with scientific fact commands my sincere interest and respect.'

'What sort of experiments, colonel?' asked Leyton.

'Well, I won't be too technical'; Buxton shot a humorous glance at Frome. 'They're some I made in connection with photography. It was before the recent publicity given to spirit photographs, but I'd heard enough about it to set me thinking. I wondered if some of those "spirit" photos—those in which faking or other fraud had been absolutely excluded by precautions—weren't the records of the mind-pictures of the sitters at the séances. . . . People with uncommon power of thought-projection, who thought, as it were, with a high-voltage current.'

'It seemed to me that the most likely field for experiment would be a person in a state of unconsciousness, after some violent shock or emotion. I thought that a very powerful sight-impression might sink down into the sub-consciousness, and stay there for a time, dominant. It remained to be proved whether it would dominate sufficiently to register itself objectively. I contrived a special camera, which I perfected by degrees. I can't explain how the plates are

sensitised; they aren't by any means the ordinary kind. . . . This is rather a dull preamble, I'm afraid; I'll fetch the photos.' He went into the bungalow.

'A clever man—a remarkably clever man,' ruminated Peddle aloud; 'strange that he should—'

Buxton returned with a cardboard portfolio, cleared a space on a table under a light, and opened the case.

Every one gathered round except Frome, who sat where he was, hardly taking his eyes from the professor.

'I'd better explain one or two things before you see the prints,' said Buxton. 'They're highly enlarged, which gives a woolly effect. There was never a double image on any plate; it was always unified, as by the ordinary process of sight. And an interesting point is, that the better educated the mind was which had received the impression, the clearer and more life-like was the reproduction. Which goes to prove, in black and white, that *how* we see is governed by the degree to which our brains are cultivated.'

'Then they're really brain photos?' said Hart.

'It's as good a name as any other. They really belong to the mysterious borderline between the physical and the psychical. I found it was absolutely necessary that the eyes should have seen the object in a strong light, and that it should have stamped itself with horror or fear on the mind's eye. The eyes were the best transmitters, though acting through closed lids. But sometimes, when I experimented without the camera, and with plates wrapped in black material, fixed on the forehead, I got results too, only not nearly so definite as when the plates were in contact with the eyes. All of these prints were got from people in an unconscious—or, as one ought to say, a sub-conscious—state.'

He took out the uppermost photo and handed it to Peddle.

'What—er—is this supposed to represent?' asked the professor, fixing Buxton over the rims of the pince-nez he had put on to examine the print.

'That's a negro woman's "ideograph" of a West African witch-doctor. He'd been "doctoring" her for weeks, before I was called in by her husband, who had a strain of white in him. I got this portrait of the devil-doctor the day before she died. He'd sat over her for hours, every day, under an awning of matting outside the hut, and his hideous phiz had got well into her brain. She was scared to death of him; she knew he was poisoning her.'

'Buxton,' said the professor judicially, 'I'm going to put a straight question. Is this, or is it not, a hoax—a fake?'

'Quite a natural question—it's a new departure, and I know it seems rather incredible. A Frenchman has done the same thing, as a

matter of fact, and published the results. No, all these prints are entirely genuine, not even touched up.'

'Astonishing . . . astonishing!' ejaculated Peddle. 'My dear fellow, this must have made your name—'

'Oh, he's a very big bug now, professor,' said Frome; 'got half-a-dozen swell letters after his name, but he's so beastly modest?'

Buxton laughed boyishly.

'What's this one, colonel?' asked Leyton, taking up the next print, which had lain face downwards.

'It appears to be the head of a wild beast; yes, a kind of tiger,' said Peddle, peering.

'Rather impressionistic, but the beast was springing. The man it was coming for looked up from his work to see it flying through the air at him. I was staying with a planter in Assam, and one of his coolies was struck down by an old man-eater in broad daylight. The man must have fainted with fright the instant he saw the tiger. . . . No, he got over it—he'd hardly been pounced on before the other men came to the rescue. He was a long time coming round, but I knew he was all right, and I kept the plate against his eyes for about half-an-hour. It's a bit primitive; the open jaws evidently impressed the poor beggar most—the beast is all mouth and teeth.'

v.

'I am dumbfounded!' sighed Peddle. 'I am consumed with curiosity to see the rest! You told us that in proportion to the education of the person, so are the "ideographs" true to life; have you one projected by a civilised mind?'

'Or connected with a crime?' asked Hart wistfully. All but Peddle laughed.

'Well, I have one that supplies both those requirements, but I can't show it. I suppose I oughtn't to have kept it, but it's always locked up.'

'Story! story!' demanded Leyton, thumping the table.

'It's a tragic story, of several years ago now. Sorry, but I can't tell it. Someone might guess who the people concerned were—they were well known in society. The real facts were never published.'

'By jove!' exclaimed Hart with relish, 'this discovery of yours starts a new era in the detection of crime; doesn't it, colonel?'

'Not quite so sensational as that, I'm afraid,' said Buxton, amused. 'It's so seldom that circumstances allow of my bag of tricks being used with any success.'

'What about the sort of case we were discussing this evening?' asked Peddle; 'I mean hallucinations—delusions, and so on. Can they be reproduced on your plates?'

'They never are,' said Buxton slowly, 'and I've experimented with them often enough. I was once in charge of a big lunatic asylum in

England. All sorts of obsessions, manias, hauntings, I lived with for two years, many of them minutely described by the sufferers—natural and fabulous beasts, gigantic birds, imaginary human beings, even devils. Whenever there was a chance, during unconsciousness, usually coma or catalepsy, I tried my dodge in the hope of registering something, but the plates were always completely blank.

'Intensely interesting,' brooded Peddle. 'It suggests many avenues of thought—'

'What's this one?' broke in Leyton, whom the professor bored. He picked up a print which, like the others, was face-downwards.

He made a low, inarticulate sound. 'Good Lord, colonel. . . . It's one of those horrible mugs on the Mohand Road. . . . Joseph's impression, of course, as it glared close to the poor chap's face!'

Peddle, almost snatching the print from him, stared at it, mouthing soundlessly. '. . . A—a species of anthropoid ape,' he managed at last. 'Surely, colonel, you got this from—'

'I got that print,' interrupted Buxton suavely, 'from a man who saw the thing by lightning. It's one of the "hallucinations" which killed Leyton's driver.'

THE END.

THE VELVET CARPET.

By FREDERICK GRAVES.

AT last the summit!

I paused, rather breathless, and gazed around at the awe-inspiring scene lit, as by an old-world flame, by the autumn sunset; the far wild peaks, jagged and black against a sky of molten gold with carmine flakes; deep in the glooming gulf below, the dim purple of the loch. It was strangely lonely, silent, and still—there was no wind—and very cold, and I turned to descend once more into the world of life ere the light should fail, when I caught sight of a tiny red patch on the ben-side. It was an awkward place to reach, skirting as it did a precipitous corrie that had patches of snow in its crannies, but I got to it and gathered a tuft of the precious treasure—a rare *Andrea*, the mountain moss.

Many people will recall the old school-book story of 'Eyes and No Eyes.' How often is it illustrated in our walks through life, where we pass every day some wonderful thing till, perhaps, a little incident makes us peer into and see it with new eyes. I often think of this in connection with those wonderfully beautiful and common objects the mosses, for few people who see every day the tiny patches of vivid green realise what a wealth of beauty is to be found in them by the nature student.

The study of the mosses has been curiously neglected, even by the botanist, and had it not been for the work of a few enthusiasts we should know little about them to-day. Yet though they are lowly, and often minute, things that need a lens, and even a microscope, to reveal their full beauties, they make a fascinating study, especially in the winter days, when they are at their best.

And they are everywhere. On each old wall one may find sometimes a wonderful variety of species forming, with their every shade of green and brown and yellow, the 'velvet carpet' of which a poet has sung. On each old roof or

dyke will be the little bosses of *Tortula*, the wall-screw. In the hedges there are the trailing *Hypnum*s, such as the fern-like tamarisk moss. On the banks are the *Bryum*s with the drooping capsules. In the woods are the bushy *Polypodium*s with their yellow starry flowers. On the moors are the white lumps of *Glucobryum*, looking like pale, spiny hedgehogs. On the hills are the bristly *Campylopus*, often red or sooty black, or *Racomitium*, that gives quite a gray look to the landscape where it is plentiful. If you look at it under a strong lens you will see that every long sword-like leaf tapers off into a curling toothed transparent point, and that gives the glassy-gray look to the hill-side. Then there are the *Sphagnum*s of the bogs, spongy things of remarkable beauty, full of water, and of every colour from white to green and bright red. These are a few outstanding types.

They are always there, they need little seeking and no chasing, and all you need for the study of them is a pocketful of bits of paper to enfold each specimen, a lens (or better, a microscope), and perhaps a little book on the subject to identify each species.

And it is a delightful winter and fire-side study. You have only to take out one of your specimens and dip it in warm water to find it as fresh as ever. You can keep them in papers, in little boxes (pill or ointment), or press and mount them on paper. And once you start collecting you will become every day more and more astonished at their species and varieties. You will soon learn to know a sphagnum from a dicranum, and, if you have a microscope, you will find that the preparation of leaf specimens of the different kinds will grip you with a fascination that perhaps no other nature study has the power to do. There are few things more beautiful, when you come to look into them, than the treasures of the poet's 'velvet carpet.'

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

ONE chief enemy of the devil in a disturbed and aggravating world is evidently music. The truth of this serious and considered statement may be granted after short reflection. No doubt exists that since the War, and as the result of it, with its demoralising and disintegrating influences, a serious decline in the state and standard of civilisation has taken place. The extent of this decline is variously estimated, according to whether he who thinks upon it is optimistic and careless, or pessimistic and acutely analytical, but that in some measure it exists is agreed by all. In commercial quarters we are assured that the standard of business honesty has fallen some degrees. Prosecutions for fraudulent proceedings are more numerous than ever before, and the faults are more shameful. Robberies and burglaries are amazing in their number and the rascally boldness with which they are perpetrated. Offences against the social standards have been multiplied enormously; the old social virtues are regarded contemptuously. Night-clubs flourish, and the nobility, the rich, and the merely-foolish are arrested in them in the cold, dark hours of early morning, completing a night's revelries by infringement of Acts of Parliament regarding the sale and consumption of alcoholic refreshments. A large proportion of the population approve of some of these proceedings, being persons whose spirits have absorbed the new tendencies. They are chiefly the young, so young that they have really only begun development since the War, and have never known what it is to be good and nice, and yet not dull nor finding life a stupid show. A decline in civilisation is logically a reaction towards savagery, and as we look on London in these times, brilliant as it is, keen, delightful still in many respects, stimulating, we may see the savage tendencies, the crude barbaric elements of raw animal man at work. The old crust of civilisation is thin indeed. Tall buildings and fine clothes are not the signs of what we mean by civilisation, nor yet the inventions that inflame our wonderment. Science and discovery had reached such a mark that the sudden revelation of a number of Nature's secrets was inevitable, and though the flight of aeroplanes and the transmission

of sounds for long distances through the air were great achievements, in a few years they will be like commonplace conveniences, for, after all, they, with other inventions, are simple applications of natural facts and forces. What are such things compared with my sitting here in London and seeing and talking—just in the way of ordinary tea-time conversation—with a person in New Zealand, with whom I thus switch up at thought?—as may be our privilege and convenience at some not distant time. If sound can travel so easily, sight may do likewise, while mountains and stone walls may be no more impediment for one than for the other. A certain advantage will be presented here; one of our sons' concerns will be to avoid being thus switched upon when wanting privacy. For all the tendencies of life are against the maintenance of any sort of isolation and solitude, delicious as they have been.

* * *

We who live now are the last for a long time who may know how sweet the pleasures of solitude can be. Two years ago I dwelt in the Sahara desert for a short spell of time, and in superbest solitude I would creep from my oasis near the time of sunset out towards the gold horizon, past the last tents of the Bedouins, and with nothing but the endless desert flatness and straightness before me, watch the wide red sun go down, when it seemed that Silence herself called for a greater silence still. But now, there lies upon my table here a pamphlet telling of the conditions of a tourist expedition with regular times of departure across this Sahara desert, right through to Timbuctoo, by ordinary automobiles and others with wheels of the caterpillar kind, a journey that, with camels, not ten years back, was regarded as one of the most dangerous adventures in the world, along a track strewn with the bones of men who had tried and failed, and lain down to die of thirst. The programme here tells me that in the most dangerous and isolated parts of the desert small hotels will be erected, and there will be baths and French cooking for all of us. Likewise there will be jazz bands and cocktail bars. O, sad Sahara now! For future solitude only the poles are left, and hardly the poles since the wireless

transmissions may permeate the uttermost distance and recess. The next man to reach the South Pole may, for his spiritual refreshment after labour, sit him down and listen to the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven projected through the world from Chelmsford. And again, what are our modern wonders compared to our seeing—as one day we may be privileged to see—on the cinema screens real moving pictures, taken from the living original and not from modern actors, of the great events of Biblical history, of Alexander achieving some of his conquests, of Cæsar marching victorious into Rome, of Henry the Fifth at Agincourt, of Christopher Columbus first gazing upon the New World, of Michael Angelo engaged upon great paintings, of Shakespeare busy in the theatres of London? Soon, not long perhaps from now, seeing the speed of advance as the full scientific momentum has been attained, these things may be viewed as realities upon the screen, revived after all the ages of obscurity, because scientists of imagination believe—and it is plainly obvious deduction from known facts and circumstances—that by light and its friends in the world of Nature impressions of all that has ever happened have been made upon the stones and other things about, and it is but a question of recovery. Even easier is it to believe that our early posterity, if not ourselves, will listen in their chambers not merely to music broadcast at the time of its being played at London, Bournemouth, Aberdeen, and sundry other centres, but that they will hear the chanting of the early Christian pilgrims, hear the cymbals, harps, and lutes as they were played in the days of the Old Testament, fresh from that time—not imitations thereof, but the original music. This we may comprehend, since now we understand so much about the waves of sound floating through the ether, their seeming indestructibility, their magical persistence. They linger always in the air, and some day science will extract them all again. For many of our seemingly magical discoveries and inventions we do but work on the simplest and most absolute axiom of science, that nothing is ever destroyed, or made void in the sense of complete non-existence, nor can be. What has been is, and remains, though there may be transmutations, and in that is all the hope and all the fear for the future.

* * *

But in all such wonder and advancement, where then the supposed savagery and the tendency to it, and where the reforming influence of music? It seems that the whirling stress of present life and the intoxication of amazing change have much disturbed the balance of the human mind, already upset by four years of bloody horror, and reaction towards a certain measure of barbarism may be natural and inevitable. It may even be bene-

ficial, if it advances not too far. Next we observe that music, and what we regard as good music, is in vastly greater demand and supply to-day than ever before. Here are two prime facts, presenting a high significance. A thousand persons know and listen to the works of Beethoven, Mozart, and Elgar for each one who knew and listened only ten years ago. They may listen to them in that lonely desert; even the Bedouins may hear them. Music is being flung through every inch of space in either hemisphere, and caught upon every spot on land and by the ships at sea. I was coasting down African waters in a tiny steamer not long ago, and we used to listen to the bands being played in Paris. Some sort of music is saturating all the world. The gramophone and the radio broadcasting have done it, and by much hearing the people are beginning to understand and sympathise; they can appreciate differences and appraise an excellence. Now, we should not regard this new universal vogue of music as a merely adventitious happening. We see mankind, having been strained too much with pain and with excitement, losing its head and tumbling towards demoralisation and savagery, and at this crisis the world is strewn with music, all the sweetest, finest music. All the people who before had listened only to crude brass bands and tunes, hear now the noble and delicious compositions of the masters. It is true that the high people of music, they who have known and understood it all the time, and have been finely cultivated in theory and practice—some of whom are called 'high-brows,' because they disdain what the people love, and devote themselves to intricate profundities—deprecate this circumstance because, as they would say, firstly, it is not music, and secondly, it is vulgar. Such is their peevish way, but it matters little. It has the effect of music. Music differs from the other arts in the intensity of its temporary effects upon the human mind. It is an anodyne; it is a benevolent drug. Lovers of pictorial art, with discrimination and taste finely trained, rarely feel a beating of the heart when gazing upon a masterpiece, and more seldom is their vision blurred by tears of emotion. Yet music often draws the tears. It sucks them to the eyes of emotional men and women who have stood taut against the tenderest and most pathetic passages in novels and plays to which others have succumbed. When the war was waged what onlooker did not feel his pulse to leap and beat when soldiers were marching through the streets with the drum and fife ahead of them, expressing the most infinite pathos through the shrillest of sounds? So now we say that the savagery of modern life, or the tendency to it, is being counteracted by this anodyne, universally spread over the world at the moment when most needed, soothing it and purifying. And so that

old tag of Congreve, after all its long, unthinking, hackneyed use, comes up with a new truth brilliantly displayed—'Music has charms to soothe a savage breast.' And it is enticing people back to homes they had deserted, so that they may listen to it—'listen in.' That in itself is a tremendous movement. It soothes them there after the rack and strain outside. This anodyne will work on all. I surmise that even certain burglars might hesitate amid their burgling were the right music played to them at the moment of their operations, though a simple spoken homily in parsonic vein would fail. It is the great tranquilliser.

* * *

Here we have a revolution. Being spiritual, affecting profoundly the nature of the people, and not merely assisting them in convenience and hurrying on their lives, it is of enormous potentiality. This sweetening of the human spirit of the masses, the new dominating interest flooded through their minds, the enticement back to home, may prove to be a revolution of greater consequence than those prepared by politicians. You cannot unceasingly pour the sweet sounds of Bach and Mendelssohn upon the human spirit, however simple it may be, without some notable result. The higher musical people may regard it with disdain, but once they, too, were among the ignorant. The education of the music-lover is like a set of flashes. He listens to the loud broadcasting, then he wishes for repetition upon the gramophone, and more and more until to his awakening sense the inner meanings and beauties of compositions reveal themselves. Then he reads, and he must attend good concerts. Soon the day comes when he must study and play some instrument himself. More cheap violins have been sold to the common people, determined to teach themselves to play, during the last three years than in the previous thirty. Near to my dwelling is a workshop, and, my window open, I hear all the day one of the men whistling parts of many famous compositions. Opposite my door is a church, and on Tuesdays the knowing vicar holds a chamber concert for four stringed instruments for an hour from one o'clock, deserving his reward; while on Fridays at the same hour there is always an organ recital. The people want more music, and they ask for it everywhere. The superior musicians in their hearts dislike the invasion of the common people. They themselves sheer away into unexplored regions, leaving old favourites and masters behind. A musician of great culture and keen prejudice assured me the other day that now as not before he regarded Beethoven's *Kreutzer* Sonata as rubbish, and he named many others of the popular classics in the same contemptuous way, while it appeared that of recent years, since gramophones began, melodies have made him sick. He is one of

many. The critics and the explainers would rather peer into some question of a dominant eleventh, or search for an inaudible fault in playing, than tell of the meaning of the themes, the relation of the parts, their qualities and effect. They have little to say of the composers now; only what they themselves would do. But the common people, like myself, are attracted by the explanations of the inspirations and meanings and constructions of the old masters, as set forth on the programmes of the Promenade Concerts at the Queen's Hall, which are the most delightful feature of the late summer and early autumn season in London.

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What the people desire is to feel the human side of music, feel it in their hearts and souls, and the exclusivists have wandered off into their new country, disdaining all as they attach themselves to intricacies and discordant depths. The people like better to hear little tales about the great composers, telling of their temperaments, their weakness and strength, inspirations and influences. Now they know well the music of Grieg's *Peer Gynt*, and they are interested in the personality of this genius who could suggest the wild fantasies of semi-barbarism so finely, refining his compositions in a hut he had made for himself some distance from his house, where he could not be pestered by his friends—though certainly the common folk did sometimes creep up to this retreat and listen through the cracks to the delights being prepared within. Nor do the people miss the point that this man, whose music takes our fancies to the mountains, had for grandfather Alexander Greig, of Aberdeen, who, after '45, left his native land for Norway and varied the spelling of his name. They like to hear again of Schubert—whom they took to heart when *Lilac Time*, the play with Schubert's songs, was done in this country—filled with music almost every minute of his thirty-one years of life, singing, singing all the time, and always so much held by his own songs being made within him that he could compose his lovely serenade while watching a game of skittles and write down the notes on a scrap of paper. And now that the people know and understand the dreamy beauty of *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* they must reflect upon Debussy as the wonderful lover of Nature, understanding the nuances of her moods most marvellously. In the days before these people found their new delight they used to think there was in Nature no sort of music, only loud sounds at times like thunder, or the moaning of the wind. But just as he who, in ripe years, first toying in the country with a box of paints, the trees and the hills, the stream and the silver road before him, discovers the enchanting variety and fascination of Nature's colour and her shapes, so shall our new music

lovers hear the sweet sounds of Nature as not before, feeling that the crooning of the breeze through summer leaves of trees, while a linnet takes the solo in this divine concerto, or the soft ripple of a rill, is as music of the gods. Fritz Kreisler, the enrapturing violinist, the other day had something to say of Nature's music that caught our fancy. He spoke of the wind being the tonal background of much of Nature's music; its song, he said, murmurs of joy as it glides through the fields of corn. The most beautiful of all music, thinks Kreisler, is the song of the forest. He would repose among the pines for long and long, and would hear the wind singing through, while the birds were piping and the insects droned their tune. But Kreisler is not attracted by the sound of the sea, which is strange, though he explains what almost is an antipathy. But surely the moan and the roar of the waves, telling of the infinite with pathetic grandeur, is as the greatest of all music.

* * *

The inclination of the people seems to tally with a certain general movement in the world of art. Signs are shown of a coming return to sweet simplicity, abandoning all the discordant eccentricities favoured by certain sects in art. The election of Sir Frank Dicksee to the presidency of the Royal Academy the other day was a token of great importance, for he is no faddist or eccentric, no obscurist of any kind, but one who catches at charms in human life and paints them for his pictures. In music the people love melody, and they shall have melody. More and more lovely melody will be composed. The 'high-brows' scarcely like it. Had they dared, their supporting critics would have said slighting things about the music of Puccini when he died a few weeks back, this wonderful Italian who gave more pleasure and delight to people everywhere than did any

government of any country in his time. One is inclined to think that more have been led from a desert of ignorance and indifference into the enchanted palaces of great music by Puccini than through any other influence, because in their vacuity, yet with vigilant perceptions, they have delighted in *Madame Butterfly* and *La Bohème*, and thence have passed to other and less delicate opera. Those two, with *La Tosca*, were, by general feeling, Puccini's greatest work, and he must have been over-estimating his inspiration when once he said that he had enough music in his head for forty more operas, could he only get the right libretti. More ponderous and weighty, there was surely something missing in *La Tosca* that was contained in the other two favourites; and what was it? What drew the people to *Butterfly* and *Bohème*, sometimes without their exactly knowing why, was the remarkable atmospheric effects that the composer gained. The peculiar haunting pathos that begins immediately with *Butterfly* and runs through it all, establishing the scene, the sense, the tragedy, and the strange sad charm exactly, is bewitching. It is an effect that one might have thought was gained accidentally and could not be repeated, but Puccini had done it before in *Bohème*, catching the true tone of poignant sweetness just the same, but in another key, suited better to Montmartre than to Japan. Puccini with melody, though dead, might be elected as a first president in the new world of music the people now have entered. The loftiest set will say these times that Verdi with so much simple melody is poor, but the people must have *Aida* all the time. But observe that, liking music written and played *noblemente*, they are sound for Elgar always. The people have great sense, and art is nothing if not sense, however subtle the expression of it all.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER VII.—*continued.*

EVER since she had heard that the Laird of Crask was coming to dinner, Janet Raden had looked forward to this occasion as her culminating triumph. He had been her confidant about the desperate John Macnab, and from her he must learn the tale of her victory. Her pleasure was increased by the consciousness that she was looking her best, for she knew that her black gown was a good French model, and well set off her delicate colouring. She looked with eyes of friendship on him as he limped across the room, and noted his lean distinction. No other country, she thought, produced this kind of slim, graceful, yet weathered and hard-bitten youth.

'Do you know Mr Claybody?'

Johnson Claybody said he was delighted to meet his neighbour again. 'It's years,' he said, 'since we met at Ronham. I spend my life in the train now, and never get more than a few days at a time at Haripol. But I've managed to secure a month this year to entertain my friends. I was looking forward in any case to seeing you at Muirtown on the 4th. I've been helping to organise the show, and I consider it a great score to have got Lamancha. This place has never been properly worked, and with a little efficient organisation we ought to put you in right enough. There's no doubt Scotland is changing, and you'll have the tide to help you.'

Mr Claybody was a very splendid person. He looked rather like a larger edition of the great Napoleon, for he had the same full fleshy face, and his head was set on a thickish neck. His blonde hair was beautifully sleek, and his clothes were of a perfection uncommon in September north of the Forth. Not that Mr Claybody was either fat or dandified; he was only what the ballad calls 'fair of flesh,' and he employed a good tailor and an assiduous valet. His exact age was thirty-two, and he did not look older, once the observer had got over his curiously sophisticated eyes.

But Sir Archie was giving scant attention to Mr Claybody.

'Have you heard?' Janet broke out. 'John Macnab came, saw, and didn't conquer!'

'I've heard nothing else the last two days.'

'And I was right! He is a gentleman.'

'No? Tell me all about the fellow.' Sir Archie's interest was perhaps less in the subject than in the animation which it woke in Janet's eyes.

But the announcement that dinner was served cut short the tale, though not before Sir Archie had noticed a sudden set of Mr Claybody's jaw and a contraction of his eyebrows. 'Wonder if he means to stick to his lawyer's letter,' he communed with himself. 'In that case it's quod for Charles.'

The dining-room at Strathlarrig was a remnant of the old house which had been enveloped in the immense sheath of the new. It had eighteenth-century panelling, unchanged since the days when Jacobite chiefs in lace and tartan had passed their claret glasses over the water, and the pictures were all of forbidding progenitors. But the ancient narrow windows had been widened, and Sir Archie from where he sat had a prospect of half a mile of the river, including Lady Maisie's Pool, bathed in the clear amber of twilight. He was on his host's left hand, opposite the professor, with Agatha Raden next to him; then came Junius, while Janet was between Johnson Claybody and the guest of the occasion.

Mr Claybody still brooded over John Macnab. 'I call the whole thing shameless impertinence,' he said in his loud assured voice. 'I confess I have ceased to admire undergraduate "rags." He threatens to visit us, and my father intends to put the matter into the hands of the police.'

'That would be very kind,' said Janet sweetly. 'You see, John Macnab won't have the slightest trouble in beating the police.'

'It's the principle of the thing, Miss Raden. Here is an impudent attack on private property, and if we treat it as a joke it will only encourage other scoundrels. If the man is a gentleman, as you say he is, it makes it more scandalous.'

'Come, come, Mr Claybody, you're taking it

too seriously.' Colonel Raden could be emphatic enough about the rights of property, but no Highlander can ever grow excited about trespass. 'The fellow has made a sporting offer and is willing to risk a pretty handsome stake. I rather admire what you call his impudence. I might have done the same thing as a young man, if I had had the wits to think of it.'

Mr Claybody was quick to recognise an unsympathetic audience. 'Oh, I don't mean that we're actually going to make a fuss. We'll give him a warm reception if he comes—that's all. But I don't like the spirit. It's too dangerous in these unsettled times. Once let the masses get into their heads that landed property is a thing to play tricks with, and you take the pin out of the whole system. You must agree with me, Roylance?'

Sir Archie, remembering his part, answered with guile, 'Rather! Rotten game for a gentleman, I think. All the same the chap seems rather a sportsman, so I'm in favour of letting the law alone and dealing with him ourselves. I expect he won't have much of a look in on Haripol.'

'I can promise you he won't,' said Mr Claybody shortly.

Professor Babwater observed that it would be difficult for a descendant of Harald Blacktooth to be too hard on one who followed in Harald's steps. 'The Celt,' he said, 'has always sought his adventures in a fairy world. The Northman was a realist, and looked to tangible things like land and cattle. Therefore he was a conqueror and a discoverer on the terrestrial globe, while the Celt explored the mysteries of the spirit. Those who, like you, sir—he bowed to Colonel Raden—'have both strains in their ancestry should have successes in both worlds.'

'They don't mix well,' said the colonel sadly. 'There was my grandfather, who believed in Macpherson's Ossian, and ruined the family fortunes in hunting for Gaelic manuscripts on the continent of Europe. And his father was in India with Clive, and thought about nothing except blackmailing native chiefs, till he made the place too hot to hold him. Look at my daughters, too. Agatha is mad about poetry and such-like, and Janet is a bandit. She'd have made a dashed good soldier, though.'

'Thank you, papa,' said the girl. She might have objected to the appellation had she not seen that Sir Archie accepted it with admiring assent.

'I suppose,' said old Mr Bandicott reflectively, 'that the War was bound to leave a good deal of unsettlement. Junius missed it through being too young—never got out of a training camp—but I have noticed that those who fought in France find it difficult to discover a groove. They are energetic enough, but they won't stay put, as we say. Perhaps this Macnab is one of the uprooted. In your country,

where everybody was soldiering, the case must be far more common.'

Mr Claybody announced that he was sick of hearing the War blamed for the average man's deficiencies. 'Every waster,' he said, 'makes an excuse of being shell-shocked. I'm very clear that the War twisted nothing in a man that wasn't twisted before.'

Sir Archie demurred. 'I don't know. I've seen some pretty bad cases of fellows who used to be as sane as a judge, and came home all shot to bits in their mind.'

'There are exceptions, of course. I'm speaking of the general rule. I turn away unemployables every day—good soldiers, maybe, but unemployable—and I doubt if they were ever anything else.'

Something in his tone annoyed Janet. 'You saw a lot of service, didn't you?' she asked meekly.

'No—worse luck! They made me stick at home and slave fourteen hours a day at controlling cotton. It would have been a holiday for me to get into the trenches. But what I say is, a sane man usually remained sane. Look at Sir Archibald. We all know what a hectic time he had, and he hasn't turned a hair.'

'I'd like you to give me that in writing,' Sir Archie grinned. 'I've known people who thought I was rather cracked.'

'Anyhow, it made no difference to your nerves,' said Colonel Raden.

'I hope not. I expect that was because I enjoyed the beastly thing. Perhaps I'm naturally a bit of a bandit—like Miss Janet.'

'Perhaps you're John Macnab,' said the lady.

'Well, you've seen him and can judge.'

'No. I'll be a witness for the defence if you're ever accused. But you mustn't be offended at the idea. I suppose poor John Macnab is now crawling round Strathlarrig, trying to find a gap between the gillies to cast a fly.'

'That's about the size of it,' Junius laughed. 'And there's twenty special correspondents in the neighbourhood cursing his name. If they get hold of him, they'll be savager than old Angus.'

Mr Bandicott, after calling his guests' attention to the merits of a hock which he had just acquired—it was a Johannisberg with the blue label—declared that, in his belief, the War would do good to English life, when the first ferment had died away.

'As a profound admirer of British institutions,' he said, 'I have sometimes thought that they needed a little shaking up and loosening. In America our classes are fluid. The rich man of to-day began life in a shack, and the next generation may return to it. It is the same with our professions. The man who starts in the law may pass to railway management,

and end as the proprietor of a department store.

'Our belief is, that it doesn't matter how often you change your trade before you're fifty. But an Englishman, once he settles in a profession, is fixed in it till the Day of Judgment, and in a few years he gets the mark of it so deep that he'd be a fish out of water in anything else. You can't imagine one of your big barristers doing anything else. No fresh fields and pastures new for them. It would be a crime against Magna Charta to break loose and try company-promoting or cornering the meat trade for a little change.'

Professor Babwater observed that in England they sometimes—in his view, to the country's detriment—became politicians.

'That's the narrowest groove of all,' said Mr Bandicott with conviction. 'In this country once you start in on politics you're fixed in a class, and members of a hierarchy, and you've got to go on, however unfitted you may be for the job, because it's a sort of high treason to weaken. In America a man tries politics as he tries other things, and if he finds the air of Washington uncongenial he quits, and tries newspapers, or Wall Street, or oil.'

'Or the penitentiary,' said Junius.

'And why not?' asked his father. 'I deplore criminal tendencies in any public man, but the possibility of such a downfall keeps the life human. It is very different in England. The respectability of your politicians is so awful, that when one of them backslides every man of you combines to hush it up. There would be a revolution if the people got to suspect. Can you imagine a Cabinet Minister in the police court on a vulgar charge?'

Professor Babwater said he could well imagine it—it was where most of them should be; but Colonel Raden agreed that the decencies had somehow to be preserved, even at the cost of a certain amount of humbug. 'But excuse me,' he added, 'if I fail to see what good an occasional sentence of "six months' hard" would do to public life.'

'I don't want it to happen,' said his host, who was inspired by his own Johannisberg, 'but I'd like to think it *could* happen. The permanent possibility of it would supple the minds of legislators. It would do this old country a power of good if now and then a Cabinet Minister took to brawling and went to jail.'

It was a topic which naturally interested Sir Archie, but the theories of Mr Bandicott passed by him unheeded; for his seat at the table gave him a view of the darkening glen, and he was aware that on that stage a stirring drama was being enacted. His host could see nothing, for it was behind him; the professor would have had to screw his head round; to Sir Archie alone was vouchsafed a clear prospect. Janet saw that he was gazing abstractedly out

of the window, but she did not realise that his eyes were strained, and every nerve in him excitedly alive. . . .

For suddenly into his field of vision had darted a man. He was on the far side of the Larrig, running hard, and behind him, at a distance of some forty yards, followed another. At first he thought it was Leithen, but even in the dusk it was plain that it was a shorter man—younger, too, he looked, and of a notable activity. He was gaining on his pursuer when the chase went out of sight. . . . Then Sir Archie heard a far-away whistling, and would have given much to fling open the window and look out. . . .

Five minutes passed and again the runner appeared—this time dripping wet—on the near

side. Clearly not Leithen, since he wore a white sweater, which was a garment unknown to the Crask wardrobe. He must have been headed off up-stream, and had doubled back. That way danger lay, and Sir Archie longed to warn him, for his route would bring him close to the peopled appendages of Strathlarrig House. . . . Even as he stared he saw what must mean the end—two figures appeared for one second on the extreme left of his range of vision, and in front of the fugitive. He was running into their arms!

Sir Archie seized his glass of the blue-labelled Johannisberg, swallowed the wine the wrong way, and promptly choked.

(Continued on page 220.)

THE GREY FRIARS GARDEN.

By M. M. M'PHERSON.

JUST seven centuries ago, a monk of Pisa was sent on a mission to England by St Francis of Assisi. He and his companions arrived at Canterbury in due course after various adventures; and, with the permission of Archbishop Stephen Langton, the Little Brothers subsequently founded the Grey Friars Monastery.

The very small portion which Time and the Reformation have left of this religious house is now completely hidden behind ordinary buildings in Stour Street. It is very courteously shown, however, to any interested and curious visitors who penetrate the yard-gate into the charming garden in which it is situated. Across this can be seen a very old bit of wall—the remnant of a still more ancient hospital. It was just outside this building that the Brothers pitched their tents in 1224, and watched the construction of their own monastery. Their strict vow of poverty precluded them from owning the land allotted to them, or the house which was built thereon; but the matter was arranged by the monks of Christchurch assuming possession, and accepting the Franciscans as tenants.

There they peaceably lived and studied, worked and prayed, in these lovely surroundings until Henry VIII. quarrelled with the Pope, seized the monasteries, and confiscated to his own uses such treasures as his emissaries discovered therein.

Later on, in the seventeenth century, the property came into the hands of Colonel Richard Lovelace.

A long narrow path bordered with fruit-laden apple and pear trees leads to the entrance. A branch of the river Stour flows gently on one side between bricked-up banks. A gay fringe of nasturtiums was in bloom on one side when the present writer visited the spot, and the

flowers and tendrils hung over the edge, peeping into the quivering mirror. On the farther bank a corresponding path wound along the island, flanked by a well-tended herbaceous border.

The most substantial remains of the monastery are carried right across the stream on brick arches, a curious method of construction, suggesting a mill rather than a dwelling-house—unless, indeed, it was merely the unassuming gatehouse which led to more important buildings, of which there are ample traces on the island at the back.

A door under a pointed arch gives access to a narrow passage. On one side of this a good-sized room is shown, which tradition describes as the refectory. Until thirty years ago it was inhabited by cottagers, and the recessed cupboards, wooden dado, and stove are all of the most obviously modern workmanship.

On the other side of the passage, at the end of the little building, is an ancient door of solid reddish-hued wood. It is beautifully made, the upper panel opening to reveal an inner slatted panel. This gives access to the monks' kitchen, where the deep embrasures of the diamond-paned windows show the thickness of the stone walls. In the floor is a square trap-door, which, when raised, reveals the river flowing beneath. Here the monks cunningly fished at their ease, whatever the weather. And there could be no doubt about the freshness of their fare, for it was literally just one leap from the water into the pan!

The room over the refectory, supposed originally to have been the monks' dormitory, is very lofty, with massive beams and rafters. In the days of the gay Cavalier another flooring was added, and the upper portion served as his sleeping apartment. This has now been removed, but a fireplace half-way up in the wall

is still visible. Richard Lovelace used it as his sitting-room. The outlook from this chamber is ideally inspiring for a poet. At the end of the garden the narrow river is spanned by two bridges. The first is a simple wooden affair; the second, of warm red brick—almost completely veiled by brilliantly-tinted virginia creeper—is said to have been built by the Grey Friars to enable the townsfolk to get round to their chapel on the island. And then, above and beyond the steep tiled roofs of houses, the cathedral towers rise finely, closing in the view.

Above the kitchen at the back is a much smaller room, where an interesting photograph, taken from a portrait of Agnellus, the founder of the monastery, was shown. Subsequent to the writer's visit, the seven hundredth anniversary of this monk's arrival was commemorated, with much form and ceremony, by the Roman and Anglican churches, on 10th September 1924.

Returning to the ground floor, we passed out through the back door at the end of the passage; above this we observed traces of a Norman arch filled in at a later period with a smaller Gothic

one. Foundations of other buildings were to be seen outside. One ancient wall still showed a fine Norman arch built up into it, which had been the west entrance of the monks' chapel. On either side of this were curious square apertures, through which tradition avers that offerings made to the monks were thrust.

Skirting what is now a kitchen-garden, we passed under an exquisite little arch, which Lovelace is said to have found and set up. And one thought of how he must have walked along the paths of this pretty garden, musing over and perhaps actually composing the famous lines by which he is remembered:

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for a heritage.

Franciscan monastery, Cavalier's dwelling, cottagers' home, what vicissitudes have these old walls witnessed!

But the garden is still blooming, and the influence of the learned monks upon the intellectual life of Britain remains to this day.

ALCESTIS AND ARIADNE.

By ALAN SULLIVAN, Author of *Man's Work*, &c.

I.

IT came toward me, dancing across the Round Pond with miniature dignity, the most perfect model of a ship I had ever seen. At the same time there approached, walking along the bank, a miniature man. He was not more than five feet tall, and carried a bamboo with a rubber tip. The model glided shorewards, tilting delicately to a varying breeze, a flat furrow broadening from its slender forefoot. The little man put out his stick, and turned his craft till the wind fluttered in her pigmy sails. Then, lifting carefully, he laid her on her side, the bamboo under her glossy bilge.

A certain ritual is observed by those contemplative adults whose vessels navigate the Round Pond. They are weatherwise in small compass. They are masters of rig and design. Shroud and spar, bobstay and topping lift, tafferel and boom, they recreate all these. They study clearance, displacement, and friction. Winter evenings are lovingly given to those perfect hulls that, later, will cleave their liquid passage through the bizarre flotilla of Kensington Gardens.

When I looked again at the little man, I seemed to understand why it was that this barquentine of his was the real thing. He had a face of soft leather, and eyes like bits of the blue sky that hung that day over London. His clothes, too, were blue, with a sort of square,

topsail cut to the coat. More leather in his throat, round which a blue tie was loosely knotted. He stood with his feet rather far apart. Then he looked at me, and felt for his pipe.

'Good bit of work, that,' I ventured.

He nodded. 'Not bad; but my fingers are getting stiff. She'll pass—for eighty.'

'Eighty what?'

'I'm eighty.' He grinned reflectively. 'You, I suppose, are about half that?'

'Yes,' I said. 'But you don't look it.' The queer thing was that he did—and didn't. I couldn't imagine him any older or younger. He might go on being eighty indefinitely.

'Well, ages interest me in a way. Always did. When a man quits feeling, and goes on just remembering, he don't age so quickly. At least, that's how I see it.'

'Is that a model of a vessel you sailed?'

He slapped his thigh. 'That's her, keelson to pennant. Southern Cross Line; China tea trade. Ever hear of *Cutty Sark* and *Thermopylae*?'

'Yes—famous ships.'

'Ever hear of *Alcestis*?'

'I don't think so.'

'No; I guess not. Nobody did, except those in the trade. I sailed her. She was a wash-out long ago. Coal hulk at Devonport. Saw her last year, and it made me sick.'

'I can understand that.'

He pointed. 'That companionway led to my cabin. I've put in the right number of steps. Ought to know after ten years of 'em. That's her rig to the last ratline. Ought to know that, too. We couldn't foot it with *Thermopylae* or *Cutty*, but our average wasn't much under. Those two were something more than ships. Over-rigged, both of 'em, and something in their lines—I don't know what—but anyway they didn't pull any water after 'em. That's where they got the speed; mostly in the clearance. More important, you know, than the lines forward. But, of course, you don't know. Hardly any one does.'

This was rather too much for me. 'It must have been a lonely life,' I hazarded.

'Queer you should say that. I just begin to see how lonely it was. My God!' He pulled down his brows. 'The sea takes everything, but never gives anything back. One's apt to forget that, specially in the tropics, till suddenly you're fetched up short—all standing. Lonely—yes—you're right enough.'

He pushed a horny forefinger into his pipe, seeming to drop me out of his mind, while through half-closed lids he stared musingly at the sleek hull of the *Alcestis*. I wondered if his ship—the real one—had played fair with him; or whether, by rebuilding her in the evening of life, he revived something, to the vision of which he still clung. Then he struck a match, sucked, and looked at me through a faint blur of smoke. His eyes were gray, now, not blue.

'Care to know?' he asked quietly.

'Whatever you like to tell me.'

II.

He lifted the *Alcestis* back on to the grass, and squatted beside her. It wasn't till then that I noted the seaminess of his skin, divided up into countless little tablelands, intersected by a criss-cross of fine, deep lines.

'Of course,' he said, 'I used to think it unusual, but it may not sound unusual to you. That's the effect of the sea. Every sailorman thinks he has found something on salt water—or in it—different from the other fellow. But when you boil them down, all these discoveries are the same. Does that sound like sense? Can you make anything of it?'

'Yes.'

'Well, I didn't fathom it till I came ashore for good, fifteen years ago. The reason is that when you're on blue water, you just naturally think backwards. So I used to think a lot about St Mawes, where I came from—it's across the harbour from Falmouth—and Thorpe, Jeff Thorpe. He came from there, too, and went to sea when I did. It was always nip and tuck between us. And there was a girl. I'm coming to her later.

'Jeff got his ship the same week as I got

Alcestis. We started from the Pool of London the same week, and cleared, hell for leather, for Shanghai. *Red Jacket*—you may have heard of her—showed us her heels in the Bay. I didn't care much; we weren't in her class, and I'd fixed it with my girl—her name was Mercy Burns, no harm in telling you that now—that we'd be married when I got back. Jeff knew it, and though we were often in sight on the early part of that voyage, he never answered a signal. I'd met him the week we sailed, passed the time of day, and he told me to go to hell.'

My friend was silent for a moment, and I pictured those two under their dipping yards, squinting across a league of blue-black sea at well-known sails that fitted like a gull's wing beneath the Southern Cross, each of them hungry for the same woman, each guided by the same star.

'What sort of a man was Thorpe?'

His glance roved along the flat shore of the Round Pond. 'Like that chap on the other side. Bigger than me, curly hair, and a sort of restless devil in his eyes. Women liked him, while they didn't cotton much to me. His laugh would make any one laugh. He was my match on salt water, too. That must have been a queer voyage for him, though he had the best of it, and was clearing Shanghai, stuffed with tea to his hatches, when I worked up the river. I took over his pilot. Even then he didn't wave a hand. *Ariadne*, his ship—a big barque—couldn't have been more than a couple of cables off.'

'And then?'

'I made the Thames in seventy-five days, my record, and was a week behind him. Dropped my hook in Upper Barking Reach, put in my papers, and started for St Mawes. Again a week too late. Mercy had gone off with Jeff. I found afterwards *Ariadne* was lying round the bend above me, and had put to sea the day after I made port. She went out with the tide, and my first mate saw a woman on the poop.'

His voice lowered and became curiously gentle. 'That's where she sat,' he went on, touching a brass tack driven into the deck of the model—'and now I like to think of her sitting there, because she must have been happy while it lasted. Anyway, that was her answer to me. I chewed it over, hating Jeff more and more every minute, and my crew had a hard time that trip till we picked up *Ariadne* on the edge of a big calm in the Indian Ocean. She lay a couple of miles ahead, sails flapping. I couldn't move, either. Hot as hell. Queer, eh, that we three should come together like that?'

I nodded, while Kensington Gardens faded away. The creaking of slack blocks came to me; the vision of tall spars tracing irregular outlines against a purple sky; yellow decks, in

whose seams the tar lay soft and sticky; the glare of a smiting sun; the flat plain of sea, empty, and rimmed by the hard bowl of sky; the ships' companies, sweltering, every man of them in full possession of the facts—for there are few secrets between rival ships; the jokes in the fo'c'sle; my friend's thoughts when night came and the *Ariadne's* lights blinked through the dusk; the passion, the hunger, and the torture. I stole a look at him. Had he been through all this?

III.

'At midnight,' he went on slowly, 'I ordered my gig, then ordered it back. You see there had been no signals, and I would only have made a damned fool of myself, and I couldn't do that before the crew. Within the next hour the bottom fell out of the glass, and I knew we were in for it. Generally the way after those calms. Jeff would know too, being as good a man as myself. And Mercy's life was in his hands. The next time I saw *Ariadne* was in a flash of lightning, running like hell under triple-reefed mainsails. The storm had begun in earnest. I suppose you've read about them?'

'Yes.'

'Then I'll leave out a good deal, except that this was a typhoon. It picked up columns of the Indian Ocean hundreds of feet high, chopped 'em off at the bottom, and let 'em drop. There wasn't so much sea, at first, because the weight of wind had beaten it flat. The sea came afterwards.'

He paused, thumbing one of the shrouds of the *Alcestis*, as though uncertain how much more to leave out. No excitement in his voice, but a slow deliberation. He might have been seeing it all again from a distance.

'How did the *Alcestis* take it?'

'She took it, but that's all. I was thinking of *Ariadne*. Never saw her again.'

'What?'

'Never saw her again,' he repeated quietly. 'Four days later the storm had blown itself out, and *Alcestis* was lying on the water like a wet spaniel lies on the bank, panting. Most of our canvas had gone, and I was rigging spares, when we sighted a boat. Jeff was in it, and three men, and Mercy. She was dead.'

His words trailed out, and I didn't speak. There were more tiny vessels on the Round Pond now, with a stiffer breeze; and I tried to magnify them to such dimensions as would enable me to visualise in some fashion what I had just heard. The little man, too, stared at the pond, and his lips moved.

'I hope you won't mistake my talking like this. You see I'm happy now—honestly; otherwise I wouldn't have said a word. It's so long ago, and I've seen so much since. None of us can tell when the blow is coming, so we can't prepare, and when it does come we think

it's the end of everything. But it isn't—and it took me thirty years to find that out. I told you the sea takes everything and gives nothing back. Well, that's true. It wasn't till I left the sea that things came right again. And it happened on the Round Pond.'

'I'm glad of that,' I said.

He nodded. 'Perhaps I'm giving it to you the wrong end first; but I rather wanted to, so that you would understand what I'm going to tell you now. We picked up that boat, and Jeff and I stared at each other. There was nothing to be said across that girl's body. She'd had what she wanted, at any rate some of it, and so had Jeff. I was no part of it. But if it hadn't been for him she'd have been alive and well that minute—my wife on my ship. That was in his mind too. I could see it in his eyes. God—how he must have suffered; and I was glad. Then I buried her in the deep sea. But it was to me she had come back, and he sat with his head between his hands for days. I used to curse him aloud before the ship's company, and he never said a word. I'm sorry for that now. That other tack in the deck is where she lay.'

IV.

I wondered why he told me all this. He seemed a strangely gentle repository for hate and revenge. Wind and weather and solitude in great spaces had refined the fibre of him—or perhaps it was always fine—so that his appearance had on me a certain cleansing, invigorating effect, and I wanted to feel bigger and better for having met him. An hour with him, to judge by all that was outward, should be, in a way, enfranchising, and put me in tune with finer things than one ordinarily supplies for oneself. Yet there he sat, breathing enmity and bitterness, while with a manner in which there was nothing short of love he fingered the slim body of the *Alcestis*.

'Of course,' he went on, as though communing with himself, 'you'll see why I built this model. I didn't do it till after I had quit the sea for some years, and then it took a good while. You can't hurry over this sort of work, and I had nothing else to do. Queer effect it had, because a million things came back that I thought I had never known. Just like something inside me saying, "Stop, you blasted fool, you've forgotten something." It got so real that after a while I felt like a miniature man myself, and could walk this deck and look up at these spars and think how tall and straight they were. Then I'd come back to myself—I mean my right size—and get to work again.'

He touched the *Alcestis* amidships. 'That's where Jeff used to sit, all day and most of the night. He shared the mate's cabin. Anything I had to tell him I sent word by a boy or the mate. He did the same. The mate didn't ask

any questions, for he knew better. And besides, he knew. They all knew. Time and time again I used to see Mercy's face just under the water, or following the ship, and from the way Jeff looked he saw it too. But we never spoke. I landed him at Singapore, put in my statement about the rescue and all that, then cleared for Shanghai. Jeff got a passage home in another Southern Cross clipper.'

'And you didn't say good-bye?'

'Not a word. I used to hear whispers saying that I was dead wrong and couldn't judge others; but when the water under you is three miles deep, you're apt to hear lots of voices you don't pay any attention to. Anyway, I didn't.'

'And after that?'

'Mercy seemed to sail with me every voyage. When the weather allowed, I used to set my course for a certain spot I had pricked on the chart; and if we passed over it at night I used to take the wheel myself and manage to send the watch below so as to be alone on deck for just a minute. *Alcestis* seemed to know it by the way she acted, giving a little shiver to her spars, so to speak, and footing it very gently and carefully, and never the whine of a block or the shake of a single sail. Ships have souls, right enough. Of course, I used to hear about Jeff. He stayed with the line. I sighted him sometimes—he had *Calypso* then—but we left each other alone. I saw his name on the company's pay-roll—he was getting the same pay as myself—and passed him in Wapping High Street more than once. But we hadn't anything to say. Then about six years later it was my turn to be picked up.'

'Wrecked?'

He nodded. 'Nobody's fault. Cargo of tin from the Malay States. Got into a big blow, cargo shifted, strained my hull, and down she went. Not a hundred miles from where *Ariadne* sank. Jeff found us, the last man in the world I wanted to do it. He saw that the minute I stepped on board. Nothing said between us. It doesn't seem possible now, but it's true. He motioned to his cabin, but I wouldn't go, and shared the mate's. It was hell for the rest of the voyage. Before that I'd been alone with Mercy, you understand; but now I was locked up with the man who stole her and lost her. Of course his story had followed him, just as mine did me. No escaping that on the high seas. And there was a sort of triumph in his eyes when he dropped his hook in the Thames. He was even then on the rescue business, anyway. I hated him the more for that. I actually did.'

V.

I knew by the mild light in his face, and the kindness lurking in the corners of his lips, that hate had now been altogether done away with. He radiated benignity. But whether it

had been knocked or coaxed out of him I could not tell. I think by the way he deliberated over the rest of the story he must have rather enjoyed my uncertainty, for he had time to make a careful adjustment of the *Alcestis*'s steering-gear before he spoke again.

'Well, we criss-crossed the sea for years—it was steam by that time—as long as we were good for it, and stepped ashore during the same autumn. Both comfortably off. Retiring pension, you know, and a bit saved. Then, after I'd got settled in the new life, I began to see things in a new way. I couldn't hate as before. The trouble with the sea is that you can't forget anything while you're on it. It has no future, and the mind pitches back to the past. What's behind you seems crowded, and what's in front is empty. You never heard a skipper talk about what he's going to do—because he don't know. That's how it was with me, and, I guess, with Jeff too.'

'I hoped you were coming to that,' I said, smiling.

'You haven't got it all yet, but I reckon it's clear now why I built this model of *Alcestis*. When it was done I brought her up here. It took me a good month to put her in sailing trim, just as any new vessel had to find herself, and get the set of her canvas right, and learn the feel of wind and water. I was busy at this one day, not noticing anything or any one else, when there came the model of a barque, beating across from the other side of the pond. I knew in a second it was *Ariadne*. There was a rake to her masts you couldn't mistake. Opposite me was Jeff. No mistaking the cut of his jib, either.'

'That was odd.'

'No, it was the most natural thing in the world. I pushed off *Alcestis*, and walked round the west side, and he launched *Ariadne*, and came round the east. Each of us made a semi-circle of the pond, finishing where the other started. Same with the ships. They passed each other in mid-pond, making the same weather of it, though *Alcestis* points a little closer. She always did.' He paused, laughed contentedly, and re-lit his pipe. 'We quit that evening by mutual consent, and never a word between us.'

'Who spoke first after that; for, I assume, you did speak?'

'Well, that's the queer part of it. After a while I seemed to see Mercy on *Ariadne*, and the thing got almost too real. But I couldn't stay away. When Jeff was late I felt vexed, and I reckon it was the same with him. One time he didn't come for a week. I got his address from the company, sneaked round to his place in Putney, and found there was nothing much wrong. We were both too proud to speak, though we were both aching to. Hate was dead. I began to feel that any man Mercy had loved must have been all right. I don't

know what he felt, for he never told me, but it had the same effect. I suppose it sounds as though we acted like children, and perhaps we did, but it isn't easy for a man to climb down when he's been in command of ships and men for most of his life. There's nothing quite like having a ship and her company in the hollow of your hand, and the high seas in front of you. We were both straining at a leash, and afraid the leash would break. I don't know if it ever would have happened if it hadn't been for *Alcestis* and *Ariadne*.'

'How was that?'

'They were becalmed in the middle of the pond one evening, and lay a fathom apart. Put that into miles, and the ships into their full size, and you get what happened that night in the Indian Ocean. Jeff knew it, too. The sun went down. Jeff's figure was indistinct when the park guard told us it was time to quit, and he would be responsible for the ships. But we wouldn't budge. He gave it up, and went home. Been at sea himself, he had. So I stuck, and Jeff stuck, with the same thing in both our heads, and living it all over again. I could imagine the binnacle-lamps on those ships, and hear the talk drifting up from the fo'c'sle, and a yard or a boom would swing over just as it used to. But, instead of the silence, I got the noise of London and the traffic-lights along Bayswater Road.'

VI.

He stopped again, and I began to see how it is that the spirit of man infused itself into the things of wood and canvas in which he used to brave the unknown, and how those things must have thrilled with the same high tension of endeavour as did their masters and creators. The same fibre was in them both.

'After a while there was a breath of wind,' continued my friend slowly, 'and *Alcestis* put her nose into it, came about, and headed south beside *Ariadne*. I stood still as they came along, hulls almost touching. Jeff came, too, down his side of the pond. I felt a bit queer, and I suppose he did. *Alcestis* and *Ariadne* reached the bank dead-level, and two feet apart. Jeff was there by that time. He stooped to pick up his boat, and his elbow bumped mine. I sort of figured it would. "Sorry," he said. "That's all right," I said; "and you've got a shade too much slack in your main sheet." "Maybe," he says. "And I think your mizzen-mast is stepped a mite too far forward. Good-night." "Good-night," I says. "See you to-morrow." And that's how we began again.'

He chuckled, and sent me a communicable grin. 'I told you that ships had souls. Don't that prove it?'

I nodded. 'It's enough for me. Is Jeff here to-day?'

He pointed toward the Broad Walk. A man

was coming across, pushing an ancient perambulator, on which was balanced a model ship about the size of the *Alcestis*, but differently rigged. He had a short, snow-white beard, a round jovial face, and rolled a little as he walked. He waved a hand, marched to the other side, and made preparations. My friend slid the *Alcestis* gently into the water, and waited. At a signal the two tiny vessels commenced their pigmy voyage, while their masters began a watchful patrol, but on the same side of the pond. I reckoned that ships and masters would meet half-way.

GEORGE.

THE sun was setting scarlet as the barges drifted by,

And tap'ring masts of foreign ships stood dark against the sky;

He thought of going homewards, then his mind went far away

To watch the San Diego lights shine out across the bay.

He'd saved a bit of money, and the shop in Camden Town

Was paying, and his wife had said, 'You ought to settle down.

You're forty-one to-morrow, George, and are no more a youth

To muck around in foreign parts.' She merely spoke the truth.

Not only San Diego; as he pondered, other bays Appeared as he had seen them—all came back in different ways.

'Bad towns you're longing after,' she had said to him last night.

'Those towns and other women!' But she had not been quite right.

It never was the women, though he liked to hear them sing

Behind their latticed windows, like the birds that call in spring;

He'd sit and watch them dance and move across the saw-dust floor,

And knew them all by name at every port he went ashore.

It was not other women: love and comfort, all the best,

Were here at home awaiting him. . . . What would not let him rest?

That something that had called men out across the world so oft,

That lonely calling voice that's e'er beyond horizons soft.

'Twas there by night in London docks, was whispering in the tide,

And seeking 'mong the wharves and creeks along the river side.

A trip to 'Frisco only! Just the last of all those trips,

And he'd come back to Camden Town, and sell his fish and chips.

P. G. N. CHAMBERS.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A HUGE PAPER-MAKING SCHEME.

IT is common knowledge that the paper on which most newspapers are printed is made from wood, and that large areas of forest abroad, more especially in Newfoundland, are being devastated to maintain the supply. The wood is literally ground up into pulp before it is fit for manufacture into paper, and this process requires a large amount of power. A huge scheme for producing the necessary power from water and for laying down a factory to produce 120,000 tons of paper a year is now being carried out for the Newfoundland Power and Paper Co., Ltd., by Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth, & Co., Ltd., Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It is impossible within the space of a paragraph to do more than touch on the outstanding features. Full details will be found in our esteemed contemporary, *The Engineer*. The water-power is derived from a lake with an area of 150 square miles, which drains a large surface and is capable of being made to maintain at all seasons a flow of 4000 cubic feet per second. From this lake the water is conveyed through canals and natural channels to the head of the pipe line leading to the power-house, 250 feet below. There are seven pipes, which convey the water to a like number of turbines in the power-house. Each pipe is $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter inside, and 4000 feet in length. For the first 2500 feet the pipes are built up from wood staves and steel hoops, like barrels. Steel plates riveted together are used for constructing the lower ends, which are subject to high pressures. At the turbines the pressure is 108 lb. per square inch. Water is admitted to the pipes through sluices 12 feet square. These are closed automatically by a trip gear if the speed of the water in the pipe exceeds a pre-determined limit, as would be the case should a pipe burst. Each turbine is capable of giving 14,000 horse-power when running at 375 revolutions per minute. It is astonishing how efficient a big water turbine can be made. The loss of power in this case is only 9 per cent. In the best of the old-fashioned water-wheels only 75 per cent. of the power in the water was utilised. A huge butterfly valve made of cast steel is fixed in each turbine to shut off the water. This is closed by hydraulic pressure from the supply pipe, which acts on a piston. Governing is effected by adjusting the ring of gates which admit water to the runner. But all the oil-operated governor does is to control the flow of oil under a high pressure to either side of a piston, the latter opening or closing the gates as required to maintain a uniform speed. Each turbine is coupled to an electric generator which gives

current at 6000 volts. For transmission to the paper-mill, 32 miles away, the pressure is transformed to 66,000 volts, so that only one eleventh of the quantity has to be carried by the line conductors. These are of aluminium with a steel core, aluminium being a good conductor, while the steel gives the necessary strength. These conductors are carried on latticed steel towers about 400 feet apart. At the mill the pressure is transformed down to 2200 volts for the bigger motors, and to lower pressures for small motors and for lighting. A considerable quantity of steam is required for paper-making, and this is supplied by boilers which are heated by electricity at a pressure of 4400 volts. No less than 200,000 lb. weight of steam is required per hour, or as much as would drive engines of 20,000 horse-power. The paper-making machines, which have been supplied by a Lancashire firm, are said to be the largest in the world. They turn the paper out in a width of 219 inches. To supply the paper-mill, 200,000 cords of wood per annum will be needed, and this huge quantity will be taken from forests estimated to yield 10,500,000 cords. [A cord = 128 cu. ft.]

AN ARM-CHAIR ASH-TRAY.

For the smoker seated in an arm-chair the most convenient position for his ash-tray is frequently the arm of the chair; here it is very liable to be knocked off. The latest novelty in ash-trays is one attached to a leather band which is weighted at each end and hung over the arm of the chair. On an upholstered arm this device takes a good deal of force to move it. The trays are made in silver, gilt metal, or oxidised metal, and the leather bands are of various colours, the complete device presenting a handsome appearance.

A NOTABLE DEEP-WELL PUMP.

In our issue for January 1922 there was described, under the heading, 'Simple Deep-Well Pumps,' an entirely new form of apparatus for raising water to the surface of a well. Owing to the depth of the well (400 feet), and the high efficiency obtained, a pump of this description which has been installed in the Dover Forts is of especial interest. In their main characteristics pumps of this kind resemble the well-known elevator by which grain is raised. This contrivance has a pulley at the top and another at the bottom, with an endless belt between them on which are mounted steel scoops. When the top pulley is driven the belt comes up one side and goes down the other, the scoops, or 'buckets,' as they are called, scooping up the grain at the bottom and coming up with it to the top, where, in going round the top

pulley, they shoot out their contents. The pump now being described has a corresponding pulley at each end, and a Balata belt, which is not affected by water. Instead of buckets, however, the belt is fitted with three rows of horizontal cells. According to *The Engineer*, each row 'consists of a strip of steel about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, which is folded so as to form a continuous series of triangular-shaped cells having a depth to the face of the belt of about one inch.' The remarkable feature of these cells is that after being filled with water at the bottom of the well, where the belt is immersed to a depth of about 10 feet, they hold the water without much spilling during the long journey upwards of 400 feet. When the belt passes over the top pulley, centrifugal force causes the water to fly out from the cells into a collecting spout. The bottom pulley frame is mounted in vertical guides, and is weighted to keep the belt tight. Except for a pulley immediately above the bottom one, the belt is not guided. It travels upwards at a speed of about 500 feet a minute. The top pulley is driven through reduction gear by an electric motor. This pump was designed to lift 3350 gallons an hour from a depth of close on 400 feet. According to tests the wastage of power due to spilling and friction amounts to only 30 per cent. of the power applied to the top pulley. This is a good result for any type of pump; while the simplicity of the installation and its low cost compare favourably with alternative devices. It may be remarked that for comparatively shallow wells no guides are required at the bottom; hence the work of installing such pumps can be carried out entirely from the top.

FINDING THE ELECTRIC-LIGHT SWITCH IN THE DARK.

Ignorance as to the whereabouts of the electric-light switch is a common worry when one is entering a strange room in the dark. A device is now obtainable which indicates the position of the switch by a luminous knob. Measuring a quarter of an inch across, this knob is coated with luminous paint and mounted on a strip of brass. This strip corresponds in curvature with that of the switch cover, and has turned-up points at the ends. To fix the device in position, the cover is unscrewed until the points at the ends of the strip will pass under the edge. It is then screwed up again and grips the strip, leaving the knob exposed. In a dark room this luminous knob is seen at once, while it saves finger-marks on the wall-paper round the switch caused by those groping to find it.

A REMEDY FOR SAGGING MATTRESSES.

Most of us have spent uncomfortable nights on old spring mattresses which sag in the middle. A contrivance has been brought

out recently which corrects this fault at a very moderate cost. It consists of a frame, fitted with a number of spiral springs, which is hung to the frame of the mattress by steel straps. This frame does not extend the full length of the mattress, but supports the middle part, where the sagging takes place. It has six cross rows of spiral springs, and is adjusted for height so that these just touch the under side of the mattress when it is level. The springs are strung together at the top to keep them in position, and are then covered with a piece of carpet, felt, or hessian, which prevents grating (with accompanying noises) between them and the mattress. By these means not only is the sagging of the mattress prevented, but the result in comfort is equal to that obtained from box spring mattresses; in fact, the contrivance described is almost identical with the modern spring mattress except that it is shorter. The frame is varnished and the springs are rust-proofed. It is very easily fixed to any spring mattress if the complete instructions packed with each frame are followed out. So confident are the makers that this appliance will give satisfaction that they send it on approval without any payment, the customer returning it if he or she is not satisfied with the results.

CLEANING OF BOILER-FLUES BY STEAM.

In spite of the many gas and oil engines to be found up and down the country, our main source of power is still steam. The use of boilers to provide the necessary steam involves one of the dirtiest jobs that men are called upon to carry out. This is the cleaning of the flues from the flue-dust which accumulates in large quantities. Until a few years ago this operation entailed shutting down the boiler and waiting until the metal and brickwork had become cool enough for men to enter, when the dust was removed by sweeping and shovelling. Where there are a number of boilers, the shutting down of one periodically is perhaps not of very great consequence, but in the smaller mills and factories, which have only one or perhaps two boilers, flue-cleaning means the loss of a day's work. In these circumstances the delay is minimised as much as possible by tackling the job long before the flues are cool, when, as may be imagined, the work is exceedingly unpleasant, if not positively dangerous. These difficulties have been successfully met by a patent mechanical flue-cleaner. In this device special groups of nozzles (connected by pipes to the boiler), through which steam is blown once a day, are placed in the flues. These nozzles, which are arranged at intervals throughout the flues, project the dust towards the chimney, that is, in the direction of the draught. In some cases, such as collieries, brickfields, and steelworks, the flue-dust is discharged from the chimney-top; but where

it would cause annoyance, the dust is collected in a special chamber, built to one side of the main flue, through which the gases are directed during the time the nozzles are in operation. This chamber is provided with water sprays to assist in trapping the flue-dust. It can be emptied by hand at any time without disturbing the cleaning of the boilers. In some cases the chamber is raised to a sufficient height above ground to allow of the flue-dust being dropped into a cart. Apart from the saving in labour effected by this method of cleaning flues, the heating surfaces of the boilers are kept free from soot, resulting in a considerable saving of fuel.

A REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT OF THE MAGIC LANTERN.

A development of the optical lantern which has been made in the United States bids fair to revolutionise the ordinary method of working this instrument. One of the principal features of the new development is that the rays of light from the lantern do not reach the screen from the front, but from the back. Striking a specially prepared screen at the proper focus, they form an image which is clear and distinct either in broad daylight or in artificial light. Another feature is the successful employment of what is called an opaque projector. A page of manuscript or of printed matter, a cutting from a newspaper, a picture post-card, or any other kind of illustration, is placed in the lantern and is immediately thrown on to the screen. It is evident that such an invention is a powerful auxiliary in visual education, and we are informed that it is already in use in over 2000 schools, as well as in the principal colleges, universities, and medical schools of the United States. Many churches, too, we are told, are adopting it for purposes of instruction and entertainment. An interesting development is its use in connection with the Stock Exchange tape or 'ticker.' The long, thin tape recording business transactions on the market is automatically fed into a lantern, which throws the picture of the quotations on to the screen placed on the 'floor' of the New York Stock Exchange, and also in some stockbrokers' offices. Hundreds of onlookers can thus see the progress of the market at one and the same time.

ENGLISH RAPID-HARDENING CEMENT.

As a response to the quick-hardening cement of French origin which formed the subject of a paragraph in this Journal for October 1923, an English cement with similar characteristics has been lately placed on the market. It is essentially a Portland cement, made of the usual constituents but in modified proportions; and improved methods of manufacture have produced quicker hardening and increased strength. According to the results of tests made by the selling agents, which are given in

The Engineer, the new cement has a tensile strength after one day of 450 lb. per square inch, this figure being increased to 900 lb. after seven days. Ordinary Portland cement has no useful strength after one day; after seven days the strength of an average sample is 750 lb. Tests on beams of reinforced concrete made from the new rapid-hardening cement and on similar beams made from the ordinary variety, carried out by Professor S. M. Dixon at the City and Guilds Engineering College, South Kensington, showed the new cement to have practically treble the strength of the ordinary kind after four days, and double after fourteen days. Compression tests showed four times the strength in some cases. Naturally, the short time in which this cement becomes strong as compared with ordinary Portland cement allows of carrying out construction work much more quickly.

PETROL TRACTORS FOR YARD HAULAGE.

In many industrial establishments heavy goods have to be moved from one part to another of extensive yards. Such establishments include collieries, timber merchants' and ship-builders' yards, brickfields, and railway goods stations—to name only a few of them. At one time horses were used exclusively for haulage of this nature. Then followed the steam locomotive for use on rails, and the steam tractor for yard pavements. Of late years the electric truck, as seen in big railway stations, has achieved some measure of popularity; but the petrol tractor, which has recently made its advent, seems likely to become the prime favourite in the future. It is much lighter and less costly to run than tractors propelled by either steam or electricity, while it will handle heavy loads more quickly than the steam tractor. With its rubber-tired wheels, the petrol tractor can haul either road or rail trucks. The motor, rated at 22½ horse-power, is fixed with the radiator under the usual car bonnet in the front of the tractor. It drives the back wheels through a differential and a chain or a worm gear, according to the model chosen. Of these models there are several. A seat for the driver is provided at the back of the chassis, where he has the steering-wheel and the controls conveniently placed before him. A push plate is arranged in front of the radiator, and a similar plate at the back of the chassis. Chains on rollers with crank-handles and ratchets are provided for towing at a distance behind; also chains with spring shock-absorbers for towing close up. Alternatively, automatic hitches controlled by the driver are fitted. Some models have only two speeds and a reverse; others have four speeds. The tractors measure 8 feet in length, with widths of about 4 feet, while the weights range from 21 to 31 cwt. Two special models are made; one with flanged steel wheels to suit standard-gauge railway lines; the other with a platform at the rear to take loads up to 2 tons. A number

of these petrol tractors are now in service, and are working to the satisfaction of the purchasers.

FREE BATTERY CHARGING AT HOME.

The widespread adoption of 'listening-in' sets has led to an enormous increase in the demand for low-voltage batteries. These are mostly of the accumulator type, which has to be charged at intervals. Small batteries are also largely used in cars for ignition, lighting, and starting. Charging from lighting circuits at 220 volts is very wasteful, because between 95 and 98 per cent. of the pressure is converted into heat (and is therefore wasted) in the resistance necessarily involved. Electric supply undertakings and some garages have special appliances for charging such batteries without incurring this loss, but accumulators are heavy articles to take to and from the nearest charging station, which may be a long distance away. A device for charging low-voltage accumulators from house-lighting circuits has been invented recently by Mr F. A. Wilkinson, M.I.E.E. This consists of a change-over switch, placed in the negative main circuit next to the consumer's fuse. By means of this switch the current can be passed through the battery to be charged instead of direct to the out-going terminal. When lamps are lit and current is flowing, the battery is automatically charged; and the process costs nothing, since the lamps would be required in any case. It is true that the resistance of the battery reduces the pressure at the lamps, but the slight dimming of the light is barely perceptible. If electric kettles, irons, or motors for driving domestic machines are used in the house, charging will also go on while these are in operation, at the cost of a very slightly increased consumption of current.

A BANDIT ALARM.

A development arising out of the war or post-war conditions is the daytime 'hold-up' in a bank, a post-office, or a shop. The difficulty of giving the alarm in such cases is that the victim can make no perceptible movement of the hands when threatened with a revolver or an automatic pistol. But the feet, being screened by a counter, may be used for making electric contacts whereby alarm bells are rung. Based on this fact, a simple electric alarm-bell system has been devised recently which is put into action by pressing down a contact button with the foot. The apparatus consists of a powerful electric bell, a dry battery to work it, and a push-contact which may be fixed in any convenient position for the operator's foot. In a large establishment a number of push-contacts can be connected to one bell and battery circuit. As might be expected, and as has been proved by experience, 'hold-up' bandits are very nervous of alarms, and a powerful bell which rings continuously causes most of them to decamp

hurriedly. These alarms are very easily installed. That something of the sort was wanted is demonstrated by the fact that an order for a large number has been placed by a well-known bank.

A NOVEL BATTERY-IGNITION DEVICE.

During the last few years there has been a distinct revival in battery ignition for the motors of cars and lorries. The system entails the provision of a coil, a condenser, and a battery, which are stationary and fixed in any convenient position, and a contact-breaker, with a distributor, which has to be driven at half-engine speed. If it be desired to change over a motor from magneto to battery ignition special arrangements have to be made on the engine to drive the rotating parts at the correct speed, while two wires are required between these parts and the coil, which may be some distance away. In a recent battery-ignition device the coil and the rotating contact-breaker and distributor are combined in a form having the same dimensions and driving spindle as a standard magneto. All that is necessary to change over the ignition system from magneto to battery is to put the new device in place of the magneto. Other advantages include the absence of wires between the coil and the engine, and the practicability of using the terminals of the device for a portable lamp, which is more often wanted on the engine than elsewhere. This appliance has been especially devised for ignition from the lighting system with which most modern cars are fitted. The chief advantage of battery ignition is that any motor can be started with certainty at the first pull-over on the coldest morning, provided, of course, that the carburetter is functioning correctly. In the demonstration car, a 25-horse-power Vauxhall, the motor is started by giving the starting-handle a quarter turn with the foot. A fact that inspires confidence is a free 14-days' trial offered by the makers, after which, if the device does not do all that is claimed for it, they will take it back and refund the money paid.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, Chambers's Journal, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

C R A S K I E.

By HILTON BROWN.

PART I.

I.

THE weekly market-day at Brig o' Muir was wearing to a close. It had been a day of warm autumn drizzle, but now the clouds broke in the west and the late afternoon sun sent shafts of level light athwart the thinning concourse in the streets, the herds of sheep and bullocks surging out of the mart. In hotel yards the clatter of hoofs and the creak and rattle of harness told of preparations for departure. Hotel bars, enjoying their great hour of the week, roared merrily with loud rough voices.

In the 'coffee-room'—where no one ever thought of drinking coffee—of the Gilzean Arms big John Bonnar of Craskie finished his tea, counted over rapidly a thick bundle of notes, and slapped them into a wallet. His round rosy face under the fair hair assumed a momentary air of abstraction while he made the count, and then relapsed into vacancy as he looked up at Mrs Lockie, the landlady, who stood waiting to clear away the dishes. Once again that observant lady was reminded of a large, well-fed, well-beloved cat; the smooth cheeks, the big golden moustache, the luminous greenish eyes that looked up at her were all reminiscent of some kindly, affectionate, and wholly domestic beast.

'Was the eggs to your taste, Craskie?'

'Fine!' Craskie's sudden blaze of a smile sprang into his face and gave it astonishing life—much as the late sun outside, bursting through the clouds, gilded and lit the countryside.

'The ham wud please ye? I telt M'Gowan the last was ower saut. If I don't know yer tastes now it's no' for want o' experience.'

Craskie smiled absently again. He hated and detested ham and eggs for tea; left to himself, it was a thing he would never have had. But it was the Gilzean Arms's idea of a suitable dish for a farmer about to set forth on a six-mile drive at the close of his day's business. For twelve years—Craskie reflected a moment as he worked out dates in his head—ay, for twelve years Mrs Lockie had set in front of him every Tuesday at five o'clock an enormous dish

of this abhorred delicacy; and every Tuesday—except, of course, when he was 'away at the war'—Craskie had methodically eaten it. It was just twelve years since for the first—and only—time he had tried to suggest something else.

'Ay!' he said solemnly. Craskie's 'Ay' was a wonderful word; it appeared to mean—and did mean—nothing; yet somehow it produced the effect of a judicious summing-up of any existing situation on which it happened to comment. In the hill-farms round about Brig o' Muir you do not speak for the mere sake of speaking; if there is anything to be said, you say it; if not, you say 'Ay,' or 'M'phm,' or 'Jist that.' And if you can get into any of these as much as Craskie could get into his least conscious 'Ay' you are something of a conversationalist.

'Ay!' said Craskie again; and Mrs Lockie, entering into the spirit of the talk, screwed her mouth to one side, fixed her gaze on the street outside, and said 'M'm.'

Craskie scraped back his chair and stretched out his huge arms till the great muscles in them cracked. He brought them down on the table with a crash that made the dishes jump.

'Ah well, I'll just step into the bar for my usual,' he said. 'Ye might tell them I'll be out to the trap inside a quarter of an hour.'

Mrs Lockie, who admired him secretly, but none the less whole-heartedly, gave him an arch look.

'You an' yer usuals!' she remarked pleasantly. 'When ye've got a wife to harry ye hame there'll be nae mair o' *that*.'

To badinage of this type Craskie was normally a willing respondent; the applause of his great roar of a laugh rarely failed to crash out with the last word of the jest. But to-day he only looked sheepish and put out. He contrived a painful simper that to Mrs Lockie was worse than an oath. For Mrs Lockie had suddenly remembered—and realised with the remembrance—that she had been guilty of a most appalling *bêtise*. She coloured violently, made a great clatter with the dishes, and fled to the kitchen.

There she met her husband, a genial incom-

petent who regarded himself as a profound philosopher—and who could not have run the hotel without her for a week.

'Oh, man Davie,' she burst out, 'what think ye I've just gone and said to Craskie?' And she retailed the scene with gusto. "'When ye've got a wife to harry ye hame,'" says I, "there'll be nae mair o' that." Whatever possessed me to say sic a thing, an' at this time, of all times!

Lockie took his pipe from his mouth and looked at his excited wife with the cold contempt of an Academician.

'What for no'?' said he.

'What for no'? Ye ask me that! An' me maybe ruined the lassie's chances a'thegither.'

'Havers!' said Lockie. 'Folks doesna pay s' muckle heed to you an' yer sayin's as ye think. Like all auld wives, ye've naething in yer heid but marryin'. Hoo much o' this clash about Craskie and the lassie Maitland is due to yer ain spreadin' an' yer ain make-up?'

'I thought folk paid nae heed to me,' said his wife, scoring her point promptly.

'Folks'll aye listen t' auld wives' havers.' Lockie realised that his retort was rather lame, and took up a firmer tone. 'I say what I've said all along. I've asked ye a hunnert times—what need has Craskie to be marryin' any one at all? Has he no' a fine downsittin' where he is? Doesna Sarah Begg look after him jist as weel an' better'n any man could want?'

'David Lockie!' said his wife. 'Fifteen years syne, when ye were comin' round my father's house an' a'boddy kenned fine what ye were after—if some one had come an' said t' ye that ye were well off wi' Sarah Begg to look after ye, an' no' to be thinkin' o' marryin'—what wud ye ha' said?'

The outburst of an electric-bell deprived her of Lockie's answer to this involved question. She hurried away upstairs, throwing over her shoulder a Parthian shot of 'Sarah Begg!'

Up in the coffee-room Craskie finished his Gargantuan stretchings, felt his pockets carefully for pipes, pocket-book, watch, and tobacco-pouch, and stepped across to the dingy mirror above the mantel for a moment's attention to his tie and hair. He had been feeling in a ferment all day, and it was with something akin to relief that he beheld in the mirror only the old familiar face, rosy and good-natured, lit by a faintly humorous surprise. Straightening his tie, he beheld with more than usual satisfaction the great shoulders and upper arms that seemed to burst from his rough tweed coat. In the neighbourhood of Brig o' Muir a degenerate civilisation has not yet substituted professional football for Highland games; it was not so long since this same John Bonnar had putted weights and tossed cabers to distances which none of his contemporaries could approach. Before the war he had won prizes as far away

as Braemar in one direction and Strathpeffer in another. The name of John Bonnar was known from Dee to Ness.

Standing before the mirror, he doubled his arm and felt the muscle. He could do it again. Ay! He felt fine and well. Then the torments of the day came suddenly back to him; his honest face clouded over and he turned away like a wearied man.

He boldly entered the bar, however, called for his 'usual,' and fell into a dull talk about sheep with his neighbours. From the corner two old men with mean, scrubbily-bearded faces watched him drink. One was Sandy Skinner of Louby and the other was Jimmie Toddock of Shores.

Presently Skinner spoke. So far as a cleft palate would allow, he was understood to say that Craskie was playing fast and loose with the lassie Maitland. 'A dichty game!' he spluttered virtuously. 'A dichty game.'

Toddock shook his head. 'Na, na, man, it's nae that ava'. Yon mannike cudna play fast an' loose wi' a nowt. He jist canna mak' up's ain mind. He will, an' he winnae. He's aye been the same. Left a young laddie wi' s mither tae guide him—an' she was the managin' sort, yon. She was that. She made up's mind for him for twenty year, an' noo she's gane he canna dae't for himsel'.'

Mr Skinner keekled loudly, wiping the water from his bleary eyes. 'An' she wad yet,' said he, 'she wad yet. Heh, heh! she wad that. Gin Nelly Bonnar was still aman's there'd be nae Peggy Maitland for ony laddie o' hers. Na-na!'

Toddock echoed his unpleasant laughter. 'Ye dinna ken, man,' said he, 'that the ghaist o' her's no' guidin' him yet. He's in a wandered-like state at the best o't ony way. . . . Anither wee yin, Sandy, afore we go—hoot ay, man, jist wi' me.'

II.

The rich red-gold of the sunset died suddenly behind Craskie as his horse dropped into a walk on the long hill below Tomnahoy. Something of the sombreness of the country-side from which the light had been struck fell upon Craskie's mind. The horse pulled strongly at the hill—a sturdy, useful beast, but better bred and better made than was common thereabouts. The trap bespoke a careful owner comfortably off; its paint was new, and it answered the two tests of the Brig o' Muir ostlers—rubber tires and rubber foot-mats front and back. Its smartness was of a piece with the good Harris tweed of Craskie's suit, the decent briar pipe he smoked, the refined mixture that shed an aroma round him. It never occurred to Craskie to style himself a gentleman-farmer, but he might have done so without violence to either component of the term.

Yes, Craskie was a good farm, a very good farm; and it was going to be better. The garden was beautiful, the old-fashioned house was developing in his careful hands into the sort of place of which tenants rarely permit themselves to dream. Only last year he had put in a bath with hot-water circulation—a hundred pounds that had cost him, what with the new range it had meant, and all. It was a magnificent bath; you could almost swim in it. This year, far in advance of all his neighbours, he was toying with the idea of a small electric plant. . . . Yes, Craskie was a house you could ask any one to share without embarrassment.

Then why didn't he ask Peggy Maitland?

Craskie knocked out his pipe on the step iron, leaning carefully down to see that the hot ash fell clear onto the road. Yes, why didn't he? Was it because he knew she would decline? No, it wasn't that. On the contrary, he was almost sure she would accept. It wasn't that.

As the horse, blowing a little, toiled up the interminable ascent, Craskie ran over in his mind the brief conversation he had had with Peggy in the streets of Brig o' Muir that day. How precious every moment of that conversation had been! Why, the Lord only knew; now that he came to try, he could hardly recall a word of it. He had talked about his plums, and she had been eager and interested. He had told her a story about his first horseman—an excellent servant with a termagant of a wife—and she had laughed generously. He had told her of his difficulties over the electric-light project, and she had been intelligently sympathetic. But all the time she had given a sort of impression that though these things were deeply interesting to her, there was something he might say any time that would be even better. Did he know what it was? Fine! Ay, fine. Then why didn't he say it?

Sarah Begg!

As her name came into his mind her figure rose before him like a photograph. There she was—pale, big-boned, rectilinear. She was not ugly—yet certainly she was not bonnie; no, no, never that—she was not handsome altogether, she was not exactly grim, she was not at all masculine, neither hard nor solid nor mirthless nor Puritanical. No one of these words would do; but had Craskie possessed sufficient subtlety of mind, he might have told himself that she was all these things at once, and also in some incredible way all their direct opposites. He saw her black dress, her square, broad shoulders; her finely-waved black hair, her oddly white hands, her great right-angled chin. He heard her level, toneless voice—making statements one did not somehow dream of contradicting, offering suggestions one would never dare to refuse. That was Sarah Begg, Craskie's housekeeper.

Craskie's master? 'Tah!' he said in disgust at the idea; and then submissively, 'Ay!' Not his master—no, no; but it came to this, that before he, Craskie, could ask any girl to marry him he would have to tell Sarah Begg that he would no longer require her services as housekeeper. And how in the name of all desperate enterprise was he to accomplish *that*?

He couldn't, he simply couldn't; and that was just why he couldn't say to Peggy Maitland the thing she was quite clearly waiting to hear.

The horse crested the hill, threw up its head, and started to trot. Craskie pulled it back again into a walk. He wanted to think, to let his mind blend with the gentle melancholy of the evening along the pleasantly sad avenues of self-pity. Always, it seemed to him, he had been dominated by women. There had been his mother; his father had died when he was six, and from then onwards till the day of her own demise he had done what his mother told him. It was part of Craskie's simple creed that decent men were fond of their mothers; he could bear instant tribute to his. Much of the prosperity of the farm of Craskie was due to her magnificently capable direction—the sharpest buyer in the county, the most judicious seller, and when it came to a knowledge of sheep . . .! And he could remember many kindnesses, great and little—so long as he had done exactly what she wanted. But when or if he had tried to strike out a line for himself—ah, then it was a different story! What a woman she had been; she could put any man in his place with half-a-dozen words. 'I sorted *him*,' she would say. Ay, she had 'sorted' her son anyway.

He could remember her attitude to girls—and, indeed, to all women younger than herself. Merciless! There was Bessie Hope, who had gone off and got secretly married to young Wishart because her parents would not let him have her openly; there had been Mrs Abbot at Balforra, who had turned from her drunken boor of a husband and 'carried on' with another married man. Craskie had had a sneaking idea that both of these culprits were perfectly within their rights; but he would not have dared to hint at such a thing to his mother. He shuddered yet as he remembered her voice when she spoke of these delinquents; it would have cut a hole in a stone dyke! And of the two it was Bessie Hope who had caught it the worse. To run away from your husband was eternal damnation and hell; but to go against your parents—oh, unspeakable!

Craskie strove honestly to keep the hardness out of his thoughts; his mother was dead these four years, and it was to her almost entirely that he owed his present comfortable state. But suppose he had been going home to *her* to-night to tell her that he wanted to bring Peggy Maitland home as mistress of Craskie? The cold sweat almost stood on his brow at the mere

thought. That could never have been done—never, never, never.

It was his mother who had installed Sarah Begg; and as well as if he had seen into her mind, Craskie knew that she had designed Sarah to be a perpetuation of herself when she should no longer be there—to guide John in the way he should go, and to keep all 'impudent, forcing creatures' the length of the Brig o' Muir road away from Craskie. The war—accursed disaster!—had given her funds to indulge in Sarah; almost in the first days of the struggle she had grasped the fact that sheep were going to pay as never before—and everything on the place had gone into sheep. She had grabbed the market a good year ahead of her neighbours, and she had never let it go. They had made—well, not a fortune, but something more than a very decent turnover. And in 1916 Mrs Bonnar, failing the least thing herself, had commanded a housekeeper. Whatever Mrs Bonnar desired appeared instantly, as though supplied by a subservient Providence, though for much simpler needs others might search the length and breadth of the country in vain. Sarah Begg had materialised; she had settled in; she had persisted. And how on earth was she to be got out? She was a vitally strong woman—'Never a day in my bed, Mr John'—she had thirty years of vigorous life before her. She was perfectly contented at Craskie, as she well might be, and had taken root there for good. She remained a virgin, and the idea of anything else was unthinkable. No, there was no outlet; only by his own effort could Sarah Begg be dislodged. Could he make it?

Craskie had been glad to turn to the recollection of his mother's commercial aptitude; that, at any rate, he could sincerely venerate. Yet the thought of the war had brought a very bitter memory of her, too. She had decided ('I have decided, John'—he could hear her formula yet) that he was not to go to the front; and she had kept him back till the last possible moment, when he was taken from her. John Bonnar of Craskie—Private Bonnar, Corporal Bonnar, Sergeant Bonnar, X/Yth Seafields—had been a conscript. He had got the Military Medal, but—he had to be fetched. Not soon would Craskie forget those first years of the war—the looks the women gave him sometimes, the coldness of the older men at the market, the hell of that Tuesday when the Seafields, with their pipes playing, marched through the long street of Brig o' Muir, and John Bonnar of Craskie stood cheering—among the spectators. Among old men and wastrel youths and the village idiots; among the lame and the halt and the blind. And he the strong man of the county, as every one knew—a champion at the Highland games!

Not soon would he forgive his mother that; or himself either, for giving in to her.

Well, well, his mother was dead, and Sarah Begg was her reincarnation only in the morbid moments of his own imagination. His mother would have been immovable, fatal; Sarah Begg could be told to go. And she *would* be told—that night, maybe; the memory of those bitter days of the war had strengthened him to that. His mother had been wrong about his going to the front; she had almost admitted as much herself, a length to which she had never gone on any other occasion within his memory. Maybe if she had lived she would have seen herself wrong about the 'impudent, forcing creatures' as well. Anyway, Sarah Begg was *not* his mother, as she would soon find out.

A catch newspaper phrase jingled in his head. 'Ay,' he murmured, with a glint of his famous smile, 'Sarah Begg must go!'

(Continued on page 235.)

THE GIANT PIKE.

I AM the terror of the ways,
The horror of the pool and weir.
I am the haunting dread that stays—
I am the living, awful bier.

The nightmare of the speckled trout,
A cannibal pirate to my kin,
I put all living things to rout—
I am a living sabred sin.

My blood is rich with th' innocent,
I care for nothing that is dead.
All in the pool to me pay rent—
I must be fed—I must be fed.

Silver dace, oh I watch them race
And playfully leap in the air;
I watch through the weeds that interlace,
Deep in my lair, deep in my lair.

The timid chub I love to harry;
Even the salmon, lordly and bold,
Gives a wide berth—he doesn't tarry;
Knows me of old—knows me of old.

Translucent green, like weeds I seem
Motionless in the current,
And yet I glide and glide upstream,
A living death abhorrent.

I live on life, on life I live,
My spirit's their hereafter;
Their timid blood feeds my cruel flood,
Their agony's my laughter.

I am their knell, I am their hell,
My serried teeth their death-bed;
I am their sepulchre as well—
I must be fed—I must be fed.

I am the terror of the ways,
The horror of the pool and weir.
I am the haunting dread that stays—
I am the living, awful bier.

T. E. D. GEORGE.

BESSARABIA, A NEW TRAVEL GROUND.

By E. C. DAVIES.

I.

THE jaded traveller, weary of the stereotyped joys of the routine 'beauty spot,' might do worse than make for the delta of the Danube, and pitch his tent for a season in far Bessarabia. A journey of one night and day from Bucharest will take him to its capital city, Chisinau (Kishinev), and from there his wanderings can begin.

There are charms enough in the north of Bessarabia, where glorious vineyards clothe the hills and dense woods stretch out to fertile pasture-lands. Immense primeval forests once covered these rounded hills and rich valleys, and the rich brown earth, where the trees have been burnt away, is an indication of their former extent. To-day there are dense thickets, beautiful and wild, where beech mingles with elm, and the acacia abounds; groves of wild plums and cherries, with the fragrant eglantine finding a home amid the stately oaks. The sweet grass attracts the cattle, which come to browse among the mighty roots, and close to the villages even the pigs wander into the heart of the forests, so that little by little the clearings are widened by the pasturage of the animals.

The wooded hills dominate the terraced lands where the vine flourishes, and the villages nestling on their slopes, the white houses peeping from a wealth of green, are often on a level with the trees that crown them. The peasant builds in accordance with the needs of his primitive agricultural operations: nearness to a spring of water, favourable soil for his grapes—guided here by the instinct of a descendant of generations of vine growers—a sloping hill for the young plants, and shelter from the steppe winds. On the lower levels the crops of maize or barley are divided by thorn hedges, or low walls of the limestone which abounds in northern Bessarabia. The houses, characteristically Roumanian in appearance, have the typical long gallery running along the front, the gate pillars covered with naïve carving, the wide veranda, where the family bedding airs all day long in the sunshine, the spacious stables and granary. All the villages of the centre and north of Bessarabia possess this air of settled ease and comfort, betokening long centuries of peaceful occupation, unlike the steppe villages on the Dniester farther south, always a prey for the invader from the East. And in the *Codru*, as this long strip of the province is called, where Roumanian traditions have held out for centuries against any attempt at Russification, the people wear the graceful costume of Roumania proper, with the dignity and charm of this handsome race. The

men, picturesque in spotless white linen trousers and embroidered shirt, a scarlet sash round the waist, a sheepskin jacket slung from one shoulder, their brown heads crowned by black felt hats, are frank and free of manner. The women, sweet and gracious, if shy with the stranger, adorn their white robes with the wonderful needlework so instinct with a feeling for colour and decoration that every Roumanian woman seems to possess by birthright; and men and women alike are handsome, with fine classical features and dark, expressive eyes.

One carries away a delightful mental picture of these villages of the *Codru*, perched between orchard and forest; of the wide valleys where the great rivers wind slowly along, and the sound of the shepherd's pipe is the only other note in the stillness; of old white monasteries shining out from a wealth of greenness; of the old bastioned fortress of Suba, built in the great days of Stephen as a refuge from the dreaded Turk; its round granite towers, pink in the rays of a setting sun, the gardens of the little town beneath its walls stretching down to the graceful curve of the Dniester between the gorges cut out by its tributaries.

II.

But the wise traveller will not linger even in these charming pastorals, for beyond them lie the steppe lands, and he who has once tasted their pure air, and felt the subtle charm of infinite distances, will be drawn again and again to journeyings over these limitless plains.

The steppe of Bessarabia descends gently and regularly from the great plateau of Moldavia to the level of the Black Sea, its parallel valleys following the southern watershed, the curving line sweeping away in mighty folds to the distant horizon. One thinks of the steppes as flat; but in reality they are as full of wave-curves as the sea itself, and here and there rise into rounded folds of perfect contour, like our Sussex Downs. The 'black earth' of Bessarabia is some of the most wonderful corn-growing soil in the world, but all the steppes are not corn land, and immense stretches of velvety pasture nurture great herds of cattle and buffalo. As far as the eye can see, the same undulations of the land occur—monotonous but infinitely grand. Where the road follows the hills, the impression of solitude is complete. The fields are full of exquisite flowers of every shade; the air is like champagne; the sky marvellously clear and pure, great cloud-shadows sweeping over the horizon, casting purple lights on the land.

The charm of the steppe can be felt only by those who are willing to lend themselves to its

appeal. It is a fascination which makes all other beauty seem wearisome, save only that of the sea, to which, in its spaciousness and changeless changelessness, it has a close resemblance. And in Bessarabia the two beauties, of sea and steppe, can be realised almost together, for from the tiny village of Vilcov, where the fishermen catch the mighty sturgeon of the Danube and where the finest caviare in the world is to be tasted, to the Black Sea is only a day's journey. Only a country cart can cross the sand-dunes from Vilcov to the village of Djubria, where the road that takes one to Akkerman begins, but the drive across these dunes is a never-forgotten experience. Over miles of sand, beaten into waves by the clean fresh wind that blows from the sea, one passes great stretches of reeds, man-high, where a marvellous bird-life exists in the lovely loneliness, and gorgeous butterflies flit hither and thither in the sunshine. There are fields of blue chicory, and purple daisies, and a curious, reddish grass; and the last section of the way leads actually through the sea, the heavy wheels of the cart splashing through the green, transparent water, millions of tiny fishes plainly visible as they dart away in terror from the oncoming intruders.

If I were rich I would build me a house on the shores of the Black Sea, close to that island village that is part of the mainland only at low water. There is pure joy in basking in the glorious rays of the sun on the white sand-dunes covered with tussocky grass, fragrant with thyme and peppermint; watching the dark waters of the sea change in colour with the changing hours; in wandering amid the leafy lanes that lead to Shaba, where a little colony of French descent prepares the finest wine of a province that boasts five hundred varieties of grapes; in climbing the walls of the great fortress of Akkerman, and looking over its shimmering lake to Bolshevik Russia.

III.

The history of this town, the Roumanian name of which is Cetatea Alba, dates back four centuries before Christ. Built by the Greeks at the mouth of the Danube to protect their trade-route inland, it passed from the dominion of Byzantium to that of Genoa. After them came the sovereignty of the Tatar, until in the fourteenth century the Moldavians obtained possession of it, and under two powerful princes, Alexander the Great and Stephen the Great, made of it one of the most impregnable forts in Europe. Even Mohammed II., the conqueror of Constantinople, affirmed that, 'so long as the town remains in the hand of the Moldaves, we Turks will never vanquish the Christians'; and for long years all attempts to that end were unavailing, till at length, after a mighty battle, it fell, and under Turkish rule played an important part in the wars of that state against Russia in the eighteenth century. Recent

excavations have brought to light much of the ancient city in which the triple influences—Byzantine, Genoese, and Moldavian—are plainly illustrated. The immense strength of the great towers built by the Genoese (reminding one strongly of Norman work), the curtain walls and bastions, and the remains of the outer fortifications running down to the lake give an impression of extraordinary power, and, before the days of long-range artillery, the place must have been well-nigh impregnable.

By motor-boat from Chilia, where the grain ships take up their load from the golden granaries of Bessarabia for the sea, one can reach the quaint monastery of Lipovene monks, close to Vilcov of caviare fame. The monastery stands close to the river-bank on a narrow reach of the Danube, and in its lovely garden golden quinces, like the apples of the Hesperides, glow in their season. At sunset the trees, banked high to withstand the periodic inundations of the Danube, stand out like black fans against the marvellous colour of the sky, while the Danube shines crimson and gold in that miraculous hour. In the memory of such pictures, the traveller forgets the petty discomforts of wanderings in a primitive land, and weeks of journeying in Bessarabia add innumerable joys to the mind's treasures. One breathes again the cool, salt air of the great lagoons fringed by tall reeds, the haunt of wild birds by thousands, the birthplace of strange aquatic plants, the home of lonely fisher-folk, where some tiny creek may shelter a humble house. One remembers the red sunsets over the Danube, the chanting of the bearded monks in their quiet sanctuary, the fields of golden corn in September days, and the treading of the grapes in the vineyards; the green waters of the Black Sea lapping the white sands of Budachi; the lonely, infinite horizons of the steppes; and—kindest memory of all—the warm welcome that awaits one after long days in the solitudes in the little towns, where the traditional Bessarabian hospitality, almost patriarchal in its beautiful simplicity, still has its being.

GRAY DAYS AND GOLD.

WHEN long the road and far the goal,
Heavy the burden;
When for the sad and stricken soul
Seems there no guerdon:
A faith there is to ease the load,
A hope the heart to free—
When far the goal and long the road
For you and me!

When clear the day and calm the night
In earth's fair closes;
When dressed in silkiest garments bright
Bloom radiant roses:
A love there is for hearts that pray,
A love for ever true—
When calm the night and clear the day
For me and you!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

THE FIRST DOG.

A TALE OF PREHISTORIC ENGLAND.

By Lieutenant-Colonel GORDON CASSELY, F.R.G.S.,
 Author of *The Elephant God*, *The Jungle Girl*, *The Red Marshal*, &c.

I.

HIGH up on the face of a rocky hill that rose above the Thames valley a strangely-clad man pulled aside the stones blocking the entrance of a small cave, and stepped out cautiously into the morning sunshine. His only garment was a deerskin jerkin, belted at the waist, although at first sight he seemed to be clothed from head to foot in some tight-fitting hairy garb. But the fur grew on his own skin, a thick brown fur, like a monkey's; and he might have been taken for one of the apes that inhabited the forests of England then, but for the long, straight hair of his head, the higher forehead, and the strongly-marked chin, that showed him to be human. For it was hundreds of thousands of years ago; and men then did not seem far removed from the apes.

In one hand he carried a long, flint-tipped spear, while the other held three short javelins; and a small stone axe hung from a bandolier of deerhide over his left shoulder. With quick, nervous glances all round he assured himself that there was no danger near, and relaxing his cautious attitude, he turned and spoke to someone in the cave behind him. From it emerged a woman carrying a baby, and two young children followed her. She was clothed like the man in one leather garment, hers being ornamented by the skins of brightly-feathered birds fastened to it by bone skewers, and around her neck was hung a string of polished shells. But she and her naked offspring were even hairier than he was; and her features, although not unpleasing, were more ape-like.

The man, her husband, had turned away again, and was looking down into the valley below, where the river, five miles wide, swept along between dense woods. From where he stood he could see a score or more of gigantic crocodiles crawling out on to a small sandy island to bask in the sun; while everywhere great black dots rose and sank in the water—hippopotamuses, he knew them to be, for in that far age the rivers of Britain swarmed with these amphibians; while elephants, rhinoceroses, cave-lions, and sabre-toothed tigers haunted its forests, where monkeys and great apes played in the tree-tops.

The tropical climate that had prevailed in the land for untold centuries was changing rapidly, for a glacial period was in store for the world, and a vast ice-sheet was spreading over Northern Europe. Its coming was heralded by the great herds of reindeer and Arctic animals that had

already appeared in Britain; while the tropical mammals were beginning to migrate across the wooded isthmus that linked England to France, a relic of the days when what are now the British Isles were but small portions of a vast country that stretched from Scandinavia to Spain and spread out west into the Atlantic far beyond the present limits of Ireland.

Of that past history this little family of the Old Stone Age knew nothing. All that the father and mother realised was that even in their life-time the climate was sadly altered, and cold such as they never knew in their young days chilled them now. The man, who was named Koto,¹ was more intelligent than his contemporaries in the scanty population of Britain. He had taken up his abode in this cave, and by so doing had set a new fashion, which the increasing rigour of the climate soon made popular among the inhabitants of Europe.

He had been the first in his own country to wear clothes, such as they were, for hitherto men's hairy skins had been sufficient protection for them against the weather. In this his example would soon be followed, for fire and the art of making it were unknown to human beings then; and the intense cold caused by the approach of the ice-sheet from the North Pole made some artificial means of obtaining warmth necessary. But, like all pioneers, he was regarded askance by his fellows, the other dwellers in the forest where he generally sought for his family's food. Like all the inhabitants of Britain then, they and he were hunters; and, armed only with hand-to-hand weapons of stone and wood, they slew harmless animals for meat, and did battle with the dangerous ones, which preyed on them in turn.

II.

Koto looked down towards the river and debated inwardly whether to descend to the forest or climb to the undulating downs on the other side of the hill and chase the deer that roamed there. He decided on the latter course; and, putting his axe away, as it would only impede him when running, he bade the woman guard the children and remain near the cave, into which she could retire for safety if any beast of prey drew near.

Then he climbed like a goat up the rocky face of the heights that, now diminished and softened, still rise above the Thames at Richmond, until he stood on the summit looking on the grassy

¹ See 'A Child of the Stone Age,' in *Chambers's Journal* for December 1924.

downs below. Dotted here and there over them, herds of reindeer were feeding; so, with hunger lending wings to his feet, he rapidly descended the steep slopes.

But before he reached the level he stopped with an exclamation of anger. Across the undulating ground swept a large pack of wild dogs, big, russet-hided animals with prick ears and bushy tails, running silently in the chase, and before them the deer fled their fastest—for of all their many foes, these were the worst. The tiger, the cave-lion, and the spotted hyena slew them by ones and twos, but the dogs by scores.

In a few minutes, therefore, there was no game to be seen; and Koto was too skilled a hunter not to know that it would be a waste of time to look for any where the wild pack had passed. He turned his attention instead to searching the scrub along the base of the hill for foxes or other small animals that might be hidden in it.

He had poor luck. At the end of two or three hours he had found only a snake, which he killed and ate on the spot. So he resolved to recross the hill and descend into the forest on the river-bank, and was turning away from the level when his eye was caught by something moving among the bushes. Crouching motionless, he saw two or three small animals playing in the scrub. They were wild-dog puppies, and, as he watched, the mother came out of cover and lay down on the grass near them. Koto waited until she was asleep before he moved. Then he stole cautiously through the bushes toward her upwind, until he was near enough to hurl a javelin at her, just as she woke up at a warning growl from one of her offspring, which had caught sight of him.

The flint-tipped weapon pierced her heart and she fell dead. Koto ran swiftly up and knocked the astonished puppies on the head, four of them, as they backed away from him, snarling. He tied the hind-legs of all his kill together, passed a strip of deerskin through them, and slung the dead animals over his shoulder.

As he turned to go a fifth puppy, which had been lying asleep under a bush and so had escaped his eye, woke up and came towards him. Unlike the others, it showed no fear of him, and walked forward, gambolling clumsily and wagging its tail. As the man stooped to pick it up and wring its neck it licked his hand.

Koto was astonished at these demonstrations of friendliness, for dogs were then regarded as the most intractable animals of the wild, fierce and dangerous as wolves, and as ready to pull down human beings when hunting in packs. At that age of the world none had ever been domesticated, and a man would as soon have thought of trying to tame a sabre-toothed tiger or a cave-lion as a dog.

The hunter could scarcely believe his eyes when this puppy showed every desire to be friendly. He picked it up carefully, but the

little animal only licked his hand again, and nestled down confidently in his arms. Koto had not the heart to kill it, and put it down on the ground again, for the other members of its family hanging on his back would provide sufficient food, and he could afford to let it go. But, to his surprise, as he moved away it followed him, wagging its tail.

He stopped and looked at it thoughtfully. If he left it, it would either starve or be killed by some beast of prey; so it would be kinder to put it out of its misery at once. He raised a javelin to slay it, but the puppy looked up at him so trustingly that he lowered the weapon again.

Suddenly he remembered the children in the cave. How they would delight in such a play-fellow! He thought of his own boyhood and how he would have loved such a companion; so he picked up the puppy again, and it promptly went to sleep in his arms.

III.

Speculating with amusement on his wife's surprise and the children's pleasure when he brought it home, Koto breasted the slopes of the hill, carrying the little dog carefully, and started to climb down the precipitous face on the river side. He dropped from rock to rock like a mountain goat until he reached a path that he had made himself, which led around a projecting corner to the entrance of his cave. He strode along it without caution, not dreaming of danger so near his home.

But just as he got to the great rock that jutted out from the face of the hill, and was about to turn it to reach the cave, the puppy, tucked under his arm, stiffened and growled faintly. Koto checked in his stride and looked at it. The dog was awake, and, lifting its little nose in the air, sniffed and growled again.

The warning was enough for the man. Quietly laying the dead animals on the ground, he placed the puppy with them, and then climbed like a cat up the steep rocks until he reached the small cliff that rose sheer above the mouth of his cavern. Lying down, he crawled to the edge and looked cautiously over.

In front of the entrance to his home a great cave-lion crouched, ears twitching and tail beating the ground impatiently. Like a cat it was watching the hole in the cliff, and as Koto looked it rose, and with its huge paws tried to dig away the rocks with which the woman inside had blocked the entrance, the boulders that were always kept there for the purpose. Failing to dislodge them, the brute snarled angrily and lay down again.

Koto, watching it, felt very grateful to the puppy, for without its warning he would have walked straight on to the lion and, taken by surprise, must inevitably have perished. But now he was safe from attack where he was, and held the enemy at his mercy.

He drew back cautiously until he was hidden from the sight of the beast below. Looking at the loose stones lying around him, he selected two heavy, flat ones; with his sharp-edged flint knife he cut a broad strip from the hem of his deerskin garment, and with this bound the stones against the shaft of the spear, two feet from the head. Then, carrying the weapon, he crawled forward again cautiously on his stomach and looked over.

The lion lay almost directly below him. Rising to his feet, Koto lifted the weighted spear and hurled it down with all his strength. It struck the great brute between the shoulders and, breaking the spine, pierced the heart. With a convulsive shudder the stricken animal died without a sound.

Koto threw stones at it to assure himself that it was really dead. Waiting for a few minutes to ascertain if its mate was near, he climbed down by the way that he had ascended. The puppy was sitting by the body of its mother; but, seeing him, it ran to meet him, wagging its little tail. He stooped down and petted it, to its evident delight, then turned the corner, and with uplifted javelin advanced cautiously towards the lion. The small dog followed him, and at the sight of the big beast growled and rushed forward with bristling hair and bared teeth. But the common enemy was dead.

Delighted with the puppy's courage, Koto stroked it again, and called loudly to his wife. She answered from within; but not until, through a spyhole, she had seen him draw the spear out of the lion's carcass would she roll away the great stones that closed the entrance to the cavern, then she cautiously emerged with a javelin in her hand.

Seeing the dog, she raised her weapon; but Koto, picking up the puppy, held it out to her. She refused to touch it, and begged him to kill it. Even when she heard how it had saved his life she persisted; and when the two older children came out and screamed with delight at the sight of the puppy in their father's arms, she angrily pulled them away from it as it licked their little hands. She bitterly opposed its being brought into the cave, and tried to drive it out; but Koto, grateful to it for the warning that had preserved him, insisted on its staying. For weeks it was the cause of constant quarrelling between the pair, until at last the usually pacific man thrashed his wife soundly, and obtained peace.

But she would never allow it to touch her or the baby. The other children, however, loved and welcomed their new playfellow, and rolled with it all day long on the floor of the cave or on the strip of grass outside the entrance. They named it Lion, persuaded from its fearlessness that the spirit of the ferocious beast that had died on the threshold had entered its little body. It very soon proved that it was more than a

child's toy, for one night, when all lay sleeping on the deerskins that served them as beds, its growling awoke them, and they heard some beast of prey snuffing at the stones with which Koto had as usual blocked the entrance to the cave, and trying to pull them away. Koto rose and clambered up to a narrow hole that he had made, opening onto a ledge above the mouth of the cavern. He thrust a stout pole out through it, and pushed with this until he dislodged a pile of rocks that he kept heaped up on the ledge for such occasions. The big stones crashed down on the unseen animal, which, battered and bruised, bolted in terror.

The young dog was soon always to be relied on to warn them of danger; and so Koto took to sending it out of the cave every morning, and waited safely inside until he understood from his four-footed scout's manner that it was safe to emerge himself.

IV.

Lion grew rapidly, and before many months had passed was bigger than a wolf. The dog always accompanied Koto out hunting, for it had speedily shown itself useful in the chase. It gave its master early intimation of danger, and warned him when they were near game; and it pulled down wounded deer, or held them until he could come up and kill them.

Many and varied were the adventures of the pair, narrow their escapes from death, as they roamed the forests or ranged far and wide over the upland downs. Other human hunters, seeing this novel association, whispered that the dog was an evil spirit, a fitting companion for the man who had outraged old custom by wearing clothes and living in a cave.

Koto paid no heed to them, but went his way with the faithful companion that shared his dangers and was always ready to give its life for him. In order not to have to abandon the dog whenever he was obliged to take refuge in a tree from some dangerous beast, he taught it to grip the back of his jerkin collar with its teeth, place its paws over his shoulders, and cling to him while he climbed up out of harm's way. This trick often saved Lion's life. Once as they pursued an antelope through the forest they burst suddenly into an open glade in which an enormous animal was browsing on the leaves of a tree. It was a baluchitherium, the greatest of all varieties of rhinoceros. It stood thirteen feet at the shoulder, and its neck, relatively as long as a horse's, gave it an additional reach of four or five feet when it raised its great head to feed on the branches above it. It had no horns; but two long, down-growing ivory tusks served it as deadly weapons of defence instead.

Like all the rhinoceros family, the brute, although not carnivorous, was liable to fits of blind rage; and now, seemingly annoyed at being disturbed, it looked around for someone

to vent its anger on. The antelope had vanished ; but the great brute's fierce eyes fell on the man, who rushed for the nearest tree. Unluckily, this had no branches for twenty or thirty feet above the ground ; so Koto turned in desperation to look for a more accessible one.

The nearest that was climbable stood at the other end of the open space, and as he ran for it the monster charged him. Clumsy though it seemed, it moved swiftly ; and Koto, glancing over his shoulder, saw with horror that it was rapidly overtaking him. He gave himself up for lost. The enormous head towered over him as the rhinoceros lifted it high in the air to give him a crushing downward blow with its tremendous tusks.

But at the crucial moment the beast squealed shrilly and swayed away to one side ; for the gallant dog had dashed in and given it a raking bite in the hind-leg, a bite that shore through tendon and sinew and almost hamstringed the monster, which stopped in bewilderment and looked around for its assailant. When it saw the dog it grunted fiercely and, forgetting the man, charged at it. Lion dodged the rush, and as the rhinoceros turned and dashed at it more angrily than before, fled into the undergrowth. The great beast crashed noisily in after it ; but as the miraculously-saved Koto got to the tree and reached up to grasp the lowest branch the dog ran out of the bushes and came to him.

Despite the imminent danger he could not abandon the faithful animal ; so he knelt down, and Lion sprang on his back, gripped the collar of his garment with its teeth, crooked its paws over his shoulders, and held on firmly to him as he pulled himself up into the tree, just in time to get out of reach as the baluchitherium burst into the glade again and charged towards them. When the baffled monster realised that its prey had escaped, it pressed its forehead against the trunk and tried to push the tree down. Finding the task too much even for its giant strength, it gashed the bark with its curving tusks in impotent fury. While it thus vented its wrath foolishly Koto climbed into the next tree and went on through the forest high above the ground as adroitly as a monkey, the dog on his back gripping him firmly.

But even when he got back to the cave and told Ra, his wife, what Lion had done for him she still persisted in regarding the dog with hostility ; for she was convinced that some day it would reveal its savage nature and attack them. But the day came when she changed her opinion.

v.

The child that she had been nursing when Lion first entered their life had been succeeded by a new baby. One morning, when Koto was digging for flints some distance down the hill

with a pick made from a reindeer's antler, and the mother was gathering leafy branches to lay under the skins that formed their beds, all the children were playing on the grass before the cave. Ra had given the three eldest strict injunctions to guard the baby ; but, seeing the father and Lion climbing up to them, they ran to meet him, leaving it on the ground, wrapped up in a soft deerskin.

Suddenly a shadow seemed to pass across the sunlit sward. One of the children turned and screamed. A spotted cave-hyena had stolen down from the cliff above, leapt noiselessly on to the grass, and snatched up the baby in its strong jaws. With one bound it vanished into the bushes.

At the child's cry Ra came running along the path, and Koto climbed up the rocks as fast as he could, ignorant of what had happened, but knowing that some danger threatened their offspring. But swifter than either, Lion sprang ahead of his master, sniffed the ground, and then without hesitation started off on the hyena's track. It had vanished before the distracted mother had reached the other children and learned from them her baby's fate.

She shrieked the truth to her husband as he came up. Flinging down his pick, he snatched up a spear and rushed wildly after the dog. He caught a glimpse of it just as it disappeared among scattered trees and undergrowth on the hillside. But he lost its trail and, mad with despairing rage, stood irresolute, not knowing which direction to take.

Suddenly he heard a whimper, a snarl, and the awful scream of a hyena, and sprang towards the sound. In an open space he came upon the spotted ravisher struggling fiercely with the dog. Although the brute was twice its size and weight, Lion had seized the hyena's throat, and, though swung wildly round, and battered against the ground, the brave animal never relaxed its grip.

Koto's heart seemed to stop, for there was no sign of the baby. He dashed to the struggling pair and, when the hyena swung round towards him, drove his spear into its heart. As he plucked his weapon out the blood spurted from the wound and the hyena fell on the ground dead. But Lion still held its throat until his master opened the clenched jaws. Then the dog, followed by its master, ran into the undergrowth and with a joyous whimper nosed out the baby, lying still wrapped up in the deerskin, crying but unhurt. It was evident from the teeth-marks that the hyena had gripped the leather and so inflicted no injury on the child.

Lifting the baby up, and assuring himself of the welcome truth, Koto patted the bruised and bleeding dog, and ran back towards the cave. With streaming eyes Ra met him on the way, and like a mad thing snatched the infant from his arms. Tearing the deerskin from it, she examined it all over before she could believe

his assurance that the baby was unhurt. She mouthed its hairy little body, and smothered it with fierce caresses.

Not until they had reached the cave did she recover her senses sufficiently to listen to her husband's story. But when at last she realised that she owed the life of her child to the animal

that she had always distrusted, she knelt down beside Lion as it lay licking its wounds and, putting her arms round its neck, pressed the great head fondly to her bosom.

And that is how the dog first came to be accepted as Man's faithful friend in dog-loving Britain.

WIRELESS VERSUS CABLES.

By GEORGE E. CLARKE.

SENATOR MARCONI'S recent announcement of his startling experiments with the 'Beam' short-wave system of transmission, which it is claimed will revolutionise the whole business of long-distance electrical communication, has again revived the query, first raised over twenty years ago, 'Will wireless supersede the cables?'

The Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company has now been in operation for seventeen years, in active competition with the cable companies, and there can be no question as to the miraculous strides made, particularly in the last few years, in this almost uncanny means of communication.

When commercial transatlantic communication first took place in 1907 between Clifden, County Galway, Ireland, and Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, the working speed was seldom, if ever, more than ten words per minute, a very laborious proceeding. Even at this painfully slow rate, numerous lengthy interruptions took place, particularly during the day, when transmission was impossible owing to atmospheric disturbance. In those days the sending operator formed his dots and dashes by hand, while the receiving telegraphist could manage to read the very anæmic signals only by the use of ear telephones!

Nowadays automatic transmission at a speed of sixty words per minute, both ways simultaneously, between London and New York direct, by the aid of automatic relays installed at the coast stations on both sides of the Atlantic, is the order of the day; while on shorter circuits, like that between London and Paris, a speed of a hundred words per minute in both directions is often maintained for many hours, except during very hot weather, when atmospherics cause considerable trouble and occasional lengthy stoppages.

Even the 'Beam' system apparently will not overcome this atmospheric trouble, as it is generally admitted that 'Beam' transmission is only possible during the hours of darkness and for an hour or so before and after twilight, while the reflectors used in the reception of 'Beam' signals do not prevent interference of other stations working on the same wavelength. The experiments carried out by Mr Marconi between Poldhu, Cornwall, and Sydney, N.S.W., were only possible during seven hours out of the twenty-four, and it would be interesting to know the reason for this limitation.

It may not be generally known that the short-wave or 'Beam' system of wireless transmission is not by any means new. It was first tried by Hertz over thirty years ago; even Mr Marconi himself, when he first came to this country in 1896, experimented with it over short distances, but dropped it in favour of the long-wave, as the latter was found to be much more satisfactory.

Unfortunately there appears to be some hesitancy on the part of the Post Office Research Board in accepting the claims of the 'Beam' system, by the fact of demanding that the tests for the new stations proposed under the Imperial scheme shall continue for such a lengthy period as twelve months before being accepted by the Government as satisfactory.

And now, what of the cables? To those closely connected with the business of Atlantic communication, it is rather astonishing that little or no notice has been taken in either the technical or daily press of the great revolution which is taking place in cable telegraphy.

Previous to the World-war the majority of the Atlantic cables were worked from either Ireland or Penzance, Cornwall, the cable stations in each case being connected with the London offices by ordinary land wires leased from the Post Office authorities; while on the American side, short cables connected the Canadian cable station at Canso (Nova Scotia) with the city office in New York.

A cablegram despatched from London was transmitted by Morse dots and dashes to the cable station in Ireland (or Penzance), where on receipt it was re-transmitted by siphon recorder (a tape machine) to the Canadian station, from where it was again transmitted to New York.

Marvellous improvements have, however, taken place in the operation of cables as well as wireless, and nowadays most of the Atlantic cables are connected up by the introduction of automatic relays, or rotary repeaters, direct between the London city office and the city office in New York, no re-transmission being necessary at any point. Important telegrams can be transmitted and the reply received in less than two minutes between the two cities, and the average working speed is about fifty words per minute, both ways simultaneously, and on some cables sixty words per minute; and this

speed can be maintained during the whole twenty-four hours if necessary.

Recently came news of the most important development in the whole history of submarine cable construction, and the first radical change for over fifty years, in the invention of a new distortionless cable, which, if expectations are realised, will have a considerable bearing upon the relative importance of long-distance wireless telegraphy.

The conductor of this distortionless cable is composed of a special alloy, known as 'Permalloy,' of nickel and iron, which will permit of an increase in speed of transmission by nearly ten times. So great is the increase in speed that it is declared to have a carrying capacity of between three hundred and four hundred words per minute, which will mean of necessity the introduction of multiplex printing telegraphy on submarine cables if full advantage of such tremendous capacity is to be taken.

Ever since the first successful transatlantic cable was laid in 1858, cables have been of essentially the same type—that is, with a copper conductor, although during the intervening years the actual size of the conductor has gradually been increased, until in the most recent transatlantic cable put down by the Commercial Cable Company between New York and Paris, via the Azores, no less than 1100 pounds of copper per mile was used, making it far and away the world's greatest cable, equal in speed to three of the older type.

The feature of the new 'Permalloy' cable, however, is what is known as inductive loading, an idea which dates back many years, being first put forward by that great scientist, Oliver Heaviside, while Dr Pupin, of New York, in conjunction with the Western Electric Company, has been largely responsible for its practical adaptation to submarine cables. The new type of cable is surprisingly like the old, and differs only in the fact that it has a thin tape of 'Permalloy' wrapped round the copper conductor underneath the gutta-percha covering, which permits the electric current to reach the distant end of the cable with its energy concentrated and without any loss of power *en route*. This increased energy makes it possible to transmit the tele-

graphic signals in more rapid succession, thus increasing the working speed of the cable, 150 miles of which were laid a few months ago off the coast of Bermuda for experimental purposes. The very exhaustive tests which took place proved conclusively satisfactory, and the first transatlantic cable of the new type is now being laid between the United States and Italy, via the Azores, by the Western Union Telegraph Company. It is claimed that this new cable will be equivalent to eight of the old type cables and can be operated without additional expense.

Without minimising in any way the epoch-making development in the art of wireless communication, there is undoubtedly still a lot to be accomplished before it will equal, let alone surpass, the improved regular operation of submarine cables—for two reasons. The first is lack of secrecy; a fact so fully recognised by the British Government during the Great War as to cause the closing down of the only transatlantic circuit then operating between Clifden (Ireland) and Glace Bay (Nova Scotia). A further instance has come to light since the inauguration of the wireless service between London and Paris, when it was discovered that telegrams transmitted from London to Paris were picked up in Amsterdam, as well as at other continental points, and this is being done to-day. It may not be generally known, but there is nothing to prevent the picking up of wireless signals, so long as you know the wavelength and possess a sufficiently sensitive valve set, together with a receiving tape machine. The second weakness is that of atmospherics, which are so powerful at times as to prevent transmission altogether, a fact recently confirmed by no less an authority than Sir Charles Bright, F.R.S.E., M.I.E.E., etc.

At the same time it cannot be disputed that wireless has taken a permanent place in the realm of electrical communication, and is rendering, and will continue to render, great service in broadcasting, ship-to-ship and ship-to-shore communication; but the highest authorities are unanimous that it will never be the equal of the cable in responding to the exacting demands of the business community for secrecy, speed, and reliability.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

By JOHN BUCHAN, Author of *John Burnet of Barns*, *Greenmantle*, &c.

CHAPTER VII.—continued.

WHEN the Hispana crossed the bridge of Larrig His Majesty's late Attorney-General was modestly concealed in a bush of broom on the Crask side, from which he could watch the sullen stretches of the Lang Whang. He was carefully dressed for the part in a pair of Wattie

Lithgow's old trousers, much too small for him; a waistcoat and jacket which belonged to Sime the butler, and which had been made about the year 1890; and a vulgar flannel shirt borrowed from Shapp. He was innocent of a collar; he had not shaved for two days; and as he had

forgotten to have his hair cut before leaving London, his locks were of a disreputable length. Last, he had a shocking old hat of Sir Archie's, from which the lining had long since gone. His hands were sunburnt and grubby, and he had removed his signet-ring. A light ten-foot green-heart rod lay beside him, already put up, and to the tapered line was fixed a tapered cast ending in a strange little cocked fly. As he waited he was busy oiling line and fly.

His glass showed him an empty haugh, save for the figure of Jimsie at the far end close to the Wood of Larrigmore. The sun-warmed waters of the river drowled in the long dead stretches, curled at moments by the faintest western breeze. The banks were crisp green turf, scarcely broken by a boulder, but five yards from there the moss began—a wilderness of hags and tussocks. Somewhere in its depths he knew that Benjie lay coiled like an adder, waiting on events.

Leithen's plan, like all great strategy, was simple. Everything depended on having Jimsie out of sight of the Lang Whang for half-an-hour. Given that, he believed he might kill a salmon. He had marked out a pool where, in the evening, fish were usually stirring, one of those irrational haunts which no piscatorial psychologist has ever explained. If he could fish fine and far, he might cover it from a spot below a high bank, where only the top of his rod would be visible to watchers at a distance. Unfortunately, that spot was on the other side of the stream. With such tackle as his, landing a salmon would be a critical business, but there was one chance in ten that it might be accomplished; Benjie would be at hand to conceal the fish, and he would disappear silently into the Crask thickets. But every step bristled with horrid dangers. Jimsie might be faithful to his post—in which case it was hopeless; he might find the salmon dour, or a fish might break him in the landing, or Jimsie might return to find him brazenly tethered to forbidden game. It was no good thinking about it. On one thing he was decided; if he were caught, he would not try to escape. That would mean retreat in the direction of Crask, and an exploration of the Crask covers would assuredly reveal what must at all costs be concealed. No. He would go quietly into captivity, and trust to his base appearance to be let off with a drubbing.

As he waited, watching the pools turn from gold to bronze, as the sun sank behind the Glenraden peaks, he suffered the inevitable reaction. The absurdities seemed huge as mountains, the difficulties innumerable as the waves of the sea. There remained less than an hour in which there would be sufficient light to fish—Jimsie was immovable (he had just lit his pipe, and was meditating on a big stone)—every moment the Larrig waters were cooling with

the chill of evening. Leithen consulted his watch, and found it half-past eight. He had lost his wrist-watch, and had brought his hunter, attached to a thin gold chain. That was foolish, so he slipped the chain from his buttonhole and drew it through the arm-hole of his waistcoat.

Suddenly he rose to his feet, for things were happening at the far end of the haugh. Jimsie stood in an attitude of expectation—he seemed to be hearing something up-stream. Leithen heard it too, the cry of excited men. . . . Jimsie stood on one foot for a moment in doubt, then he turned and doubled towards the Wood of Larrigmore. . . . The gallant Crossby had got to business and was playing hare to the hounds inside the park wall. If human nature had not changed, Leithen thought, the whole force would presently join in the chase—Angus, and Lennox, and Jimsie, and Davie, and doubtless many volunteers. Heaven send fleetness and wind to the South London Harrier, for it was his duty to occupy the interest of every male in Strathlarrig till such time as he subsided with angry expostulations into captivity.

The road was empty, the valley was deserted, when Leithen raced across the bridge and up the south side of the river. It was not two hundred yards to his chosen stand, a spit of gravel below a high bank at the tail of a long pool. Close to the other bank, nearly thirty yards off, was the shelf where fish lay of an evening. He tested the water with his hand, and its temperature was at least sixty degrees. His theory, which he had learned long ago from the aged Bostonian, was that under such conditions some subconscious memory revived in salmon of their early days as parr when they fed on surface insects, and that they could be made to take a dry fly.

He got out his line to the required length with half-a-dozen casts in the air, and then put his fly three feet above the spot where the salmon were wont to lie. It was a curious type of cast, which he had been practising of late in the early morning, for by an adroit check he made the fly alight in a curl, so that it floated for a second or two with the leader in a straight line away from it. In this way he believed that the most suspicious fish would see nothing to alarm him, nothing but a hapless insect derelict on the water.

Sir Archie had spoken truth in describing Leithen to Wattie Lithgow as an artist. His long, straight, delicate casts were art indeed. Like thistledown the fly dropped, like thistledown it floated over the head of the salmon, but like thistledown it was disregarded. There was, indeed, a faint stirring of curiosity. From where he stood Leithen could see that slight ruffling of the surface which means an observant fish.

Already ten minutes had been spent in this barren art. The crisis craved other measures.

His new policy meant a short line, so with infinite stealth and care Leithen waded up the side of the water, sometimes treading precarious ledges of peat, sometimes waist-deep in mud and pond-weed, till he was within fifteen feet of the fishing-ground. Here he had not the high bank for a shelter, and would have been sadly conspicuous to Jimsie, had that sentinel remained at his post. He crouched low, and cast as before, with the same curl, just ahead of the chosen spot.

But now his tactics were different. So soon as the fly had floated past where he believed the fish to be he sank it by a dexterous twist of his rod-point, possible only with a short line. The fly was no longer a winged thing; drawn away under water, it roused in the salmon early memories of succulent nymphs. . . . At the first cast there was a slight swirl, which meant that a fish near the surface had turned to follow the lure. The second cast the line straightened and moved swiftly upstream.

Leithen had killed, in his day, many hundreds of salmon—once, in Norway, a notable beast of fifty-five pounds. But no salmon he had ever hooked had stirred in his breast such excitement as this modest fellow of eight pounds. "'Tis not so wide as a church-door,'" he reflected with Mercutio, "'but 'twill serve'"—if I can only land him.' But a dry-fly cast and a ten-foot rod are a frail wherewithal for killing a salmon against time. With his ordinary fifteen-footer and gut of moderate strength, he could have brought the little salmon to grass in five minutes, but now there was immense risk of a break, and a break would mean that the whole enterprise had failed. He dared not exert pressure; on the other hand, he could not follow the fish, except by making himself conspicuous on the greensward. Worst of all, he reckoned he had, at the best, ten minutes for the job.

Thirty yards off an otter slid into the water. Leithen wished he was King of the Otters, as in the Highland tale, to summon the brute to his aid.

The ten minutes had lengthened to fifteen—nine hundred seconds of heart-disease—when, wet to the waist, he got his pocket gaff into the salmon's side and drew it on to the spit of gravel where he had started fishing. A dozen times he thought he had lost; once, when the fish ran straight up the pool, his line was carried out to its last yard of backing. He gave thanks to high Heaven when, as he landed it, he observed that the fly had all but lost its hold and in another minute would have been free. By such narrow margins are great deeds accomplished.

He snapped the cast from the line and buried it in mud. Then cautiously he raised his head above the high bank. The gloaming was gather-

ing fast, and, so far as he could see, the haugh was still empty. Pushing his rod along the ground, he scrambled onto the turf.

Then he had a grievous shock. Jimsie had reappeared, and he was in full view of him. Moreover, there were two men on cycles coming up the road, who, with the deplorable instinct of human nature, would be certain to join in any pursuit. He was on turf as short as a lawn, cumbered with a tell-tale rod and a poached salmon. The friendly hags were a dozen yards off, and before he could reach them his damning baggage would be noted.

At this supreme moment he had an inspiration, derived from the memory of the otter. To get out his knife, cut a ragged wedge from the fish, and roll it in his handkerchief was the work of three seconds. To tilt the rod over the bank so that it lay in the deep shadow was the work of three more. . . . Jimsie had seen him, for a wild cry came down the stream, a cry which brought the cyclists off their machines and set them staring in his direction. Leithen tossed his gaff after the rod and began running towards the Larrig bridge—slowly, limpingly, like a frightened man with no resolute purpose of escape. And as he ran he prayed that Benjie from the deeps of the moss had seen what had been done and drawn the proper inference.

It was a bold bluff, for he had decided to make the salmon evidence for, not against, him. He hobbled down the bank, looking over his shoulder often as if in terror, and almost ran into the arms of the cyclists, who, warned by Jimsie's yells, were waiting to intercept him. He dodged them, however, and cut across to the road, for he had seen that Jimsie had paused and had noted the salmon lying blatantly on the sward, a silver splash in the twilight. Leithen doubled up the road, as if going towards Strathlarrig, and Jimsie, the fleet of foot, did not catch up with him till almost on the edge of the Wood of Larrigmore. The cyclists, who had remounted, arrived at the same moment, to find a wretched, muddy tramp in the grip of a stalwart but breathless gillie.

'I tell ye I was daein' nae harm,' the tramp whined. 'I was walkin' up the water-side—there's nae law to keep a body frae walkin' up a water-side when there's nae fence—and I seen an auld otter killin' a saumon. The fish is there still to prove I'm no leein'.'

'There is a fush, but you wass thinkin' to steal the fush, and you would have had it in your breeks if I hadna seen you. That is poachin', ma man, and you will come up to Strathlarrig. The master said that any one goin' near the watter was to be lockit up, and you will be lockit up. You can tell all the lees you like in the mornin'.'

Then a thought struck Jimsie. He wanted the salmon, for the subject of otters on the

Larrig had long been a matter of dispute between him and Angus, and here was evidence for his own view. 'Would you two gentlemen oblige me by watchin' this man while I rin back and get the fush? Bash him on the head if he offers to rin.'

The cyclists, who were journalists out to enjoy the evening air, willingly agreed, but Leithen showed no wish to escape. He begged a fag in a beggar's whine, and, since he seemed peaceable, the two kept a good distance for fear of infection. He stood, making damp streaks in the dusty road, a pitiable specimen of humanity, for his original get-up was not improved by the liquefaction of his clothes and a generous legacy of slimy peat. He seemed to be nervous, which indeed he was, for if Benjie had not seized his chance he was utterly done, and if Jimsie should light upon his rod he was gravely compromised.

But when Jimsie returned in a matter of ten minutes he was empty-handed. 'I never kenned

the like,' he proclaimed. 'That otter has come back and gotten the fush. Ach, the maleecious brute!'

The rest of Leithen's progress was not triumphant. He was conducted to the Strath-larrig lodge, where Angus, whose temper and wind had alike been ruined by the pursuit of Crossby, laid savage hands upon him, and frog-marched him to the back premises. The head-keeper scarcely heeded Jimsie's tale. 'Ach, ye poachin' va-agabond. It is the jyle ye'll get,' he roared, for Angus was in a mood which could only be relieved by violence of speech and action. Rumbling Gaelic imprecations, he hustled his prisoner into an outhouse, which had once been a larder and was now a supplementary garage, slammed and locked the door, and, as a final warning, kicked it viciously with his foot, as if to signify what awaited the culprit when the time came to sit on his case.

(Continued on page 229.)

SOME ARCTIC NOTES.

By G. LINDESAY.

FROM one cause or another Norway has of late years become associated more closely with some of the Arctic island groups than was the case before the War, and she now despatches annually a large fleet to these far northern regions in pursuit of the various animals and birds which exist there. These vessels operate throughout the spring and summer months, both among the so-called 'Eastern Ice' (that is to say, the tract of ocean which lies between the Russian Coast—Novaja Semlja in the south-east and Bear Island—Spitsbergen in the north-west) and the Western Ice (between Spitsbergen and Greenland). Here the Greenland Seal (*Phoca groenlandica*) may be said to be the most important object of pursuit, together with—in the western region at any rate—the Hooded Seal or 'Klapmyds' (*Cystophora cristata*).

The two species which are most common in summer on the coasts of Spitsbergen and Novaja Semlja are the Bearded Seal or 'Storkobben' (*Ph. barbata*), and the Ringed Seal or 'Snadden' (*Ph. foetida*). The former is the largest of the seal tribe in the northern Arctic, and attains a length of about ten feet. It is highly valued on account of the quantity of blubber which it yields, and for its skin, which is reckoned the best for the construction of boats, kayaks, sleighs, dog harness, etc. It keeps near the land in shallow water and is frequently met with in the fjords. In warm, still weather, it lies out on the ice floes and is then not difficult to approach. In stalking these animals amongst the drift ice large white-painted boats are employed, and instead of ordinary rowlocks, rings of rope are used, so as

to minimise the noise made by the oars. The ringed seal is common in the fjords throughout the summer. In the open water, where it is most frequently met with, there is little use in shooting at it, as, when killed, it sinks at once.

The walrus has ceased to exist on the west coasts of Spitsbergen and Novaja Semlja, but to the east and north of these groups considerable numbers are still to be found. On Bear Island they were very plentiful about a hundred years ago, and there they were slaughtered in thousands by the 'Fangstmaend' (professional hunters).

On the east and north coasts of Novaja Semlja the polar bear is still met with occasionally. It has a distinct preference for the drift ice, where it finds the seals, which constitute its principal food. In stalking its prey it exhibits great skill, and it is even said by hunters to conceal with a fore-paw the only black spot it possesses—namely, its nose.

When the ice approaches the shore bears sometimes land, but, there being few attractions in the shape of food, they do not generally remain there long. In winter they follow with the drift ice southwards, and have even been known to reach Finmarken. Young ones are not infrequently captured alive after the death of the mother and brought to Norway, their ultimate destination being usually a zoological garden or a menagerie. I recollect travelling in the society of one all the way from the North Cape to Bergen, and a more noisy little beast I never saw. Although liberally supplied with food, it kept roaring for more,

night and day; and when on one occasion it succeeded in breaking out of the strong cage in which it was confined, the combined efforts of passengers and crew were required to secure it again.

The only large land mammal in Spitsbergen and Novaja Semlja is the reindeer; the musk ox, which is of comparatively frequent occurrence in some parts of Greenland, does not exist on either of these two groups. On the western coasts there are very few deer left, but in the north and east there is still a considerable stock, owing mainly to the inaccessibility of these parts. Professional and amateur hunters have done their best to exterminate this noble animal. In 1891 Prince Henry of Bourbon's party shot 78, and the following year 114. The question as to how reindeer originally reached Spitsbergen has been much discussed, in view of the great tract of ocean which lies between it and the European continent. It would seem, however, that they must have come from north Russia (where, on the island of Vaigatsch, the Samoyedes keep tame deer), by way of Novaja Semlja and Franz Josef's Land, traversing the intervening tracts of sea on the ice in winter.

The Spitsbergen reindeer is smaller than the Norwegian and Greenland rein. It also differs somewhat from these in structure, and it has a comparatively shorter and broader skull. Its summer coat is rather darker than that of the Norwegian wild rein. In spring, it is so thin and in such poor condition that its flesh is hardly eatable. It is not long of recovering, however, and already at the end of July it has a thick layer of white fat between the skin and the flesh. During the long, dark arctic winter the animal absorbs this fat, so that in spring it has entirely disappeared.

When Spitsbergen was first discovered the Greenland Whale (*Balaena mysticetus*) frequented the surrounding waters in vast numbers, and in the first half of the seventeenth century the English and the Dutch carried on a whale fishery there, which was so lucrative that the Spitsbergen group came to be called the Gold Mine of the North. Ruins of the great establishments erected in connection with the fishery may still be seen on the west coast. This period of prosperity, however, did not last long. In the neighbourhood of Spitsbergen the Greenland whale soon ceased to exist, and after a time the vessels, in order to find any, had to go so far towards the east coast of Greenland that it no longer paid them to have stations in Spitsbergen. For the present the Greenland whale has disappeared from the east coast of Greenland.

The great 'fin whales' or rorquals arrive in summer in the waters between Spitsbergen and Finmarken, and in ice-free years they also show themselves in the seas to the west of Spitsbergen. The Grampus (*Delphinus orca*) and the Bottlenose (*Hyperoodon*) have a more western

distribution—between Iceland and the drift ice round Ian Mayen.

The Narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*) lives among the drift ice and is therefore oftener seen on the north coast of Spitsbergen, but it would seem to be most frequently met with among the ice between that group and Greenland. The Beluga (*Delphinapterus leucas*) frequents the inner fjords, where it may often be seen pursuing the pollack along the edge of the glaciers discharging into these. It is captured with heavy, large-meshed nets. The polar fox is common on the Arctic islands, but its fur is valuable only in winter, when large numbers are trapped by the 'Fangstmaend.' It is partial to the vicinity of the coast, where it lives mainly on the sea-fowl which swarm there and on their eggs.

Of the Arctic fauna the birds are the most prominent feature during the summer months, and the great colonies, with their myriads of inhabitants closely packed together on the rocky ledges and filling the air with their cries, present a most remarkable and interesting spectacle. Of the Spitsbergen Auk or Guillemot (*Uria bruennichi*) there is an enormous colony near the southern end of Bear Island, and for miles along the coast of Novaja Semlja the cliffs swarm with these pretty black and white birds.

On the skerries and islets the eider breed in immense numbers. Their eggs and those of several other kinds of sea-fowl are much appreciated by the 'Fangstmaend,' constituting, as they do, a pleasing change from the monotonous food to which they are accustomed on board ship. A peculiarity of the eider in the Arctic regions is that the male remains with its mate until a short time before the young are hatched out; in Norway he leaves her as soon as she begins to sit.

The King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*) is fairly common at several places on the west coast of Spitsbergen, but appears to vary greatly in numbers from year to year. On Bear Island it does not seem to breed.

According to Professor Grilg of the Bergen Museum, in his latest disquisition on the fauna of Spitsbergen, fifty-two kinds of birds have been observed there, and of these twenty-five breed; the corresponding numbers for Bear Island being thirty-six and sixteen. No birds of prey breed on either, but the snowy owl and the falcon have been seen on the former.

Some of the small lakes near the coast of Novaja Semlja are frequented by large numbers of wild geese, and on the western side of that group there is an extensive tract of low-lying country called 'Gaase Land,' where in summer vast flocks of these birds are to be seen.

The only permanent bird resident in Spitsbergen is a form of ptarmigan (*Lagopus hyperborea*), which closely resembles the Norwegian 'fjeld rype.' On Bear Island it does not exist.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS ON PICQUET DUTY.

By Lieutenant H. P. CINNAMOND, M.C.

I.

'YOU'RE on out-lying picquet to-night, Jones, so you can turn in this afternoon, if you like. I'll have your men fallen in for you at four o'clock. Don't oversleep yourself.'

'Good Lord!' grumbled Second-Lieutenant Jones, 'this is the third time this week that I've been on picquet.'

'It is a bit hard,' agreed Tyrrel, his company commander, 'but there's only you and Burton for it, and as Burton came off duty last night he can hardly be expected to go on again to-night, can he? I should take a turn myself were it not against orders. Now toddle off and get your beauty sleep. I'll see you at four.' So saying, he strolled away, leaving the other to curse his luck, the Frontier Force, Afghanistan, and life in general, as he made his way to the 'E.P.' tent shared with three other spirits more genial than himself.

At four o'clock Jones received final instructions from his company commander, who awaited him beside the little body of men, drawn up on the tiny square forming the centre of the perimeter camp, who were to form the picquet.

As Jones saluted, Tyrrel informed him that the men were ready to be marched off; that he had inspected them. 'I've given you twenty-five men and three N.C.O.'s,' he continued. 'I'm also giving you two Lewis guns, because you'll have to split your picquet up; it's the river picquet.'

'Thank the Lord!' ejaculated Jones. 'I was afraid it was going to be Green Hill again—I nearly died climbing it last time. Whom am I taking over from?'

'From the — Sikhs. Subadar-Major Gholab Singh is there now with thirty men.'

'An Indian officer!' grumbled the discontented youth. 'Surely if they can put an Indian officer in charge we ought to be able to put a warrant officer in command of our lot?'

'Gholab Singh is a Viceroy's commission,' answered Tyrrel shortly, 'and when you know as much about border warfare as he does you may hope to command a division, if you're not dead. Now get along; everything's correct here—rations, water, bombs, s.a.a., guns, spare parts, etc. See that you check the ammunition

you take over from the Sikhs. They did a lot of firing last night, so don't take their boxes as being full if they are not. Those disciples of Guru Nanak like a few spare rounds about them that they don't have to account for. Don't forget to report every hour through the night. Your signallers' stuff is all correct. Right-o! March off. The men are numbered.'

A sharp 'To the right in fours—form fours—right—left wheel—quick march!' and the little column with Jones at its head moved off to its destination, the river picquet.

II.

After leaving the fortifications, a deep ditch with a parapet thrown up on the inside, a right wheel followed by a half-right as they cleared the perimeter headed them for their objective, a line of hills, which lay some half-mile away across the dusty Dakka plain, extending in a low spur to the Kabul River. Up the spur a narrow path, well-worn by the feet of many picquets, ran to the walled sangars at the top; along this the little force marched.

Arrived at the sangar, Jones halted his men while he, with his senior N.C.O., went forward to arrange for the relief of the garrison.

A tall, heavily-built man, wearing the badges of a Subadar-Major, came out of the sangar to greet them; a man to be remembered, Gholab Singh, a Sikh of the military caste, a class to which India—indeed, the Empire—owes some of her finest soldiers; that caste which, before the days of the British Raj, drove the Afghans from the Punjab.

As the Subadar-Major advanced, even Jones, who, being freshly out from home, was rather apt to class all natives generically as 'niggers,' was compelled to admit to himself that he had seldom seen a finer man. Tall and strongly-built, his great chest bearing medals, some of which Jones had never seen before, spoke of the long and arduous nature of his service. The face, framed in its heavy beard, the latter coiled Sikh fashion, was strikingly handsome. The broad high forehead, only partly concealed by the Sikh puggri, the wide-set dark eyes, and the hawk-like nose combined to make a picture not easily forgotten.

Saluting punctiliously, he addressed Jones in

Urdu, to which Jones, feeling like a very small child, could only reply by shaking his head, when the Subadar-Major hastily changed to English.

The sahib had come to relieve his picquet? Good! If the sahib would come with him he would have pleasure in handing over to him. Had the sahib been on this particular picquet before? No? Then perhaps the sahib would like to see the dispositions which he had made of his force the night before? This diffidently.

Yes, the sahib would certainly like to see the Subadar-Major's dispositions.

'By day, sahib,' began Gholab Singh, leading the way into the sangar, 'I have but one sentry—there!' pointing to a man on duty beside a pile of arms; 'that is sufficient. He can command all the country from that point; he can watch both the camp for signals and the hills for the enemy.'

'At night I have four double posts, three in this sangar and one with the Lewis gun post, where the spur overhangs the river.'

Jones glanced around the sangar. It was a big one of an oblong shape, some sixty feet long by twenty wide, running from north to south along the slope of the spur. Its construction was simple—merely a wall five feet in height enclosing the afore-mentioned space, a wall some two feet thick built of the stones and boulders which lay strewn about in profusion on the hill-top.

The Subadar-Major led Jones to the southern end of the sangar. 'Here, sahib,' he said, 'I place my No. 1 group. It can overlook that portion of the hill which is dead ground to the picquet on Black Hill; also it can keep connection with it.'

'I have my No. 2 post on the western side; it overlooks the slope over which any attack, save from the river, must develop itself if it is to avoid other picquets.'

'My No. 3 group is placed at the extreme north point of the sangar. Its duty is to watch the ground between ourselves and our subsidiary post on the river bank, and to maintain connection with the latter, where No. 4 group is situated.'

Together they left the main sangar, and climbing out along the rocky spur which abutted on the river, they came to the Lewis gun post, where they found six men under a naik (corporal). One of the men was peering across the river and paid no attention to the two officers.

'This,' said Gholab Singh, 'is the position occupied by No. 4 group. Its duty is to watch the far bank of the river and to maintain connection with the main picquet. As you see, it is impossible for an attack to be made on it from the land side without first forcing the main sangar. But, nevertheless, it is an uncomfortable post, for it is under fire practically the whole night from darkness until dawn. As soon as darkness falls the snipers assemble on that ridge on the far bank of the river—that low ridge, sahib, running east and west at the back of the

town of Lalpura. The range is 1400 yards to the eastern point of the ridge, and 1250 to the western point. In spite of the distance and the darkness the swine make pretty good shooting.'

'And we're supposed to be at peace with the Mohmands,' growled Jones; 'I should think a few shells from our six-inch howitzers in their capital Lalpura would make them think twice before they sniped us again.'

'Ah! sahib,' replied the Subadar-Major, 'it is not the Mohmands who do it. They will not readily fight again against the British Raj—they had their lesson three years ago. It is the Afghans, with, perhaps, a few budmash Mohmands, who cross the river and do the sniping, hoping, no doubt, to draw the Mohmands into the war in this manner.'

He led the way back to the main sangar, where the stores, ammunition, bombs, Very lights, Very pistols, etc. were checked. Receipts for the amounts taken over were entered in the picquet log, a book which, like Tennyson's stream, goes on for ever, in spite of the comings and goings of men. In it is entered, along with matters of daily routine, every item which may concern the well-being of its temporary inmates, including range-cards of the surrounding country, details of attack and defence, suspicious objects seen, with time, place, range and compass bearing complete. It is in fact a compendium of useful information, and many a raw subaltern who has cursed while entering the minutiae of the daily routine has found it a godsend when confronted with an awkward situation.

Next the daylight sentry was posted, after which the Subadar-Major's men marched out and Jones's men marched into the sangar. The Lewis gun post was similarly relieved, when the Sikhs swung down the hill and marched off to camp.

III.

Left alone, Jones called a signaller to him and ordered him to report the relief complete to the camp. When the heliograph ceased winking he sent for the sergeant, and taking him around the position, showed him where he intended posting his sentries for the night.

'We will "stand-to" from seven to eight and from five to six in the morning, which will give you three reliefs of three hours each. The Lewis gunners in the lower sangar will find their own sentries. Tell Corporal Smalley so, and give him the hours for the reliefs. You and I, sergeant, with Corporal Buckley, will do the rounds. I don't want Smalley to leave his post at all. Better let Buckley take the first watch from eight to eleven; then, if you take the middle watch until two, I'll take from that until "stand-to," when we'll mount the day sentries. You'd better get along now and fix up the reliefs. See that the Lewis gunners in the lower sangar have their rations sent to them. I don't want them to come up here at all.'

Left to himself again, Jones wandered about idly; the Sikhs, with characteristic discipline, had left the place spotlessly clean, so there was no tidying up to be done, as there generally is after taking over from British troops.

He watched the construction of a sanitary trench, and instructed the men that it must be used before the night sentries were mounted, as from that time until the dawn 'stand-down' no man would be allowed to leave the sangar. He saw that the *chagals* containing water were placed in a shady and protected spot. Then, in the few minutes' leisure before the evening 'stand-to,' he surveyed the country round about.

Looking towards the west, he had before him, extending from the foot of the hill on which he stood to the town of Jelalabad, some thirty miles distant, a rich and well-cultivated plain, only a couple of miles in width in his immediate vicinity, but broadening as it receded until it reached a maximum of some twenty-five miles; the whole well watered by the Kabul River, flowing past him a bare fifty yards to his right and a good half-mile in width at that spot, its broad bosom broken here and there by small islands, its farther bank cultivated—from the water's edge to where, only a few hundred yards back, the outlying spurs of the Pusht-i-Kuh push forward—by the inhabitants of Chiknao and Lalpura.

The spur on which he stood, dividing the Jelalabad plain from the Dakka plain, where the British force lay, ran back to a chain forming part of the Safedh Kuh range. This same spur was broken some four hundred yards south of his own position by a tiny pass only a few yards wide—yet that little pass is the Khud Khaibar, or the Khaibar Gate, down which a great portion of the trade of Asia passes every year on its way to India.

At the hour of seven Jones gave the order to 'stand-to,' while he with the sergeant walked round the position; the night sentries were mounted and given their orders; each man was shown the exact position which he would occupy in the case of an alarm, and was instructed to sleep as close to it as possible. Jones assured himself that every man knew where bombs, ammunition, Very lights, and Very pistols could be obtained, and that they knew the alarm signals—the local alarm a series of short blasts on a whistle; the general, to warn the camp, three red flares from the Very pistols. Next the picquet range-cards were explained in order that they might judge their distances in the light of known ranges; after which 'stand-down' was ordered, when such men as were not on duty retired to rest.

IV.

As darkness fell the first of those signals which must be sent every hour winking through

the night to reassure the sleeping camp, the 'All's Well,' was sent. A few minutes later sparks of flame on the Lalpura ridge announced that the snipers had commenced their night's work; desultory shots at first, but growing into a fair demonstration of volley firing directed in about equal quantities at the camp and the river picquet, the only objects within range when firing from the ridge. Considering the darkness, the long range, and the fact that many of their weapons were of the old long-barrelled jezail type, the Afghans made very fair shooting, and soon bullets were pattering quite briskly on the rocks around, above and below the picquet. So far none had fallen within it, and even did they do so, they were likely to do but little harm, as the men were sleeping close under the lee of the northern wall. Of course, the sentries might be hit, as they could not take cover, it being most necessary that a bright look-out be kept during the more fierce bursts of fire, as it was possible the enemy might use them as an aid to an advance on the picquet.

Jones with his orderly left the sangar, and, at some risk, both from the nature of the climb and the sentries below, proceeded to the lower sangar. After being recognised by the sentry there he was admitted. 'I think, Corporal Smalley,' he said, 'we'll give these fellows an answer; it's no use letting them have it all their own way, what?'

'Very good, sir,' replied the corporal; 'I'll just traverse that bit of a ridge where the flashes seem thickest.'

Slipping forward the safety-catch of the gun lying ready in its embrasure, he raised the butt to his shoulder, and settling himself comfortably on a couple of ammunition boxes, he glanced along the luminous sights and pressed the trigger. A hoarse rattle like the tearing of canvas rang out and died away in the night, when, charging the now empty magazine with a full one, the corporal let the butt slide from his shoulder.

A slight lull followed on the other side of the river. 'That'll do for the present,' said Jones. 'Give them a magazine every hour or so just to show them we're not asleep.'

Ascertaining that the sentries were alert and understood their jobs, the officer bade the corporal good-night and returned to the main sangar, where he made his rounds, and receiving the 'All's Well!' from the three posts there, proceeded to send that message winking back to the camp. After watching the lamp—carefully shaded as to sides and rear—for a little while, he retired to his couch—that is, a waterproof sheet, with his greatcoat for a pillow.

V.

Jones was awakened by a gentle pressure on the shoulder. Opening his eyes, he was aware of the sergeant's figure bending over him. A

low 'hsh' came from the latter's lips before, straightening himself, he signed to Jones to follow him.

Arrived at No. 2 sentry post, the sergeant stood for some time in a listening attitude. At first Jones could hear nothing, then a very faint 'click' was borne to his ears.

'Did you hear that, sir?' whispered the sergeant, putting his mouth close to the officer's ear.

Jones nodded. 'Stand the men to,' he whispered, 'but no noise.'

Silently man after man was touched, and silently each man rose to his feet and took up his prearranged position, his rifle loaded and his bayonet fixed, to await the rush which all knew was preparing out there in the dark. The wicked muzzle of the Lewis gun peeped over the stones, while dark egg-shaped objects lay ready to the bombers' hands.

Now, in the dead silence, the gentle click and rattle of disturbed stones was clearly audible, even a guttural word of Pushtu could be heard. The attacking party could not be more than thirty yards below them, Jones thought. The time had come to act.

Raising a Verry pistol, he discharged it. The flare, soaring into the air, lit the scene as by day, revealing on the slope below a dark mass, which surged upwards towards the sangar wall. But the slope was steep, and the Afghans were never destined to reach their goal. The Lewis gun blared its message, a dozen little egg-shaped toys trickled gently towards them, and—the fight was over.

For half an hour the inmates of the sangar 'stood-to'; but, save for a groan now and then, or a call to Allah by the stricken below, their peace was unbroken. The 'stand-down' was ordered, the lamp flickered its eternal 'All's Well' to the expectant camp, and once more sleep reigned supreme.

VI.

Duly awakened by the sergeant at two o'clock, Jones made his rounds three times, and each time the lamps winked their message of security through the night. Save for an occasional magazine discharged at the snipers across the river, the peace was unbroken.

The dawn 'stand-to' found the little garrison waiting in eager expectancy to view the scene of the over-night battle. But if they expected to find the ground strewn with corpses they were mistaken. Blood there was in plenty, but the Faithful do not leave their dead to be desecrated by Infidel Dogs.

Then came 'stand-down,' the posting of the day sentries, and breakfast—a merry little meal of bully beef, bread, and cheese, washed down by tea, hot and sweet, and strong enough to stand on.

After breakfast Jones entered up the events

of the previous night in the picquet log-book, strolled down to the lower sangar to gaze enviously at the river, for the beginning of July in Afghanistan is decidedly hot. Fortunately this same heat melts the snow in the hills, and sends a mighty flood, gloriously cool, rolling down the Kabul; and Jones, as he looked, promised himself a long, cool swim as soon as his relief was completed. He went back to the upper sangar, where shelters were erected out of waterproof sheets and rifles.

At eleven o'clock the water mule arrived, leaving two full eight-gallon *chagals* in place of those emptied, which it took away. Then the ration beast and lunch, very similar to breakfast, and so the day wore on until tea, broken by the 'All's Well' signal at three hours' intervals.

After tea the welcome message: 'You will hand over to the — Ghurkas. AAA. Report relief complete. AAA. Message ends. AAA.'

Yes, there they come, the small brown hill-men; how little they make of the steep path which the British infantry toiled up so laboriously, and with so many deep-chested curses. Indeed, disdaining the path altogether, they swarm up the side of the hill, and are on the top in no time. The British officer in charge, a cheery young fellow in the black accoutrements of his regiment, comes forward. Greetings are exchanged. He is shown the posts by day and night, positions which he may or may not adopt as he thinks fit. Ammunition and stores are checked, the entries in the log made; he mounts his daylight sentries, then, with a cheery 'so-long,' waves Jones off.

A 'go-as-you-please' down the hill, the men are fallen in at the bottom, and a sedate march back to camp, where they are dismissed, to reassemble some half-hour later on the banks of the Kabul, there to wash away the dust and dirt accumulated during the twenty-four hours' duty.

THOMAS HARDY.

[Thomas Hardy's first published work appeared in *Chambers's Journal* just sixty years ago, March 18, 1865.]

THERE on a star that sheds a pure white ray
Shakespeare with Homer walked, and close at hand

Milton and Dante mused, and quietly planned
Whom of the Earthlings they should choose to say
What their free minds contrived in spirit way

Of import high that man could understand.
Far down a flame of genius they fanned,
And carefully they fed it day by day
With winds of thought which shook one eager man.

And Thomas Hardy felt within his soul
The kindling of a fire whose piercing light
Lit up the Everywhere for him to scan;
Then to his age he showed the Cosmic whole,
As it appeared to his most inward sight.

E. M. FRAMPTON.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER VII.—*continued.*

SIR ARCHIE, if not a skeleton at the feast, was no better than a shadow. The fragment of drama which he had witnessed had divorced his mind rudely from the intelligent conversation of Mr Bandicott; he was no longer slightly irritated by Mr Claybody; he forgot even the attractions of Janet. What was going on in that twilit vale? Lady Maisie's Pool had still a shimmer of gold, but the woods were now purple, and the waterside turf a dim amethyst, the colour of the darkening sky. All sound had ceased, except the rare cry of a bird from the hill and the hoot of a wandering owl. . . . Crossby had beyond doubt been taken, but where was Leithen?

Roylance was recalled to his surroundings by Janet's announcement that Mr Bandicott proposed to take them all in his car to the meeting at Muirtown. 'Oh, I say,' he pleaded, 'I'd much rather you didn't. I haven't a notion how to speak—no experience, you see—only about the third time I've opened my mouth in public. I'll make an awful ass of myself, and I'd much rather my friends didn't see it. If I know you're in the audience, Miss Janet, I sha'n't be able to get a word out.'

Mr Bandicott was sympathetic. 'Take my advice and do not attempt to write a speech and get it by heart. Fill yourself with your subject, but do not prepare anything except the first sentence and the last. You'll find the words come easily when you once begin—if you have something you really want to say.'

'That's the trouble—I haven't. I'm goin' to speak about foreign policy, and I'm dashed if I can remember which treaty is which, and what the French are making a fuss about, or why the old Boche can't pay. And I keep on mixin' up Poincaré and Mussolini. . . . I'm goin' to write it all down, and if I'm stuck I'll fish out the paper and read it. I'm told there are fellows in the Cabinet who do that.'

'Don't stick too close to the paper,' the colonel advised. 'The Highlander objects to "read" sermons, and he may not like a "read" speech.'

'Whatever he does I'm sure Sir Archibald will be most enlightening,' Mr Bandicott said politely. 'I confess I should like to hear Lord Lamancha. We think rather well of that young man in America. How do you rate him here?'

Mr Claybody, as an inhabitant of the great world, replied, 'Very high—in his own line. He's the old-fashioned type of British statesman, and people trust him. The trouble about him and his kind is that they're a little too far removed from the ordinary man—they've been

too cosseted and set on a pedestal all their lives. They don't quite know how to handle democracy. You can't imagine Lamancha rubbing shoulders with Tom, Dick, and Harry.'

'Oh, come!' Sir Archie broke in. 'In the War he started as a captain in a Yeomanry regiment, and he commanded a pretty rough Australian push in Palestine. His men fairly swore by him.'

'I daresay,' said the other coldly. 'The War doesn't count for my argument, and Australians are not quite what I mean.'

The butler, who was offering liqueurs, was seen to whisper confidentially to Junius, who looked towards his father, made as if to speak, and thought better of it.

The older Mr Bandicott was once more holding the table. 'My archæological studies,' he said, 'and my son's devotion to sport are apt to circumscribe the interest of my visits to this country. I do not spend more than a couple of days in London, and when I am there the place is empty. Sometimes I regret that I have not attempted to see more of English society in recent years, for there are many figures in it I should like to meet. There are some acquaintances, too, that I should be overjoyed to revive. Do you know Sir Edward Leithen, Mr Claybody? He was recently, I think, your British Attorney-General.'

Mr Claybody nodded. 'I know him very well. We have just briefed him in a big case.'

'Sir Edward Leithen visited us two years ago as the guest of our Bar Association. His address was one of the most remarkable I have ever listened to. It was on John Marshall—the finest tribute ever paid to that great man, and one which I venture to say few Americans could have equalled. I had very little talk with him, but what I had impressed me profoundly with the breadth of his outlook and the powers of his mind. Yes, I should like to meet Sir Edward Leithen again.'

The company had risen and were moving towards the drawing-room.

'Now, I wonder,' Mr Claybody was saying. 'I heard that Leithen was somewhere in Scotland. I wonder if I could get him up for a few days to Haripol. Then I could bring him over here.'

An awful joy fell upon Sir Archie's soul. He realised anew the unplumbed preposterousness of life.

Ere they reached the drawing-room Junius took Agatha aside. 'Look here, Miss Agatha, I want you to help me. The gillies have been a little too active. They've gathered in some wretched hobo they found looking at the river,

and they've annexed a journalist who stuck his nose inside the gates. It's the journalist that's worrying me. From his card he seems to be rather a swell in his way—represents the *Monitor*, and writes for my father's New York paper. He gave the gillies a fine race for their money, and now he's sitting cursing in the garage and vowing every kind of revenge. It won't do to antagonise the Press, so we'd better let him out and grovel to him, if he wants apologies. . . . The fact is we're not in a very strong position, fending off the newspapers from Harald Blacktooth because of this ridiculous John Macnab. If you could let the fellow out it would be casting oil on the troubled waters. You could smooth him down far better than I.'

'But what about the other? A hobo, you say! That's a tramp, isn't it?'

'Oh, tell Angus to let him out too! Here are the keys of both garages. I don't want to turn this place into a lock-up. Angus won't be pleased, but we have to keep a sharp watch for John Macnab to-morrow, and it's bad tactics in a campaign to cumber yourself with prisoners.'

The two threaded mysterious passages and came out into a moonlit stable-yard. Junius handed the girl a great electric torch. 'Tell the fellow we eat dirt for our servants' officiousness. Offer him supper, and—I tell you what—ask him to lunch the day after to-morrow. No, that's the Muirtown day. Find out his address, and say we'll write to him and give him first chop at the Viking. Blame it all on the gillies.'

Agatha unlocked the door of the big garage, and, to her surprise, found it brilliantly lit with electric light. Mr Crossby was sitting in the driver's seat of a large motor-car, smoking cigarettes and composing a story for his paper. At the sight of Agatha he descended hastily.

'We're so sorry,' said the girl. 'It's all been a stupid mistake. But, you know, you shouldn't have run away. Mr Bandicott had to make rules to keep off poachers, and you ought to have stopped and explained who you were.'

To this charming lady in the grass-green gown Mr Crossby's manner was debonair and reassuring. 'No apology is needed. It wasn't in the least the gillies' blame. I wanted some exercise, and I had my fun with them. One of the young ones has a very fair turn of speed. But I oughtn't to have done it—I quite see that—with everybody here on edge about this John Macnab. Have I your permission to go?'

'Indeed you have. Mr Bandicott asked me to apologise most humbly. You're quite free unless—unless you'd like to have supper before you go.'

Mr Crossby excused himself, and did not stay upon the order of his going. He knew nothing of the fate of his colleague, and hoped that he might pick up news from Benjie in the neighbourhood of the Wood of Larrimore.

The other garage stood retired in the lee of

a clump of pines—a rude, old-fashioned place, which generally housed the station lorry. Since Angus was not in sight, Agatha, in spite of some trepidation, took a second jail-delivery upon herself. She had trouble with the lock, and when the door opened she looked into a pit of darkness scarcely lightened by the outer glow of moonshine. She flashed the torch into the interior and saw, seated on a stack of petrol tins, the figure of the tramp.

Leithen, who had been wondering how he was to find a couch in that stony place, beheld the apparition with amazement. He guessed that it was one of the Miss Radens, for he knew that they were dining at Strathlarrig. As he stood sheepishly before her his wits suffered a dislocation which drove out of his head the remembrance of the part he had assumed.

'Mr Bandicott sent me to tell you that you can go away,' the girl said nervously.

'Thank you very much,' said Leithen in his ordinary voice.

Now in the scramble up the river bank, or in the rough handling of Angus, his garments had become disarranged, and his watch had swung out of his pocket. In adjusting it in the garage he had put it back in its normal place, so that the chain showed on Sime's ancient waistcoat. From it depended one of those squat little gold shields which are the badge of athletic prowess at a famous school. As he stood in the light of her torch Agatha noted this shield, and knew what it signified. Also, his tone when he spoke had startled her.

'Oh,' she cried, 'you were at Eton?'

Leithen was for a moment nonplussed. He thought of a dozen lies, and then decided on qualified truth. 'Yes,' he murmured shamefacedly. 'Long ago I was at Eton.'

The girl flushed with embarrassed sympathy. 'What—what brought you to this?' she murmured.

'Folly,' said Leithen, recovering himself. 'Drink and such-like. I have had a lot of bad luck, but I've myself to blame.'

'You're only a tramp now?' Angels might have envied the melting sadness of her voice.

'At present. Sometimes I get a job, but I can't hold it down.' Leithen was warming to his work, and his tones were a subtle study in dilapidated gentility.

'Can't anything be done?' Agatha asked, twining her pretty hands.

'Nothing,' was the dismal answer. 'I'm past helping. Let me go, please, and forget you ever saw me.'

'But can't papa . . . won't you tell me your name or where we can find you?'

'My present name is not my own. Forget about me, my dear young lady. The life isn't so bad . . . I'm as happy as I deserve to be. I want to be off, for I don't like to stumble upon gentlefolks.'

She stood aside to let him pass, noting the ruin of his clothes, his dirty unshaven face, the shameless old hat that he raised to her. Then, melancholy and reflective, she returned to Junius. She could not give away one of her own class, so when Junius asked her about the tramp, she only shrugged her white shoulders. 'I let him out myself. . . . A miserable creature. . . . I hope Angus wasn't too rough with him. He looked as if a puff of wind would blow him to pieces.'

Ten minutes later Leithen, having unobtrusively climbed the park wall and so escaped the attention of Mactavish at the lodge, was trotting at a remarkable pace for a tramp down the road to the Larrig bridge. Once on the Crask side he stopped to reconnoitre. Crossby called softly to him from the covert, and with Crossby was Benjie.

'I've gotten the saumon,' said the latter, 'and your rod and gaff too. Hae ye the bit ye howkit out o' the fush?'

Leithen produced his bloody handkerchief. 'Now for supper, Benjie my lad,' he cried. 'Come along, Crossby, and we'll drink the health of John Macnab in sound champagne.'

The journalist shook his head. 'I'm off to finish my story. The triumphant return of Harald Blacktooth is going to convulse these islands to-morrow.'

CHAPTER VIII.—SIR ARCHIE IS INSTRUCTED IN A CONDUCT OF LIFE.

EARLY next morning, when the great door of Strathlarrig House was opened and the maids had begun their work, Oliphant, the butler—a stately man who had been trained in a ducal household—crossed the hall to reconnoitre the outer world. There he found an under-housemaid nursing a package, which she averred she had found on the doorstep. It was some two feet long, swathed in brown paper, and attached to its string was a letter inscribed to Mr Junius Bandicott.

The parcel was clammy, and Oliphant handled it gingerly. He cut the cord, disentangled the letter, and revealed an oblong of green rushes bound with string. The wrapping must have been insecure, for something forthwith slipped from the rushes and flopped on the marble floor, revealing to Oliphant's disgusted eyes a small salmon, blue and stiff in death.

At that moment, Junius, always an early bird, came whistling downstairs. So completely was he convinced of the inviolability of the Strathlarrig waters that the spectacle caused him no foreboding. 'What are you flinging fish about for, Oliphant?' he asked cheerfully.

The butler presented him with the envelope. He opened it and extracted a dirty half-sheet of

notepaper, on which was printed in capitals, 'With the Compliments of John Macnab.'

Amazement, chagrin, amusement followed each other on Junius's open countenance. Then he picked up the fish and marched out of doors, shouting 'Angus' at the top of a notably powerful voice. The sound brought the scared face of Professor Babwater to his bedroom window.

Angus, who had been up since four, appeared from Lady Maisie's Pool, where he had been contemplating the waters. His vigil had not improved his appearance or his temper, for his eye was red and choleric, and his beard was wild as a mountain goat's. He cast one look at the salmon, surmised the truth, and held up imploring hands to heaven.

'John Macnab!' said Junius sternly. 'What have you got to say to that?'

Angus had nothing audible to say. He was handling the fish with feverish hands, and peering at its jaws, and presently under his fingers a segment fell out.

'That fush was cleekit,' observed Lennox, who had come up. 'It was never caught with a flee.'

'Ye're a leear,' Angus roared. 'Just tak' a look at the mouth of it. There's the mark of the huke, ye gomeril. The fush wass took wi' a rod and line.'

'You may reckon it was,' observed Junius. 'I trust John Macnab to abide by the rules of the game.'

Suddenly light seemed to break in on Angus's soul. He bellowed for Jimsie, who was placidly making his way towards the group at the door, lighting his pipe as he went.

'Look at that, James Mackenzie. Ay, look at it. Feast your een on it. You wass tellin' me there were otters in the Larrig, and I said there wass not. You wass tellin' me there wass an otter had a fush last night at the Lang Whang. There's your otter—and be damned to ye!'

Jimsie, slow of comprehension, rubbed his eyes. 'Where was you findin' the fush? Ay, it's the one I seen last night. That otter must be wrang in the heid.'

'It is not wrang in the heid. It's you that's wrang in the heid, James Mackenzie. The otter is a ver-ra clever man, and its name will be John Macnab.'

Slowly enlightenment dawned on Jimsie's mind. 'He wass the tramp,' he ingeminated. 'He wass the tramp.'

'And he's still lockit up,' Angus cried joyfully. 'Wait till I get my hands on him.' He was striding off for the garage, when a word from Junius held him back.

'You won't find him there. I gave orders last night to let him go. You know, Angus, you told me he was only a tramp that had been seen walking up the river.'

(Continued on page 244.)

DRUG SMUGGLING IN THE ORIENT.

By Major W. R. FORAN, F.R.G.S., F.R.A.I., &c.

I.

IT is fairly safe to assert, without much fear of contradiction, that nearly everybody is a smuggler at heart, if not in actual fact. Our innate free-trade instincts and love of liberty revolt against what most of us look upon as interference with our rights when we are called upon to declare and pay duty upon a box of cigars, a bottle of wine or spirits, or some article of finery beloved of the feminine heart. Smuggling, therefore, is rife in every part of the world; and there can be little doubt that it will be so as long as man-made laws restrict our importations into the country where we make our home or in which we may, perchance, desire to travel.

The whole world is taking a keen interest in the drug traffic at the present time, for it presents a problem—great or small, as the case may be—in almost every country. In European countries, perhaps, people are more inclined to be shocked by the successive ‘revelations’ in the Press; and, as a natural consequence of these exposures, the distributors of drugs are hard put to it to find new methods of deceiving the authorities.

As regards artfulness and ingenuity, however, the cleverest rogues in Europe could scarcely show greater resource than the ‘Dope traffickers’ in India and Burma. To the generality of people the smuggler is a bold and bad man, with fierce and heavily-bearded face; and he is popularly credited with being armed to the teeth with knives, pistols, and other lethal accoutrements. In reality, the smuggler—the Indian variety, at any rate—is nothing of the sort. To all outward appearance he is a respectable, well-to-do, and easy-going merchant; but he is a thorough-paced scoundrel for all that, and his ostensible business activities are merely a blind to his real and secret occupation.

A very good example of the truth of this statement came to my direct notice a year or two ago in Rangoon. I was seeking quaint curios to purchase as presents for friends in England and America, and chanced to hear of a newly-opened Chinese shop in the Indian Bazaar quarter of the city; here, so I was informed, could be seen a marvellous selection of Chinese and Tibetan goods. These rare treasures were being sold at ridiculously low prices, and were fast disappearing; so I was urged to make a visit to this Chinese merchant with the least possible delay. The news seemed almost too good to be true, but I sallied forth to investigate. On arrival at the Chinaman’s premises I was amazed at the remarkable range of the goods

offered for sale; and still more so at the price marked on each article exposed to view. I had never seen such a wonderful collection of silks, linen, lace, embroidery, ivory articles, and so forth; and it was with frank delight that I made the very most of this golden opportunity. As my eyes searched here and there in the gloom of the interior of the shop, I awoke to the fact that there was a steady stream of Chinese, Indian, and Burmese customers passing through the building, and that all seemed intent upon reaching the back premises. This set my thoughts wondering, for it was unusual to find such a brisk trade in any shop of the Bazaar. Yet, beyond this fact, there was nothing to arouse suspicion, except, perhaps, that the merchandise was priced absurdly low.

I secured a splendid collection of gifts that would please all my friends enormously, and then took my departure. It so happened that I was at a dinner-party that same evening, and my host was a senior officer of the Imperial Police. In the course of conversation during dinner, I told him of the wonderful luck that had chanced my way only that morning. It struck me as strange that he appeared to show little interest in my narrative; but I noticed a rather grim smile on his lips. When my tale was concluded, he asked abruptly for the address of this wonderful shop. Quite innocently I gave him the information. Nothing more was said. I should have dismissed the matter there and then, had it not been that on the following morning a fellow-guest at my hotel requested me to take him to this Chinaman’s shop. On our arrival there we found it closed and some police on guard. My further enquiries elicited the solution to the riddle. It seems that John Chinaman was neither more nor less than an opium smuggler from Shanghai. He had brought all his shop stock from China with him, and had set up in legitimate business as a blind to his illegitimate activities; and, so I was told, had made a most profitable visit to Rangoon, until the police discovered what he was doing. I consider myself very fortunate in having visited his place of business when I did; another day of delay and it would have been too late.

II.

In India and Burma the smugglers are greatly aided by the corruption of the subordinate native officials. The smuggler takes advantage of their financial difficulties in order to get them into his toils. Once they have been foolish enough to borrow money or accept a bribe from a smuggler, they become as wax in his clever hands. As a set-off to this, the excise depart-

ment and the police are greatly assisted by informers; for the profession of the informer in the Orient is not looked upon as a dishonourable one. However, despite the help of paid informers, a very great deal of drug smuggling goes on, and most of it escapes detection.

In the Government of Burma's Resolution on the Excise Administration Report for the years 1920-1921, which was published in June 1922, it is stated that the government have to report a decrease in issues of opium from the government-controlled opium shops amounting to nearly two tons, and that there was a consequent decrease in the revenue of Burma of about Rs. 375,000 (approximately £24,667). In Upper Burma, no Burman is permitted under any circumstances to possess opium. In Lower Burma, twenty years ago or thereabouts, a registration of Burmese opium-consumers was carried out. Consumers were invited to come forward for registration, and a certain number, who had responded to the government's invitation, were given registration certificates and were permitted to get their quantum from the government opium shops. The register was then closed, and since then only registered Burmans can obtain opium licitly. No new names were entered on the register subsequently.

Unfortunately, this registration scheme was a virtual failure. When government began registration of opium-consumers, the smugglers realised that their livelihood was seriously menaced. Accordingly, they spread a rumour far and wide throughout Burma that the government were registering Burmans, not for the drug to be given to them, but because the Burman opium-consumers were to be forced to pay enhanced taxes. The result of this was that the great majority of Burmese opium-consumers did *not* register their names. At the present time, for every registered Burman consumer there are at least ten unregistered. This, I am told on very good authority, is the lowest estimate. The correct one would be, most probably, considerably greater!

III.

One naturally asks, where is to be found the remedy for this state of affairs? Obviously it is by re-opening the registers. That being so, it is remarkable that the Government do not do this. But they do not seem to view the matter in this light, and it is rather difficult to fathom their present policy. It occurs to me that they might possibly urge one of two reasons against such an obvious solution; or possibly both. They will most probably insist that it is highly undesirable that the Burmans should take opium; and secondly, that the Burmans' opinion would be strong against it. Both are sound enough in their own way, the former more so than the latter. But there is a perfectly sane answer to both theories.

In the first place, re-registration would merely mean regularising what is at present irregular. It is freely admitted that there are many confirmed opium-consumers amongst the Burmans—probably they number several thousands. You cannot stop them getting opium, for smuggling must always go on, as it is so near to China, and the long Burma-Chinese-Siam border is most difficult—if not impossible—to police efficiently. That being the case, it seems much preferable to register opium consumers and so regulate their supply and consumption—a half-cure is always better than no cure at all. Wisdom would seem to dictate that the Government of Burma, not being able to stop opium consumption altogether, should let confirmed opium-smokers have their drug at a reasonable rate, and incidentally reap a substantial revenue for the province. It seems utter folly to force them to the smuggler, to whom they must pay huge prices for opium to compensate for the risks run in dealing with this drug. Such must be to their economic undoing, and must also fill the jails with these people, who are not criminals, merely because they are victims of a habit which it is almost impossible to cure.

As regards the second argument which may possibly be advanced against re-registration, it may be said that if the Burmans do not know that there are legions of their race who habitually take opium, then it is full time they did do so. If they do know it, then—presuming they have common-sense—they should not interfere with the Government's action in regulating the consumption. The General Council of Burmese Associations—commonly called, locally, the G.C.B.A.—have opposed Government in almost every measure since these Burmese embryo politicians first began to imitate the agitators from across the Bay of Bengal; but surely they would not strenuously oppose a governmental action which was so obviously for the good of their own race and country. They have shown themselves, times without number recently, as lacking in common-sense, and filled with uninformed and preposterous opinions; but I refuse to believe they would go to such lengths in the matter of just regulation of opium consumption. It seems almost incredible that Government should fear the immature opinions of the G.C.B.A.; but stranger things have happened in Burma.

IV.

It is well to examine the possible good results from universal registration in Burma of opium-consumers. It requires no very great imagination to realise that many material benefits must naturally be gained. The first thing that must happen will be the ruin of scores of opium smugglers, and the profession of smuggling must necessarily be reduced to a very great extent;

secondly, there will be no inducement for opium-consumers of races other than Burmans to try to obtain allowances of the drug which are greater than their actual personal needs, because there will be no really profitable market for the surplus; and thirdly, the G.C.B.A., and other allied associations for the reform of the Burmese and their country, will find a fair field of work before them in preventing recruits to the bad habit. The latter benefit, possibly, will not appeal to the Burmese political extremists and social welfare workers, pseudo or otherwise!

If only the Government of Burma had seized upon this remedy for existing evils some time ago, and applied it vigorously, there would have been no occasion for their statement that the revenue of Burma had lost roughly £24,667 in the years 1920-1921, and that issues of opium through their own shops to registered consumers had decreased by close upon two tons; these figures might, and probably would, have been on the credit side of their account.

Any Chinaman resident in Burma, who can prove that he is a genuine consumer of opium, is permitted to purchase as much as he can actually use from a Government opium shop. There is no restriction. This being so, one may be forgiven for thinking that no Chinese opium habitués buy the drug elsewhere; but, in actual fact, this is not the case. In any district of Burma, if investigation was made, it would be found that there is a large number of Chinamen who are confirmed opium smokers and eaters, but who are not in possession of consumption tickets. The reason for this strange anomaly is not difficult to discover. Almost every Excise Officer in Burma is *afraid* to take on to his lists any new consumers! If he does so, he renders himself open to suspicion as a bribe-taker. One Excise Officer, to my knowledge, incurred such a suspicion because he let it be known in his area that tickets would be given to every Chinaman who could prove that he was a genuine consumer of opium. He was taxed with taking bribes, but was able to clear himself of such an unjust suspicion, fortunately; he was, however, severely reprimanded for acting contrary to the policy of opium restriction. This policy of restriction is impossible to define; for there is no evidence of a serious effort to do more than attempt to throttle smuggling. Opium consumption is looked upon as a habit that it is impossible to eradicate entirely; and, therefore, Government maintains a nominal control of it, whilst not forgetting to make revenue.

Perhaps I am not far from the truth when I interpret the Government of Burma's pious assertion—that there was a huge deficit to be recorded for the years 1920-1921—as implying that opium consumption was greatly on the decline. But the suspicion is strong in my mind that the figures recorded in the Govern-

ment's annual reports are little short of worthless, because they do not show the actual state of things as regards opium in the province. I have solid reasons for believing that it is not declining, and it is not likely to do so whilst there are not adequate restrictions imposed. If the opium habit cannot be stopped and blotted out entirely—a contention which those with knowledge of the Orient will readily admit—the next best thing to entire prohibition is efficient control and supervision.

V.

It must be remembered that drug-taking in the Orient is almost second nature to the natives. I once asked a well-known Excise Officer in Burma whether opium-smoking was the dreadful thing it was generally thought to be. He answered me in both the affirmative and the negative. Excess in opium, he stated, is worse than in most things; but if he had to choose between opium and alcoholic excess, he would unhesitatingly insist that drunkenness was by far the worse evil. He summed up his opinion in the following words: 'Opium does not, and never can, degrade any man as drink does; and nobody makes a beast of himself with opium. It neither makes a nuisance of a man, nor does it lead to violence and murder, as excess in alcohol does invariably.' As the result of many years' observation of people addicted to both vices, I am inclined to believe that he is absolutely correct.

Morphia is another vice in the Orient, although it is nothing like so prominent as the opium habit. Morphia injection in Eastern countries is far more repulsive than opium-smoking. I have visited dens where both vices were largely indulged in, and it is impossible to compare the former with any other drug vice; I would merely observe, 'May God have mercy upon the votaries of morphia.' Cocaine is another drug with a big following in the Orient; and it is an unmixed vice. Cocaine has a far greater power over its votaries than either morphia or opium, for the after-distress is keener and the craving for more much stronger; a slave to cocaine is a slave indeed! The harm that it does, and the certainty with which it eventually kills its victims, are truly appalling. I have seen some really dreadful instances of confirmed cocaine-takers; and there is nothing that can be done to cure them of this terrible vice.

Indulgence in hemp-smoking in India is as common as betel-chewing and tobacco-smoking. I have seen hemp being smoked everywhere that my wandering footsteps have taken me in India, and also quite extensively in Burma and the Shan States. I have discussed this vice with many government officials, and have discovered a wide diversity of opinion as to whether it is merely an undesirable form of indulgence

without any permanently evil effects, or whether it is gravely harmful. Personally, I incline to the latter opinion; but I have no doubt at all that it can never be effectually stopped. Hemp-smoking is far too deeply ingrained as a habit amongst Indians to be ever successfully uprooted.

In conclusion, it seems apt to retail an old Persian allegory, on the effects of these various Eastern vices, that I came across during the course of my wide wanderings in the Orient. It so correctly illustrates my view of the comparative degree of harm derived from the various drugs in common use 'East of Suez,' that it could not be bettered. This ancient

allegory says: Three men arrived one night at the closed gates of a Persian city. One man suffered from the effects of excessive alcohol drinking, the second from the effects of opium eating, and the third had smoked hemp to excess. 'Let us break down the gates of the city,' shouted the alcoholic drinker, in a fury of drunken rage, 'for I can do it with my sword.' 'Nay,' sleepily protested the opium-eater, 'we can rest here outside the city in comfort. In the morning the gates will be opened, and then we can enter. There is no hurry necessary.' 'Why all this foolish talk?' whined the hemp-smoker. '*Let us all three creep through the key-hole!*'

CRASKIE.

PART II.

III.

THE Maitlands' 'machine' turned out of Brig o' Muir at the same time as Craskie's, but in the opposite direction. Maitland drove, sitting on the front seat with his younger daughter Nelly, Mrs Maitland and Peggy perched precariously behind. The Maitland vehicle boasted no india-rubber tires; its passengers were forced to shout if they would be heard above its rattle. Mrs Maitland and Peggy shouted at each other, secure in the knowledge that the occupants of the front seat could not hear a word.

Of Peggy Maitland, Lady Campbell of Tomnahoy once gave a famous description *à propos* of some war fête where she and her tenants had mingled their labours. 'All these girls are nice,' she had said, 'but Miss Maitland is *really* nice.' So she was. Her detractors said she was 'ill-less guidless;' her admirers (who were much more numerous) said she was the happy mean. She was neither pretty nor plain; neither witty nor dull; neither very well-read nor very ill; yet somehow she stood out. If there indeed exists that elusive thing called 'charm,' then she had it. Shy and reserved, soft but sweet spoken, sympathetically capable in nine things out of ten, she took all after the gentle, well-bred father who drove the trap, and little or nothing after the very lively mother who sat by her side and plied her with questions.

Mrs Maitland was out of a rougher mould than her husband—a kindly despot at home, a tartar out of it. She was very anxious to see her elder daughter Mrs Bonnar. Nothing but the fear of frightening Craskie off prevented her from following the lead of a celebrated mother in that county—seizing Craskie by his huge shoulders and pushing him up to her daughter with the frank announcement, 'Here's Peggy; awa' wi' her!'

'Has he spoken yet?' she inquired candidly.

Peggy's negative was drowned in the rattle of the trap. She was resigned to a drive of refined torture.

'What said he, then?' Counsel for the prosecution was not to be fobbed off.

'Oh, mother, how can I tell you? I don't remember. Nothing particular.' What did it matter, she reflected, what the man had actually said? He had talked as long as he decently could, and as fast. He had wanted to talk to *her* just about anything. He wanted *her* interest in his plums, *her* laughter for his story, *her* encouragement about the electric-light. What did the plums or the horseman's wife or the electric-light matter *per se* so long as they had been pretexts for keeping on talking to *her*?

Mrs Maitland made an unladylike noise that was very nearly a snort. 'Nothing particular!' She mimicked her daughter's soft speech with diabolical accuracy. 'An' him gabbin' there the best part o' a half-hour. It's what I've said to ye all along—ye'll have to give the man a help. He's one o' that kind that canna come to the bit wantin' a pull.'

'Mother, I couldn't possibly. What would he think of me?'

This time the snort was undisguised. 'Couldn't poss-ib-ly! I kenna what folk are comin' to. When yer father came courtin' me——'

Peggy sighed with relief; the story of her father's courtship was good to last them a couple of miles along the road. With luck, too, it would lead to its habitual sequel—the tale of the servant-girl at the farm and her backward lover. 'So I says to him, "If ye be gaun tae tak' 's, tell 's," I says, "an' if ye're no' gaun tae tak' 's, tell 's, and nae be haudin' 's fae anither."' Yes, that familiar friend would almost certainly follow—and then they would be nearly home.

Her mind wandered a little. By long acquaintance she was enabled to punctuate her mother's

narratives with the appropriate remarks without giving them any very strict attention. If only, she thought, her mother were not there, and she were spinning through this sombrely beautiful evening alone on the back seat of the trap, how much more delightful her reflections could be. The evening might then wrap her into its own luminous serenity, take her away to those rosy countries beyond the sunset. But not so long as Mrs Maitland, wholly unconscious of the feelings she was arousing, discoursed amiably on the methods of bringing prospective husbands to the scratch.

'If ye be gaun tae tak' 's, tell 's'—the story had run to its reiterated point. Peggy sighed. She strove very hard to be 'nice' (the county's word), to be genteel in that good sense of the word which much abuse has driven from mind. 'Nice' girls could not do such things; but, after all, was not the historic servant-girl lucky to be only a servant-girl, with no pretensions to 'niceness,' and a compensating freedom to speak her own mind in her own language? If she could possibly go to Craskie next market-day, and did actually say to him, 'If ye be gaun tae tak' 's, tell 's,' or some equivalent of that time-honoured formula, what would happen? What would Craskie say?

She sighed again. She knew quite well what Craskie would say; she knew what he would 'tell 's.' And she knew she would be honestly and unfeignedly delighted to hear it. In her case the 'anither' whom the servant-girl played so strongly did not exist, and she did not want one. She was very fond of Craskie, and admitted it to herself without reservation; she wanted to go and stay with him always. People laughed at him sometimes—more out of envy than anything else, but she knew better. Quite unknown to Craskie, she had stood and watched him that war-time morning when the Seafields marched through Brig o' Muir—and she had understood a deal.

But 'nice' girls could fire off no magnificent ultimatum; they must wait to be asked. And Craskie did not ask. That was where it cut; that was the tragedy of being Peggy Maitland and not a servant-girl. 'If ye be gaun tae tak' 's, tell 's . . .'

But the stories were over; her mother must be answered certainly, silenced if possible. 'If he speaks, mother, I'll say "Yes".'

'The county kens that,' said her mother brutally. 'But wha'll gar him speak? No' you!'

IV.

A quarter of a mile from his own gates Craskie yielded at last to the importunities of his impatient horse and went home through the deepening dusk at a spanking trot. He was filled with resolution; and his house, solid and imposing, lent him something of its own

dignity and strength. Yet it seemed to extend to him a welcome that was only partial; the house itself was all right, so far as it went, but it lacked inmates. Now, if Peggy Maitland had been coming along the passage to meet him . . . But, instead, it was Sarah Begg.

'Ye're back, Mr John.' Sarah's inevitable greeting. Every Tuesday for years past it had met him on his threshold, and with a sudden chill Craskie felt that so it must go on meeting him for the rest of time. There was something appalling about Sarah, something inevitable; met thus, she seemed an essential part of the house and of himself. To talk, even to think, of evicting her was almost blasphemy. That 'Mr John' went back to the days of his mother, and was in itself a reminder of her iron domination. In those days a great many people had called him 'Mr John'; now no one did it but Sarah. She seemed to revel in it. 'Craskie ye may be outside,' she seemed to say, 'but once here, you're Mr John, and *my* Mr John at that, and don't you try to forget it.'

He responded to her greeting with an absent 'Ay,' and wandered into his big dining-room, with its fine, solid furnishings and its execrable oil-paintings of his paternal and maternal forebears. To Craskie's mind they spoilt the room; but that was another blasphemy. Only once had he ventured to suggest to his mother that some of the worst of them were daubs, and he had at once been given to understand that such an idea was entirely on a par with his notions in regard to the right of Miss Hope and Mrs Abbot to live their own lives. They glared down at him to-night with what seemed to his fevered mind something like hate; it was as if they knew he plotted against them. 'Bring that tawpie here!' they seemed to threaten him. 'Jist ye *daur*!'

Sarah Begg was one of the few people who could translate all Craskie's 'Ay's'; she had realised at once that he was put out about something, and had effaced herself. Craskie poured himself out a stiff whisky from a cut-glass decanter that would have split the skull of a bullock, and drank it miserably. He knew that his evil hour was but postponed, and to his unspeakable rage and horror he felt his resolution evaporating with every minute that passed. Under the cold, forbidding stare of three generations of Bonnars, Cruickshanks, and Tullochs that fine glow of self-confidence died away. Above the mantel-piece his mother, in the early years of her marriage, looked down upon him with her habitual expression of serenity—the artist, a better craftsman than most of his fellows in this gallery, had not been able to escape the flint in her large, placid eye. Craskie looked at her moodily; he had thought he had a house, but he had erred. The house was not his; it was theirs—all these hard-featured people his mother had taught him to venerate—

and most of all was it that lady's above the mantel, with her chiselled handsomeness and her shut, determined mouth. It only wanted a picture of Sarah Begg to make it complete. They would not object to *her*; but poor Peggy—his mother would fall from her frame and crush her.

The 'girl' came in with a lamp, but he waved her away. In the dark, at least, he could not see these disapproving faces. He tried to turn the incident to advantage by fixing his mind on his great scheme of an electric installation, but the thing had gone to dust and ashes. What was the good of putting in electric-light in order to see more clearly this detestable gallery—to make his mother's eyes glitter as they used to do when she was angry? That was the only sign of wrath she ever gave. If only she had lost her temper, and raged and cursed like ordinary mortals; but she had always been far too terrible for that.

The invariable ritual of his home went forward. Presently the 'girl' came back again with the lamp in a manner that would not be frustrated; she laid the table and announced his supper. Craskie seated himself at his board with a groan. Supper was not supper; it was but the prelude to an interview with Sarah Begg. The unbroken habit of years laid down that after supper was cleared away Sarah would appear for an account of the day's doings, the news, local or distant, Craskie had collected at the market. His opportunity? No doubt; but could he take it? Craskie's soft heart hesitated over giving notice to the humblest member of his establishment; a few incompetents thrive on his farm because he could not bring himself to tell them to go. How on earth, then, could he exterminate Sarah, coming for her customary chat primed with hallowed platitudes and comments which time had developed into sacramental responses; how could he tell her that her régime was at an end? Oh for a touch of his mother's gifts! His mother never had to give notice to anybody; they saw her coming, read her face—and gave notice first.

He hacked savagely at the loaf, as if he were decapitating his bitterest enemy.

And as he ate and drank, the thin, small voice of Funk began to make itself heard. Was he not, after all, putting the cart before the horse? Surely the right order of things was to ask Peggy first and *then* deal with Sarah. Suppose Peggy refused, and meantime he had given Sarah notice, would he not, urged Funk plausibly, look a nice sort of fool? To these sophistries Craskie strove to turn a deaf ear, but he listened. Back into the old vicious circle he went, and round and round and round like an ox in an old-time mill.

Spin it out as he liked, supper came to a close. The table was cleared, the lamp shifted; he sat in his arm-chair with his mother looking

down at him. And into the room, massive and black beneath that white, right-angled face, swam, sailed, processed—anything except walked—Sarah.

'Well, Mr John, was't a good market?'

King's pawn to K 3! The game was begun. Craskie launched into an account of the market, while Sarah listened, ticking off with nods of her magnificent head the items of his tale. 'That was good; Blackhillock got nae mair than forty shillings.' Or, 'I thought ye wud hae done better than that.' She stood back in the double light of lamp and fire, her eyes fixed on the painted face of Craskie's mother. Looking up at them from his chair, Craskie detected a resemblance between the two faces that had hitherto escaped him. Natural enough, of course; they were a sort of distant second cousins. But *had* it hitherto escaped him? Or was Sarah getting more like his mother every day?

He shuddered; his recital petered out. Now was his moment; but Sarah forestalled him. 'I saw Langmuir in yon new car o' his the day. I'm thinkin' that another year we might do waur than get one for Craskie. He had a stirk in the back o't, an' it sat there fine.'

'Another year!' 'We might do waur!' Oh, God-sent opportunity. Why could he not simply say lightly, jocosely, 'Aha, Sarah, another year I'll have a different plan. Another year——' and so on. Why couldn't he? God knew; but he couldn't. He writhed in his chair and said, 'Ay!'

Sarah promptly took the bit in her white teeth and treated him to a brief lecture on cars, their uses to the agriculturist. Craskie listened gloomily. She came to an end, conscious, perhaps, that his attention was wandering. 'Come on, now,' said his resolution hopefully; 'out with it.' But Sarah had a last word yet. 'I'm rale sure, Mr John, that if yer dear mother had been here this day she wud hae said wi' me.'

Oh, undoubtedly! Oh, most certainly she would! Oh, emphatically yes! On that, as on other subjects. What demon had inspired Sarah to say such a thing? And, on the top of it, how on earth could he proceed? 'Ay,' he said moodily, 'I'll have to see about it.'

Sarah looked at him sharply. Certainly he was queer to-night. Yet, on his own showing, he had had a successful day of sales. Had he taken a dram too many? No, he would never do that; and, anyway, his symptoms were scarcely those of over-exhilaration. He was listless, acquiescent. She saw a chance, long schemed for, long awaited. 'I was ower the top attics this mornin', Mr John. Ye know it's what I always telt ye. There's a pair o' bonny rooms there ready for the makin'. Just a matter o' two three attic windows. It's a thing yer mother and I whiles talked over——'

She paused for encouragement. Craskie

grunted. He knew all about the attics. But there it was—his mother again, reaching out, pulling him by the sleeve.

'It was aye an idea of hers'—Craskie's thoughts were too busy to notice the altered, coaxing note in her voice—to turn these attics into a suite o' rooms and hand them ower to me. That wud give ye, ye see, anither spare room on the second floor. Of course, it's a thing we've aye had before our minds like, but I was jist a kin' o' fresh struck with it this mornin'. She gave him another keen glance. 'In a way, d'ye ken, Mr John, I well believe it wad be mair to the hoose than the electric.'

She stood beside him, her large white hands folded in front of her, caressing with her left thumb the heavy gold ring on the little finger of her right hand. She watched him very keenly. 'Of course, as I say, it's a' naethin' new, but I never liked to pit it till ye till I was a kin' o' settled like here. Of course, gin yer dear mother had been spared—. But it's three year an' mair noo sin' she was laid awa', and if I canna call mysel' settled noo, I'll never can do't ava. . . . I wad like fine t' get thae attics, Mr John.'

She stopped, breathing a little heavily, waiting clearly for encomium and confirmation.

Inside him, Craskie's soul tore its hair and danced in impotent fury. He was being trapped; in some intolerable way he was being trapped, and in some way he could not possibly avoid. It seemed as if the woman were inspired, the things she was saying. In the Lord's name, why should she choose this of all nights to trot out such a demand? *Was* she inspired? Craskie glanced swiftly at the calm profile and flinty eye above the mantel, and glanced as swiftly down again.

He must say something, anyway. But the thing he had to say—the thing he had meant to say—it was impossible to bring that in now. He assumed an air which he believed to be a blend of judicial cogitation and semi-jocular encouragement. 'Ay, ay, Sarah,' he said heavily; 'we'll see about that too. All in good time.' He felt he was being insufferably ungracious, and made a desperate effort. 'Maybe ye're right about the electric.'

Sarah looked at him, puzzled. This was not at all the reception she had anticipated. It was very unsatisfactory, indeed. There was something very queer about Mr John to-night. She felt as a chemist might feel if a very ordinary substance reacted in a wholly contradictory manner. 'Ye've no' had any bad news the day?'

Craskie roused himself desperately. At all costs her suspicions must not be provoked.

'Na, na,' he said hastily. 'Nothing, nothing; but I'm maybe a wee thingie tired wi' the long day, an' the rain, an' all.' He pulled himself together with an effort. Sixteen stone of Craskie, champion of many counties, tired out by an ordinary market Tuesday and a Scotch mist! What was he saying? 'I'll bear in mind about the attics, Sarah'—he struggled ponderously—but I'm just not feeling over-bright the night. We'll have another crack about them.'

Sarah looked at him kindly. She knew he was lying, and she meant that it should be her business during the next few days to find out exactly how and why. Meanwhile, diplomacy. 'It'll be the leever, maybe,' she said agreeably; 'what wi' this changeable weather, an' a'. Ye'd better awa' tae yer bed. Wad ye like a hot bottle? It's a fell comfortin' thing a hot bottle if ye're no' jist yersel'.'

And so, in a cloud of domestic minutiae, Craskie's epoch-making interview came to a close.

And yet not altogether, for as he sat in miserable dejection before his fire, Sarah suddenly reappeared. 'I forgot t' tell ye,' she said, 'what wi' one thing and anither. I had a letter frae ma cousin, Johnny Tulloch, the day biddin' me come up an' see him. I jalouse he's in trouble again, an' I was minded tae gang up the morn an' bide the night. But if ye're no' better in the mornin'—'

Craskie jumped at it. At any rate, it would get her out of the house for the best part of forty-eight hours, in which time his beaten resolution might raise its head once more. He almost warmed to her. After all, he had made no sort of rise to the fly she had cast; in fact, he had been in the last degree boorish and ungracious, and she had been magnanimous about it. She had fished for a compliment, and caught a serpent of a rebuff, which she had really ill deserved; and in these circumstances it is not easy to be pleasant. Soft-hearted Craskie saw the diplomacy and nothing more. 'Tits!' he said. 'I'll be fine in the mornin'. There's nothing ailin' me. Awa' you up tae Drumbucket. The lassie'll see to me.'

She thanked him and went, marking down his sudden heartiness as a fresh symptom to be followed up at leisure. Craskie sat on for a while by his fire, thinking of the people of the day—of Mrs Lockie and her ill-timed joke; of Maitland and his thrusting wife; of Peggy a great deal; of the lady in paint above the mantel a great deal more. Of that struggling mid-aged farmer Johnny Tulloch, or his colourless sister Meg, he thought not at all.

(Continued on page 254.)



RAND GOLD ROBBERS.

By W. ARDOUIN.

DURING the Anglo-Boer war, when the other side were in temporary occupation of the Johannesburg goldfields, a large quantity of gold in bars was removed from the mines, under the instructions of President Kruger. Whether these gold bars, which represented some hundreds of thousands of pounds, eventually found their way to another part of the world, either after or prior to the death of the President, will have to remain a matter of conjecture. But the unshakable conviction has long prevailed in many influential circles of the British and Boer population of the Rand, that this treasure found a burial-place somewhere south of the Limpopo River. Expeditions have from time to time been formed to exploit territory where Dame Rumour has circulated an attractive tale, lives have even been lost in the hunt for this hidden treasure, and money freely subscribed by enterprising speculators has 'gone west' with remarkable precision; and yet this elusive wealth will continue to have an attractive feature for those who delight in living in their own little worlds of imagination, maybe long after this generation has passed away.

More than twenty years have elapsed since the Anglo-Boer war, and nothing has ever come to light of these hidden riches, but who will be so ungallant as to deny to these numerous treasure-seekers any satisfaction which they may derive in associating themselves with the halo of romance attaching to the Rand goldfields, which as a farm in the early seventies could have been picked up for three figures?

In the early days of these fields fortunes were easily made and as easily lost, and these conditions, coupled with the semi-lawless state of the country at that time, attracted men of doubtful antecedents from all parts of the world. Heavy gambling, hectic speculation, and original, if not altogether praiseworthy, bids for fortune were then the order of the Rand's feverish days and nights.

At the present time the most approved scientific methods have been applied to extracting the gold from the reef, and the industry, in every phase of its multifarious activity, is an attractive and intensive one. Despite the fact, however, that attached to the South African Police are some of the finest detective brains to be found in any part of the world, allowances have to be made every year for a huge deficit in the output of gold, due to illicit possession of the metal, which is a criminal offence and punishable with a long term of imprisonment.

Notwithstanding the risk involved, illicit gold-dealing is very prevalent, many wealthy Indians being successful and evasive offenders

on a princely scale. The difficulty would appear to be in getting it out of the country, and instances will be cited of the methods which are adopted for this purpose.

A lump of gold about 9 inches by 5 inches by 4 inches has often been sent on an overseas journey inside a sack of mealie meal, potatoes, or oranges, or it has been discoloured to form part of some ponderous machinery which is being conveyed from one portion of the continent to another. Specially lined trunks have before now been found to contain a quantity of gold-dust and clippings of considerable value, sufficient, for instance, to pay the expenses of a voyage round the world once they have been converted into cash.

An instance can be recalled of a party of illicit dealers getting away with a quantity of gold bricks which had been stolen from a bank in broad daylight, practically under the noses of the officials. The gang knew that the C.I.D. would be promptly on their track, and that they would be watched day and night. Their movements were controlled by a conspirator with all the modern proclivities of a Raffles, coupled with the suavity and plausibility of the more pronounced type of continental adventurer. His ostensible object was to outwit the police, who had carefully laid their plans for many arrests. A heavy trunk had been left in the luggage-room of a Johannesburg railway station, and a receipt taken for it. It was conspicuously bulky and unusually heavy. The police had succeeded in tracking the parcel, and, unobserved, remained in wait for their quarry. One day two men called at the station for the luggage and fell into their hands, and the arrest of the remainder of the gang followed, with the exception of the ringleader. But all the police found in the trunk was *schlenter* (that is, counterfeit). The arch-conspirator had let his confederates down with a vengeance. A shooting affair, years afterwards, in London was believed to be the sequel of this conspiracy; in it a well-known American beauty of very doubtful antecedents figured prominently.

In 1917 the *Walmer Castle* left Cape Town for Plymouth. She carried about 5000 South African and New Zealand troops for the battle-fields of Flanders and France. She also carried one of the largest cargoes of bullion which had ever been sent from South Africa to this country.

Many of those on board who were lucky enough to return to their southern home will remember the scene at Sierra Leone, when millions of pounds' worth of bar-gold was off-loaded by means of vegetable baskets on to the

torpedo-boats that were awaiting the liner's arrival, with the object of taking the gold to Plymouth.

This course had been necessitated in consequence, so it was understood at the time, of the vessel's captain intercepting a wireless from the Cape asking for confirmation of the news that the *Walmer Castle* had been sunk. Upon receipt of this surprising communication the course of the liner was naturally deviated, and when eventually it did arrive at Sierra Leone torpedo and cruiser craft were anchored thereabouts to receive the bullion.

The transference of it had been proceeding the whole morning. A start had been made at daybreak, and the task had not been completed at noon. At the last moment there appeared to be a flaw in the totals. Something had gone wrong with the counting in that torrid tropical quarter. This intelligence had been kept most ingeniously from the troops and voyagers, and the alert brains of the *Union Castle* boat, from the captain to the boson's mate, were roused. One brick of gold alone would have been worth about £4000, and, according to the cross-check, one was missing. But long before any tangible conclusion had apparently been formed as to what had become of the missing bar, which had been packed, sealed, and checked, peremptory orders were received for the *Walmer Castle* to put to sea again *en route* for Plymouth. Arrived there, several detectives boarded the ship, and some arrests were made; but as nothing afterwards publicly transpired as to what had become of the missing bar, it was presumed that either a re-check had led to the discovery of a clerical error, or, in view of the Secret Service activities of the enemy at the time, no public disclosures were made.

Some years ago, in the mining district of Roodepoort, within a few miles of Johannesburg, an attempt was made to hold up one of the secretaries of the mines, who was in the process of taking gold to a Johannesburg bank. The action of the two men who were involved in this attempt was swift and complete, and they were supported by cool and daring nerves. They nearly succeeded in getting away with the mine's weekly output. A motor-car was in waiting at an adjacent spot to enable them to make off hastily with their spoils when the secretary, unexpectedly recovering from a blow which nearly stunned him, fired and killed one of his assailants. This man happened to be the driver of the car, and as the other could not pilot the wheel his arrest quickly followed.

Before the cyanide process for extracting gold had been invented, the ore was subjected to a mercurialised treatment only, and it is in connection with the amalgam plates which came into operation in the latter process, both before and after the invention referred to, that opportunities were

afforded for illicit gold to come easily into the possession of those who were engaged in this risky but profitable undertaking. Small portions of the slimes, scraped off at irregular intervals, would be less likely to be missed on a mine producing within a reasonable limit of its capacity. Moreover, it must be remembered that the shifts are working day and night, that the living-rooms are in close proximity to the mines, and that a modern city with all the attractions of a continental casino is within a short travelling-distance by tram or train, and that down in the bowels of the earth hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of gold are excavated every week, a quantity of which may well find its way into the hands of the illicit dealers. In these circumstances, although the percentage of gold extracted from the plates may not be exceedingly high, it soon accumulates and becomes valuable, and is sought after by the criminal brains of two hemispheres, attracted by the dazzling riches of these fields.

It was rumoured some years ago—with what veracity remains obscure—that thousands of pounds' worth of bar-gold were being shipped to another part of the world as coal. This ruse had been adopted owing to the extraordinary vigilance being exercised by the police and by expert investigators appointed by the mine-owners in view of pilfering, which had been taking place on the Rand on a wholesale scale. But presumably, on one occasion at least, the well-organised scheme miscarried. The coal, instead of finding its way into the possession of one of the port agents, who was always on the *qui vive* with an alertness and business instinct worthy of a better cause, was delivered, in error, on board a *Union Castle* liner as coal for the bunkers, and duly found its way into one of the furnace heaps, as the molten metal is understood to have been discovered in the cinder heaps and ashes, which are discarded by the liner when a suitable opportunity presents itself. The feelings of the stokers can well be imagined, who, in addition to dropping beads of sweat in a tropical heat, had unintentionally been instrumental in 'firing' golden nuggets.

LIFE AND LOVE.

THIS is love, and life worth living—
Faith in friends, and grace in giving;
Power to see, in tears or laughter,
Happiness, and hope hereafter;
Power to hold, when even closes,
Memories of roads and roses;
Labour, that is all our worth;
Virtue, and a valiant mirth;
Love of winds and open spaces,
Flowers, and little children's faces;
Love of horses and of seas,
Streets, and civic sanctities;
Trust in God, and His forgiving—
Thus is love a life worth living!

H. G. BEDDINGTON.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

AS TOLD BY THE SHIP'S SURGEON.

PART I.

ORIGINALLY of Norwegian ancestry, from a family belonging to the Orkney Islands—Scapa Flow way, where the German Fleet committed suicide—I was born in sunny India, 'Somewhere East of Suez,' as Kipling has put it. As to the year, what matters it? A man is but as old as he feels, and I have long since joined the Peter Pan brigade, which refuses to grow old.

Some of my messmates at sea have facetiously called me a Scotch Hindoo—to distinguish me from Antony Ferguson, late chief engineer of the s.s. *Olympic*, who, being born in Constantinople, was known as the Scotch Turk! Either combination would have been formidable enough if it came to striking a bargain—at least, so said our friends!

With one hundred more Anglo-Indian kiddies, coming 'home' to be reared, my first voyage from Calcutta to London lasted 150 days. Far from being in a hurry to leave, mother told me years after, we youngsters could hardly be dragged out of our beloved ship and playground. Times have changed, and so have folks. Fast liners make travellers impatient and peevish to 'get there' quickly. Before ever we leave the dock at Southampton I am asked, 'When do you think we shall reach New York?'

I was educated in three famous Scottish seats of learning—St Andrews, Dumfries, and Edinburgh. There I was carefully brought up on readin', 'ritin' and 'rithmetic, to which I might safely add porridge, punctuality, and piety.

My initial voyage must have filled me with a love of the sea, for, as a boy, I made for it whenever I could. One good licking I got was for planning to smuggle away on a sailing ship from Leith to the West Indies, where I dreamed, I suppose, of coming across some 'Treasure Island.' Another drubbing was for skipping school and going up with a student to the operating-room of a hospital. So fate probably intended that some day I was to become a ship's surgeon. This, however, was not until I had been assistant surgeon amongst the Durham miners, the Staffordshire pottery workers, the Devonshire farmers, and the poor in the slums of East London.

Then followed six years in big London Poor
No. 747.—VOL. XV.

Law hospitals; grand and valuable experience, but so full of worry that, after repeated attacks of bronchial catarrh, I was threatened with asthma. My medical friends urged me to give up the work and go to sea for six months. This I was not loath to do, and as my health improved so much, I never returned to land work.

In quest of health, and free to roam, the first voyages I made were to Canada, then to India, China, Japan, and home by Burma; then to New Zealand *via* the Cape of Good Hope, and home round Cape Horn to Teneriffe and London. As pleasure trips to different fascinating countries, spent in congenial society, these voyages have pleasant memories for me; as a money-making concern they were a failure. In those days the position of a ship's doctor was not of much account, and his meagre pay hardly kept him in clothes and pocket-money. Shipping companies—not to their credit, be it said—gave no encouragement to passengers to pay any fee at all, and travellers, on their part, took it for granted that his services were entirely free. Hence any money he ever got was in the nature of a 'gift.' This unsatisfactory system lasted far too long, and the result was that good doctors remained on a ship only for a voyage or two. By-and-by, with bigger ships, came better conditions of service, and since the War the pay on the large liners has at last reached the stage of being a living wage at least.

In early days the medical equipment on board was very poor, and I often wonder now how we managed to muddle through with what little we had at our command.

In a long voyage to Japan, I had nothing but a small medicine-chest and a handful of instruments, the rest being left to luck. The hospital (so called) was small and dingy, placed right aft over the propeller, where the vibration was terrible; altogether inadequate for the care of any case, especially a surgical one. If any fever case turned up, I had to improvise 'isolation' quarters as I could, being dependent mostly on the ingenuity of that handy man known as 'Chips,' the carpenter. How and why the Board of Trade allowed it all to go on so long I do not know; but the requirements were laid down by them, and no one else had any say in the matter. Even yet the official drug

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MARCH 21, 1925.

list prescribed for ships is worked out on the old-fashioned scale, and, in many respects, is useless for modern requirements.

Although, on the long voyages, my duties were mainly those of social entertainer, there were odd moments when past surgical experience proved valuable. On one ship, an engineer got his hand caught in the machinery, and I had literally to cut him out of it, completing the amputation when we got him aloft. One of the bridge officers gave the anæsthetic, and very well too. One purser, still well known on the North Atlantic service, proved an excellent assistant at operations. Post-mortem examinations were his special delight, and he never missed seeing and helping at one. In the tropics we were hailed once by a passing sailing ship, whose skipper asked us to take one of his sailors whose leg had been badly smashed by a fall. Gangrene had set in, so I had to amputate below the knee. He progressed well, and we landed him in good shape at Cape Town, whence he was returned to Cardiff. I am still grateful to the owners of that sailing ship, who sent me a cheque for twenty-five guineas for services rendered. Likewise, I feel kindly disposed to the owners of a cargo boat whose bo'sun I rescued in a New Zealand port. Mad with drink, he had run amok and shut himself up in a small deck-house. Bursting open the door, we got him by playing water on him with the hose-pipe, to find his arm broken in two places. Summary justice this was, but useful and quite humane under the circumstances. The owners sent me ten guineas for this, with the comment that it was 'a good morning's work,' and that I had 'earned every penny of the fee.'

Talking of lunatics, I have had to handle many of them at sea, often enough under very trying conditions, especially if the patient happened to be a first-saloon passenger. I am talking now of really crazy people—not of the large number who behave very queerly at sea, and yet are allowed to roam about free. A deported lunatic was being sent by the American Government to England. One day he was exercising on deck in charge of an attendant, who was a huge Dane. All of a sudden the insane man broke away, took a short run and hopped over the side of the ship, and was never seen again. The Dane was excited, but knew that he ought to acquaint the officer on the bridge. So he scrambled up on the boat deck and made for the bridge, gesticulating and shouting wildly that there was a man overboard. The young officer on watch saw him coming, and, as he knew there were some deported lunatics on board, he thought the attendant was one of them, who had broken loose. He therefore took no chances, and promptly hit the Dane on the head with a thick telescope, felling him and causing a big scalp wound. I arrived on the scene a minute later, and was giving him

first-aid when the skipper appeared, and I had to explain what the whole scene meant!

Once, in the Red Sea, a Chinaman fell down from the skylight of the engine-room and fractured the vault of his skull. The operation of 'trephining'—that is, removing the part of the bone which was causing the pressure—was his only chance of life, and I was anxious to give him it. Hardy, the second engineer, placed all his tools at my disposal, and these I used after carefully boiling them. After I had put the patient under the anæsthetic, Bloxham, chief officer, kept it up. The operation was not difficult after all, and the pressure on the brain was removed. The three of us nursed him in turns, and as he was alive after five days, we had hopes of ultimate success. But when we got into a sou'-west monsoon the ship rolled heavily, and we lost our man after a day's persistent vomiting—which was very bad luck for all of us.

A Chinese crew are a queer lot to handle. When things are going right they work better than the proverbial nigger, and even when prostrated with heat will go back to the stokehold an hour after they regain their senses. When sick, they took their own herb concoctions, and would have none of my drugs. The Chinese bo'sun looked after them, and the first intimation I would get was when he came along and said, 'Mister Doctor, Number 20 died few minutes ago.' 'What did he die of, bo'sun?' said I. 'Oh, all the same heart disease,' was his answer. More than once I was terrified lest some worse disease, such as plague or cholera, might be the real cause. In times of danger the 'Chinks,' like Lascars, were liable to get panic-stricken. In a typhoon in the Formosa Channel the whole crew of ninety forsook us, and, in their terror, locked themselves up in the fo'c'sle. Three firemen, trying to escape from the stokehold, were shot down. Thanks to the efforts of fourteen white men, the ship got to port safely, but battered.

On the road from Rangoon to Chittagong and Calcutta, with five hundred coolies huddled together on the decks, smallpox broke out. I isolated six cases by turning some of the boats into hospitals. Fortunately, we had no more cases before they were all removed to quarantine.

The passing of quarantine with as little delay as possible is one of the chief medical items of any voyage. Papers, therefore, must be in order, and all fever cases, real and suspicious, ready to be shown immediately on arrival. Some officials are more strict than others, especially if they know that a port from which a ship sailed is infected with plague, cholera, typhus, or smallpox. Personally, I have had no bother with any of them. However, I found Japanese, Italian, and South American officials 'fussy'; they required delicate handling. Real trouble does arise when the ship's surgeon tries

to conceal any case or disputes the diagnosis of any suspicious case—which is foolish and unnecessary. Otherwise, he is likely to get a fair and square deal, in no port in the world more so than in New York, where, for many years, I have never had a hitch. In some of our British ports, the quarantine doctor never comes along unless sent for by the sanitary inspector, who makes the first visit: another of our quaint, casual ways of muddling through important matters! *A propos* of smallpox, when it does break out on a passenger ship it is wonderful how the anti-vaccinationists—who are so brave when there is no danger—are the first to tumble into line and beg to be vaccinated! Half-way over to Plymouth once we had a bad case on board, and at one continuous sitting I had to vaccinate nine hundred souls—which took me eighteen hours to do. There was no other doctor on board; but I got noble help from George Hackenschmidt, the famous Russian wrestler, whose defeat of Madrali, the Terrible Turk, at Olympia, created such a sensation at the time. George enjoyed the whole proceedings immensely, almost as much as he loved to sit by the piano while I played and sang Scots and Irish songs to him.

A burial at sea used to be an impressively sad ceremony. As a rule the captain took it; although I do not think he liked the job, before perhaps the whole ship's crew and passengers. One good old skipper of mine broke down completely on one occasion, and I had to finish it for him. Nowadays, on fast liners, the purser officiates, unless he can pass the duty on to an obliging surgeon. 8 P.M. or 8 A.M. is usually the hour selected, and the burial service from the Church of England Prayer-Book is read.

It may interest readers to know that few burials at sea ever do take place nowadays. No first or second saloon passenger is committed to the deep without the express permission of a relative or friend on board. Failing such permit, a Marconi message has to be sent to the next-of-kin ashore asking for instructions as to disposal of the body. This, of course, provided that the death is not due to some contagious disease; in which case the disposal is entirely at the discretion of the ship's commander. Years ago, on the s.s. *Oceanic*, just after leaving Queenstown, a first-saloon passenger shot himself. By Marconi and cable we got word back in twenty hours, all the way from California, that I was to embalm the body and bring it on to New York. This regulation arose from a big lawsuit, the judges upholding the relatives' claim that, with the Marconi available, the next-of-kin should have been notified before burial at sea. Further, be it known—since 1913 no Jewish third-class passenger may be buried at sea unless he or she died of a contagious disease. So that, nowadays, the

surgeon is undertaker as well, and a complete equipment is at hand for the operation, which, incidentally, takes four hours' steady work to complete. A member of the crew is, as a rule, buried at sea with full honours; but here again, any department on board can claim that, if safe, the body of a shipmate shall be placed in a casket and conveyed to the relatives on shore. Most of all this is, I fancy, a matter of sentiment. Personally, I make it no secret that, if I die at sea, I should much prefer that the Union Jack be pulled quietly off, in the stillness of night, and my body slipped into the deep, blue, clean watery grave; just as, on shore, I should wish to be cremated, and thus avoid the unspeakable horrors of decomposition in the soil. A dear old pal of mine, a ship's surgeon, was buried, according to his dying request, in his full working uniform, cap and gloves, all ready for the final grand inspection by the Commander of All Souls.

While on the subject of ceremonies at sea, I have some very interesting notes about church service on liners. Years ago, when I made my first voyages to New York, nearly every passenger attended Sunday morning service, and many of the crew as well. These were the days when ships were smaller, and every one was a member of a happy family. To-day, little cliques are formed, and the less one sees of the other the better. Year by year the attendance fell off as Sunday became more like Saturday. On the crack of War in 1914 the attendance of passengers had fallen to twenty per cent. During the War there were, of course, fewer passengers; but they all came regularly to Church—no doubt scared out of their wits lest the next hour should be their last.

Now note what happened when the Armistice was signed and the submarine danger ceased. From 1918 till the fall of 1923, my figures, carefully taken at the services over which I preside, show a drop to fourteen per cent. of all first-saloon passengers! I offer no comment—he who runs may read. The fact is, Sunday to-day on a big liner is more recognised in the breach than in the observance of old-time regulations, which, after all, were fairly wholesome. Passengers play deck games, and cards for money in public rooms. So far they have not started dancing in the ballroom on Sunday evening, but they are itching to do so, and there is a strong under-current in favour of jazzing round to relieve what they call 'the monotony.' Personally, I should hate to see the line of demarcation between a British ship and a cabaret wiped out altogether—it is thin enough already. Some—a little, I mean—of the dancing is modest and graceful; much of it is fearfully familiar, and as discordant as the accompanying music—if, indeed, such a name can be given to it. Not that I am a prude, for the surgeon and the purser see and hear so

much to shock them that an extra little jolt or two does not matter much. But there is a limit even to frivolity, and I fancy it has nearly been reached.

Is there more drunkenness to-day at sea than twenty years ago? 'Certainly not,' is my reply. It has decreased very materially. Some of our folks have an idea that, owing to the Prohibition laws in the United States, the average American,

as soon as he comes on board, proceeds to 'load up' with any kind of liquor he can get hold of. That is sheer nonsense. Time was when I expected to have six men a voyage to treat for alcoholic excess. On the s.s. *Majestic* I have had to stop only four men's liquor in fifty crossings—a marked improvement on the old averages.

(Continued on page 266.)

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER VIII.—continued.

'WE will catch him yet,' cried the vindictive head-keeper. 'Get you on your bicycle, Jimsie, and away after him. He'll be on the Muirtown Road. There's just the one road he can travel.'

'No, you don't,' said Junius. 'I don't want him here. He has beaten us fairly in a match of wits, and the thing's finished.'

'But it's no' possible,' Jimsie moaned. 'The skeeliest fisher could not take a saumon in the Lang Whang with a flee. . . . And I wasna away many meenutes. . . . And the tramp wass a poor shilpit body—not like a fisher or any kind of gentleman at all, at all. . . . And he hadna a rod. . . . The thing's no' possible.'

'Well, who else could it be?'

'I think it wass the Deevil.'

Jimsie, cross-examined, went over the details of his evening's experience.

'The journalist may have been in league with him—or he may not,' Junius reflected. 'Anyway, I'll tackle Mr Crossby. I want to find out what I can about this remarkable sportsman.'

'You will not find out anything at all, at all,' said Angus morosely. 'For I tell ye, sir, Jimsie is right in one thing—Macnab is not a man; he is the Deevil.'

'Then we needn't be ashamed of being beat by him. . . . Look here, you men. We've lost, but you've had an uncomfortable time these last twenty-four hours, and I'm going to give you what I promised you if we won out. I reckon the market price of salmon is not more than fifty cents a pound. Macnab has paid about thirty dollars a pound for this fish, so we've a fair margin on the deal.'

Mr Acheson Bandicott received the news with composure, if not with relief. Now he need no longer hold the correspondents at arm's length, but could summon them to his presence and enlarge on Harald Blacktooth. His father's equanimity cast whatever balm was needed upon Junius's wounded pride, and presently he saw nothing in the affair but comedy. His thoughts turned to Glenraden. It might be well for him to announce in person that the defences of Strathlarrig had failed.

On his way he called at the post-office, where Agatha had told him that Crossby was lodging. He wanted a word with the journalist, who clearly must have been *particeps criminis*, and as he could offer as bribe the first full tale of Harald Blacktooth (to be unfolded before the other correspondents arrived for luncheon), he hoped to acquire a story in return. But, according to the post-mistress, Mr Crossby had gone. He had sat up most of the night writing, and, without waiting for breakfast, had paid his bill, strapped on his ruck-sack, and departed on his bicycle.

Junius found the Raden family on the lawn, and with them Archie Roylance.

'Got up early to go over my speech for to-morrow,' the young man explained. 'I'm gettin' the dashed thing by heart—only way to avoid regrettable incidents. I started off down the hill repeatin' my eloquence, and before I knew I was at Glenraden gates, so I thought I'd come in and pass the time of day. . . . Jolly interestin' dinner last night, Bandicott. I liked your old professor. . . . Any news of John Macnab?'

'Plenty news. He has us beat to a frazzle. This morning there was a salmon on the doorstep presented with his compliments.'

The effect of this announcement was instant and stupendous. The colonel called upon his gods. 'Not killed fair? It's a stark impossibility, sir. You had the water guarded like the Bank of England.' Archie expressed like suspicions; Agatha was sad and sympathetic; Janet amazed, and covertly joyful.

'I reckon it was fair enough fishing,' Junius went on. 'I've been trying to figure out the thing, and this is what I make of it. Macnab was in league with one of those pressmen, who started out to trespass inside the park and drew off all the watchers in pursuit, including the man at the Lang Whang. He had them hunting him for about half-an-hour, and in that time Macnab killed his fish. . . . He must be a dandy at the game, too, to get a salmon in that dead water. . . . Jimsie—that's the man who was supposed to watch the Lang Whang—returned before he could get away with the

beast, so what does the fellow do but dig a chunk out of the fish and leave it on the bank, while he lures Jimsie to chase him? Jimsie saw the fish and put it down to an otter, and by-and-by caught the man up the road. There must have been an accomplice in hiding, for when Jimsie went back to pick up the salmon it had disappeared. The fellow, who looked like a hobo, was shut up in a garage, and after dinner we let him go, for we had nothing against him, and now he is rejoicing somewhere at our simplicity. . . . It was a mighty clever bit of work, and I'm not ashamed to be beaten by that class of artist. I hoped to get hold of the pressman and find out something, but the pressman seems to have leaked out of the landscape.'

'Was that tramp John Macnab?' Agatha asked in an agitated voice.

'None other. You let him out, Miss Agatha. What was he like? I can't get proper hold of Jimsie's talk.'

'Oh, I should have guessed,' the girl lamented. 'For, of course, I saw he was a gentleman. He was in horrible old clothes, but he had an Eton shield on his watch-chain. He seemed to be ashamed to remember it. He said he had come down in the world—through drink!'

Archie struggled hard with the emotions evoked by this description of an abstemious personage currently believed to be making an income of forty thousand pounds.

'Then we've both seen him,' Janet cried. 'Describe him, Agatha. Was he youngish and big, and fair-haired, and sunburnt? Had he blue eyes?'

'No-o. He wasn't like that. He was about papa's height, and rather slim, I think. He was very dirty, and hadn't shaved, but I should say he was sallow, and his eyes—well, they were certainly not blue.'

'Are you certain? You only saw him in the dark.'

'Yes, quite certain. I had a big torch, which lit up his whole figure. Now I come to think of it, he had a striking face; he looked like somebody very clever—a judge perhaps. That should have made me suspicious, but I was so shocked to see such a downfall that I didn't think about it.'

Janet looked wildly around her. 'Then there are two John Macnabs.'

'Angus thinks he is the Devil,' said Junius.

'It looks as if he was a syndicate,' said Archie, who felt that some remark was expected of him.

'Well, I'm not complaining,' said Junius. 'And now we're off the stage, and can watch the play from the boxes. I hope you won't be shocked, sir, but I wouldn't break my heart if John Macnab got the goods from Haripol.'

'By Gad, no!' cried the colonel. 'Pon my soul, if I could get into touch with the fellow

I'd offer to help him—though he'd probably be too much of a sportsman to let me. That young Claybody wants taking down a peg or two. He's the most insufferably assured young prig I ever met in my life.'

'He looked the kind of chap who might turn nasty,' Sir Archie observed.

'How do you mean?' Junius asked. 'Get busy with a gun—that sort of thing?'

'Lord, no! The Claybodies are not likely to start shootin'. But they're as rich as Jews, and they're capable of hirin' prize-fighters, or puttin' a live wire round the forest. Or I'll tell you what they might do—they might drive every beast on Haripol over the marches and keep 'em out for three days. It would wreck the ground for the season, but they wouldn't mind that—the old man can't get up the hills, and the young 'un don't want to.'

'Agatha, my dear,' said her father, 'we ought to return the Claybodies' call. Perhaps Mr Junius would drive us over there in his car this afternoon. For, of course, you'll stay to luncheon, Bandicott—and you, too, Roylance?'

Sir Archie stayed to luncheon; he also stayed to tea; and between these meals he went through a memorable experience. For, after the others had started for Haripol, Janet and he drifted aimlessly towards the Raden bridge, and then upward through the pinewoods on the road to Carnmore. The strong sun was tempered by the flickering shade of the trees, and as the road wound out of the crannies of the woods to the bare ridges, light wandering winds cooled the cheek, and, mingled with the fragrance of heather and the rooty smell of bogs, came a salty freshness from the sea. The wide landscape was as luminous as April—a bad presage for the weather, since the Haripol peaks, which in September should have been dim in a mulberry haze, stood out sharp like cameos. The two did not talk much—they were getting beyond the stage where formal conversation is felt to be necessary. Sir Archie limped along at a round pace, which was easily matched by the girl at his side. Both would instinctively halt now and then and survey the prospect without speaking, and both felt that these pregnant silences were bringing them very near to one another.

At last the track ran out in screes, and from a bald summit they were looking down on the first of the Carnmore corries. Janet seated herself on a mossy ledge of rock and looked back into the Raden glen, which from this altitude had the appearance of an enclosed garden. The meadows of the lower haugh lay green in the sun, the setting of pines by some freak of light was a dark and cloudy blue, and the little castle rose in the midst of the trees with a startling brightness like carven marble. The picture was as exquisite and strange as an illumination in a missal.

'Gad, what a place to live in!' Sir Archie exclaimed.

The girl, who had been gazing at the scene with her chin in her hands, turned on him eyes which were suddenly wistful and rather sad. As contrasted with her sister's, Janet's face had a fine hard finish which gave it a brilliancy like an eager boy's. But now a cloud-wrack had been drawn over the sun.

'We've lived there,' she said, 'since Harald Blacktooth—at least papa says so. But the end is very near now. We are the very last of the Radens. And that is as it should be, you know.'

'I'm hanged if I see that,' Sir Archie began, but the girl interrupted.

'Yes, it is as it should be. The old life of the Highlands is going, and people like ourselves must go with it. There's no reason why we should continue to exist. We've long ago lost our justification.'

'D'you mean to say that fellows like Clay-body have more right to be here?'

'Yes. I think they have, because they're fighters, and we're only survivals. They will disappear, too, unless they learn their lesson. . . . You see, for a thousand years we have been going on here, and other people like us, but we only endured because we were alive. We have the usual conventional motto on our coat of arms—*Pro Deo et Rege*—a Herald's College invention. But our Gaelic motto was very different—it was "Sons of Dogs, come and I will give you flesh." As long as we lived up to that we flourished, but as soon as we settled down and went to sleep and became *rentiers* we were bound to decay. . . . My cousins at Glенаicill were just the same. Their motto was "What I have I hold," and while they remembered it they were great people. But when they stopped holding they went out like a candle, and the last of them is now living at St Malo, and a Lancashire cotton king has the place. . . . When we had to fight hard for our possessions all the time, and give flesh to the sons of dogs who were our clan, we were strong men and women. There was a Raden with Robert Bruce—he fell with Douglas in the pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre—and a Raden died beside the king at Flodden—and Radens were in everything that happened in the old days in Scotland and France. But civilisation killed them—they couldn't adapt themselves to it. Somehow the fire went out of the blood, and they became vegetables. Their only claim was the right of property, which is no right at all.'

'That's what the Bolsheviks say,' said the puzzled Sir Archie.

'Then I'm a Bolshevik. Nobody in the world to-day has a right to anything which he can't justify. That's not politics, it's the way Nature works. Whatever you've got—rank or power,

or fame or money—you've got to justify it and keep on justifying it, or go under. No law on earth can buttress up a thing which Nature means to decay.'

'D'you know that sounds to me pretty steep doctrine?'

'No, it isn't. It isn't doctrine, and it isn't politics; it's common-sense. I don't mean that we want some silly government redistributing everybody's property. I mean that people should realise that whatever they've got they hold under a perpetual challenge, and that they're bound to meet that challenge. Then we'll have living creatures instead of mummies.'

Sir Archie stroked his chin thoughtfully. 'I daresay there's a lot in that. But what would Colonel Raden say to it?'

'He would say I was a bandit. And yet he would probably agree with me in the end. Agatha wouldn't, of course. She adores decay—sad old memories and lost causes, and all the rest of it. She's a sentimentalist, and she'll marry Junius and go to America where everybody is sentimental, and be the sweetest thing in the Western hemisphere, and live happy ever after. I'm quite different. I believe I'm kind, but I'm certainly hard-hearted. I suppose it's Harald Blacktooth coming out.'

Janet had got off her perch, and was standing a yard from Sir Archie, her hat in her hand and the light wind ruffling her hair. The young man, who had no skill in analysing his feelings, felt obscurely that she fitted most exquisitely into the picture of rock, and wood, and water; that she was in very truth a part of this clear elemental world of the hill-tops.

'What about yourself?' she asked. 'In the words of Mr Bandicott, are you going to make good?'

She asked the question with such an air of frank comradeship that Sir Archie was in no way embarrassed. Indeed, he was immensely delighted. 'I hope so,' he said. 'But I don't know. . . . I'm a bit of a slacker. There doesn't seem much worth doing since the War.'

'What nonsense! You find a thousand things worth doing, but they're not enough—and they're not big enough. Do you mean to say you want to hang up your hat at your age and go to sleep? You need to be challenged.'

'I expect I do,' he murmured.

'Well, I challenge you. You're fit and you're young, and you did extraordinarily well in the War, and you've hosts of friends, and—and—you're well off, aren't you?'

'Pretty fair. You see, I had a long minority, and—oh yes, I've far more money than I want.'

'There you are. I challenge you. You're bound to justify what you've got. I won't have you idling away your life till you end as the kind of lean, brown old gentleman in a

bowler hat that one sees at Newmarket. It's a very nice type, but it's not good enough for you, and I won't have it. You must not be a dilettante, pottering about with birds, and a little sport, and a little politics.'

Sir Archie had been preached at occasionally in his life, but never quite in this way. He was preposterously pleased, and also a little solemnised. 'I'm quite serious about politics.'

'I wonder,' said Janet, smiling. 'I don't mean scraping into Parliament, but real politics—putting the broken pieces together, you know. Papa and the rest of our class want to treat politics like another kind of property in which they have a vested interest. But it won't do—not in the world we live in to-day. If you're going to do any good you must feel the challenge and be ready to meet it. And then you must become yourself a challenger. You must be like John Macnab.'

Sir Archie stared.

'I don't mean that I want you to make poaching wagers like John. You can't live in a place and play those tricks with your neighbours. But I want you to follow what Mr Bandicott would call the "John Macnab proposition." It's so good for everybody concerned. Papa has never had so much fun out of his forest as in the days he was repelling invasion, and even Mr Junius found a new interest in the Larrig. . . . I'm all for property, if you can defend it, but there are too many fatted calves in the world.'

Sir Archie suddenly broke into loud laughter. 'Most people tell me I'm too mad to do much good in anything. But you say I'm not mad enough. Well, I'm all for challenging the fatted calves, but I don't fancy that's the road that leads to the Cabinet. More likely the jail, with a red flag firmly clenched in my manly hand.'

The girl laughed, too. 'Papa says that the

man who doesn't give a damn for anybody can do anything he likes in the world. Most people give many damns for all kinds of foolish things. Mr Claybody, for example—his smart friends, like Lord Lamancha and the Attorney-General—what is his name?—Leithen?—and his silly little position, and his father's new peerage. But you're not like that. I believe that all wisdom consists in caring immensely for the few right things and not caring a straw about the rest.'

Had any one hinted to Sir Archie that a young woman on a Scots mountain could lecture him gravely on his future and still remain a ravishing and adorable thing, he would have dismissed the suggestion with incredulity. At the back of his head he had that fear of women, as something mysterious and unintelligible, which came from a motherless and sisterless childhood, and a youth spent almost wholly in the company of men. He had immense compassion for a sex which seemed to him to have a hard patch to hoe in the world, and this pitifulness had always kept him from any conduct which might harm a woman. His numerous fancies had been light and transient, and his heart had been wholly unscathed. Fear that he might stumble into marriage had made him as shy as a woodcock—a fear not without grounds, for a friend had once proposed to write a book called *Lives of the Hunted*, with a chapter on Archie. Wherefore, his hour having come, he had cascaded into love with desperate completeness, and with the freshness of a mind unstaled by disillusionment. . . . All he knew was that a miraculous being had suddenly lit the world with a new radiance, and was now opening doors and inviting him to dazzling prospects. He felt at once marvellously confident, and desperately humble. Never had mistress a more docile pupil.

(Continued on page 265.)

JANE AUSTEN AND SCOTLAND.

By A. FRANCIS STEUART.

WHY was it that 'the Immortal Jane' was so fond of Scotland? (She confessed her reverence for Charles I. as 'he was a Stuart.') She was purely English herself, and (so far as we know) resident in the south of England for most of her life; yet it is difficult not to be struck with the numbers of Scottish names to be found in her novels. Taking them (leaving out just now her *Juvenilia*, so tardily published in June 1922) in their order, we find great differences. In *Sense and Sensibility* (originally written in a different form in June 1797, though not printed until 1811) there is no Scottish trace, unless 'my friend Elliot,' who is mentioned by the asinine Robert Ferrers, can be

considered as such—and Elliot is a name found not only on the Scottish Border but (as Eliot) in Devonshire also. In the next published book, *Pride and Prejudice*, one of our greatest classics, written in 1796-97, but not printed until 1813, we find no distinctively Scottish name; although, perhaps, that of the inimitable heroine, Elizabeth Bennet, might be so claimed or recognised. I fear the English will not give her up without a struggle, for after all there are English Bennets as well as Scottish ones. *Northanger Abbey*, written in 1798, and printed twenty years later, has only one Scottish name, that of the ladies Fraser, whereas *Mansfield Park* (printed in 1817) is full of

them. There we have the beautiful Miss Crawford and her all-conquering brother, niece and nephew of an admiral, who caused the heroine, Fanny Price, so many pangs; their sister, the kindly Mrs Grant, and their friends Miss Fraser and Lady Stornoway, who all have a part in this very English story; nor must we forget 'Mr Campbell'—the friend of William Pryce—who was 'a very well-behaved young man,' surgeon of the *Thrush* when she was anchored at Portsmouth.

Emma (printed in 1816) is free from all names save those of English origin; but *Persuasion* (not published till 1818), the last of these great novels, has as heroine the charming Anne Eliot (a name we have already commented on), her Scottish gardener, Mackenzie, and her distant and rather teasing cousin, Lady Dalrymple.

Among Jane Austen's characters, therefore, it is obvious that there are a good many who bear Scottish surnames, and when one thinks of this one cannot but wonder why. She was at Steventon or Bath, where the Scot was not then greatly *en évidence*, less so at Bath by far than the Irish fire-eater. One is forced to ask: was Jane Austen ever in Scotland? Once started, this idea grows when one peruses her *Juvenilia*.

The first of these, a burlesque—and excellent fun it is—called *Love and Freindship*, which appears to have been finished on 13th June 1790, shows a knowledge of Scotland which is surely more than could be given by a perusal of the book, *Gilpin's Tour to the Highlands*, mentioned in the text. The heroine, after a series of wonderful adventures, finds herself in Scotland staying with 'MacDonald.' Turned out of MacDonald Hall eventually for inducing his daughter to jilt 'Graham' and elope to the unnecessary Gretna Green with the penniless Captain M'Kenrie, she and her friend witness the deaths of their husbands in a carriage accident, and her friend's fainting on the damp sward leads to her dissolution and this admirable advice:

'My beloved Laura (said she to me a few hours before she died), take warning from my unhappy end and avoid the imprudent conduct which had occasioned it. . . . Beware of fainting fits. . . . My fate will teach you this. I die a martyr to my grief for the loss of Augustus. One fatal swoon has cost me my life. Beware of swoons, dear Laura . . . a frenzy fit is not one quarter so pernicious; it is an exercise to the body, and if not too violent is, I dare say, conducive to health in its consequences. Run mad as often as you chuse; but do not faint . . .'

The afflicted Laura then gets into a coach bound for Edinburgh, where she discovers all

her relations and friends; but it is the description of the coach's run which makes one wonder if the author had not an authority nearer first-hand than *Gilpin's Tour*. The narrative continues: 'My next enquiries were concerning Philippa and her Husband, the latter of whom, I learned, having spent all her fortune, had recourse for subsistence to the talent in which he had always most excelled, namely, Driving, and that having sold everything which belonged to them except their Coach, had converted it into a stage, and in order to be removed from any of his former Acquaintance, had driven it to Edinburgh, from whence he went to Sterling every other day. . . . It has only been to throw a little money into their Pockets (continued Augusta) that my Father has always travelled in their Coach to view the beauties of the Country since our arrival in Scotland—for it would certainly have been much more agreeable to us to visit the Highlands in a Post-chaise than merely to travel from Sterling to Edinburgh every other Day in a crowded and uncomfortable Stage.'

Laura ultimately settles in the North, 'in a romantic Village in the Highlands of Scotland.' Philippa paid 'the debt of nature,' but her husband 'still continues to drive the Stage-Coach from Edinburgh to Sterling.'

Although *Love and Freindship* shows considerable knowledge of Scotland, the next work in the *Juvenilia*, called *Lesley Castle*, and dated 1792, in a series of letters shows even more. In it we find that Jane Austen knew that there were two universities at Aberdeen—a rare piece of special information, which suggests that she may have been there. Then this description of the Misses Lesley (in one of their letters) shows, perhaps, a first-hand knowledge of Scottish society:

'While our father is fluttering about the streets of London, gay, dissipated, and Thoughtless at the age of 57, Matilda and I continue secluded from Mankind in our old and Mouldering Castle, which is situated two miles from Perth on a bold and projecting Rock, and commands an extensive view of the Town and its delightful Environs. But tho' retired from almost all the World (for we visit no one but the M'Leods, the M'Kenzies, the M'Phersons, the M'Cartneys, the M'Donalds, the M'Kinnons, the M'Lellans, the M'Kays, the Macbeths, and the Macduffs) we are neither dull nor unhappy.'

In short, one cannot help wondering whether, sometime before 1790, the author was not in Scotland on a tour or a visit. Perhaps this paper may stimulate more research into the meagre details of Jane Austen's life, and if it even produces some more fragments—hitherto neglected—from her accomplished pen, it will not have been written in vain.

'DOWN UNDER.'

By WILLIAM D. BEATTIE.

I

SHE was busy rubbing the key-like opener of a discarded sardine tin on a stone. 'She' was just a girl who had been gracing this old mud-ball for a period of nineteen years and two months, and she was fashioning a rough needle from the dud material of the opener.

The mango-tree under which she sat was liberally festooned with that potato-like fruit you can at times detect in a bottle of chutney; but the said fruit still lacked that beer-blossom hue it would eventually sport when ripe. The mango-tree occupied part of a Chinaman's garden, now derelict, and a few such trees were about the only evidence that it had ever existed. Certainly some white sticks stood by the edge of the creek—dead orange and custard-apple trees.

Five years before the beginning of this yarn, David Grayson, on the death of his wife, had thrown up his job as a gamekeeper in that county of lakes and fells, Westmorland, sold up his home, and with Dinah, his only chick, who had just left school, set out for Australia. Ever since he was a lad, he had cherished a hope that some day he would put a strangle-hold on that wanderlust which for years had lost him a lot of sleep o' nights. Of a highly superstitious nature, he attributed to the finger of Destiny many signs and portents revealed to him in his nightly wanderings through the coppices of his native county, and Australia was ever mixed up with his musings. The death of his wife and helpmeet had left him with less desire than ever to continue earning bread for himself and Dinah in surroundings every lane and hedgerow of which reminded him of a happy married life now gone for ever.

Five hard, lean years had followed, and now on the Palmer goldfield, he was trying his luck on a—as yet—thin streak from which he had obtained colours in the pan.

It had been a long and arduous journey for both of them from Mareeba. His belief was that somewhere in the rocky heart of the sub-tropical land he had chosen for his wanderings lay, as yet undiscovered, a quick fortune in the form of a rich strike of yellow gold.

Dinah, just fourteen when her father brought her out here, was thoroughly domesticated, and could cook and bake as well as any woman in Kirkby Lonsdale. Nevertheless, many evidences of a nature swayed by romance could hardly escape the eye of even a casual observer. For weeks before the eventful Saturday on which they left Liverpool, her dreams had been disturbed by vivid scenes, in which lions, tigers, bushrangers, and native bears figured largely—

in reality, the first three as dead as the dodo in Australia, and the native bear about as ferocious as a pink-eyed rabbit gorged with dandelion.

Five years 'humping her swag' had opened Dinah's eyes to many realities, albeit she still retained many evidences of that natural charm so innate, shall we say, in most girls reared among the rugged beauties of a Westmorland dale. She still cherished the little Bible presented to her by her Sunday-school teacher before leaving England, and as she now sat preparing to sew the edges of a few corn sacks together, to make a roof for the rough 'humpy' her father had constructed, it lay open on an empty kerosene tin beside her. Her bare arms were bronzed, but hardly proof against the onslaughts of those nippy little ants, the bane of bush life. Round her neck she wore a double row of crimson-bodied, black-tipped 'giddy giddies'—bush pearls—she had gathered and strung before they set into that marble hardness which now characterised them. Ofttimes as she lay in her blanket under the starry canopy, with the five stars of the Southern Cross low down in the sky, she recollected the old Westmorland legend anent the misfortunes that would surely follow and dog the footsteps of anyone foolish enough to wear pearls in bed:

Pearls on the pillow, the wearer will soon
Meet the same fate as the man in the moon—

and on one occasion when she failed to remove hers, the dismal croakings of a pair of mope hawks kept her awake half the night.

It was a beautiful though hot afternoon, for old Sol was keeping the thermometer steady at 95 degrees in the shade. Motionless in the creek—except at intervals when, with his long beak, he harpooned a fish—an ibis stood. A mob of lean cattle, tired of wandering in search of a few blades of grass in the blackened tracks of numerous bush-fires, pulled wearily at the spiky lower fronds of a pandanus-tree. The delicate fragrance of a blossoming cork-tree was a welcome change from the everlasting smell of eucalyptus. The sheen of the evergreen trees dotting the bush landscape, and suggesting a plentiful supply of water, was illusory. Tap roots must penetrate to a depth of forty or fifty feet before reaching the water-line, and in the numerous caves, common where limestone bluffs rear their jagged heads, solid roots like long sinuous snakes could be found a hundred feet in length. No rain had fallen for several months, and the dead spear-grass was like tinder. A carelessly thrown match meant disaster, quick and certain, from fire.

Presently, four dull explosions warned her

that her father had finished work, for he would not descend his mine into the fumes of fuse and gelignite again that day. In a quarter of an hour—his claim was a bare half-mile away—David Grayson would come into camp, perhaps hopeful, perhaps despairing, to partake of his humble supper. Dinah brewed the tea in the 'billy,' put a half-moon piece of damper on the improvised table, and salvaged the tin of 'Nestlé's' from its watery jacket. Stores were running short, but the pack camels would be up shortly, when they could be replenished. Her father 'cooeed' when he came in sight, and Dinah ran down to the creek to meet him. With hammer and shovel he pulverised a few pieces of quartz; then, with that peculiar jerky semi-circular motion of the pan essential to carry off the mullock, he proceeded to take a sample.

Dinah watched the interesting process keenly, and noted the changing expressions on her father's face. 'It'll run two ounces, lass,' he said, 'and the lode is five inches wide.'

That night she sang for her father after supper, and the kookaburras heartily joined in.

II.

Wafted on the gentle westerly breeze, the 'chug-chug' of an oil-engine could be faintly heard. Lately the Queensland Government had begun diamond-drilling, in the hope that some day they would be able to announce a rich find in that old and now practically abandoned gold-field tucked away in the heart of the Cape York peninsula. In former days 'Chinks' to the number of thirty thousand or more had furrowed the surface with varying success, and as the tin-scratchers say, 'Where there's some, there's a lot.'

The East Lancashire syndicate, in whose interests Dick Hargreaves was now 'fossicking' on the tableland between Herberton and Forsayth, could not have chosen a better man for the job. He had 'all his wits about him.' He was twenty-seven now, and this little jaunt to spy out the land was all to his liking. He saw the Barron Falls from a different standpoint than that of most people who went to Kuranda for that purpose. Niagara had been harnessed without losing much of its grandeur from a tourist's point of view, and here in North Queensland a whole country's development was being sacrificed in deference to the whims of certain people who, basing their objections on what they knew about municipal gas-works, mistakenly thought that a hydro-electric installation would probably be of the same form of architectural beauty.

The climate round about Innisfail might have been modelled on that of Manchester in the matter of humidity, and Dick foresaw that the few mills at present squeezing sticky juice out of sugar-cane would in the near future be

dwarfed by others, whose looms perhaps would be weaving the bags to put the sugar in. Thousands of acres 'out-back' between Cloncurry and Chillagoe were, in his opinion, eminently suitable for cotton cultivation—so fertile that a pocket-knife stuck in the ground at night would be found sprouting in the morning!—and his opinion was based on experience gained in both Egypt and Alabama. The route of the projected north-to-south line would now almost certainly cut this belt of country, and as he expressed it in the words of the old song, 'Everything in the garden is lovely.'

He had heard a deal of talk from time to time about the mysterious rites practised by the peninsula aborigines, and he made up his mind that a detailed report to his firm in the 'Cold Country' on cotton-growing possibilities could wait until he had gratified, if possible, an overwhelming desire to witness a real fire-waltzing, blood-christening corroboree. The natives were reported to be friendly, and ordinarily one didn't get many opportunities of shooting them. If he was discovered prying into secrets guarded with almost masonic stringency, things might be different.

That's how he came to be within a few inches of a ricocheting bullet from Dinah's .32 Winchester. She often went after kangaroos, wallaroos, 'possums, and such like vermin, and heredity had a good deal to do with the fact that she was such a good shot for a woman. After all, she couldn't be expected to know that this particular dum-dum would pass through the left ear of a big 'roo she aimed at and cannon off the trunk of a lordly ironbark. If the faintest idea that a horseman was anywhere in the vicinity had struck her, she wouldn't have 'loosed off.' As it was, they were both startled, and when Dick galloped forward and touched his 'Stetson,' Dinah was profuse with apologies.

To say that he was agreeably surprised to find what he then regarded as a pretty parcel of lost luggage out there in the bush doesn't require a paragraph to itself. He didn't fall in love with her straight away, as he should have done if the Great War hadn't made the modern young man averse to falling anywhere, but he got as far as the admiring stage when she invited him with true bush hospitality to have a bit of 'tucker.' He was both hungry and thirsty, for he had ridden at least thirty miles since leaving the last cattle-station, and he made sad inroads into a hot flap-jack she baked for him on the charcoal when they got back to her father's camp.

As they ate they talked quite rationally, without a semblance of shy looks or blushes. But destiny was at work, unsuspected by either of them, and when our ends are being shaped like that—well, if you've ever seen that famous film, *The Taxi-driver of Tahiti*, you'll understand.

During the course of the meal Dinah told Dick of her father's bit of luck, and he expressed a keen desire to have a look at the show. He took the gear off his nag, hobbled it, and let it go. Dinah knew every foot of the way to the little oblong shaft her father put so much faith in. They went leisurely, for Dick had decided to stay for the night in the vicinity of the Graysons' camp. Both had noted the dull boom of mining shots, shortly after starting out, but they little suspected the awful tragedy which awaited their discovery on arrival at the mine!

David Grayson had rammed home four full charges of soap-like 'fracture,' lit the fuses, and, as is usual, was losing no time in widening the distance between himself and the coming eruption, when Fate took things in hand. Another yard and he would have been out of the mine and danger. But, alas! crude mining-ladders cannot be depended upon. Snap went a rung, and backwards went a hapless victim into that spluttering hell!

They found him there, and Dinah bore the cross of her orphanhood with a fortitude born of a sure hope of resurrection, accepting her companion's kindly spoken words of comfort with a thankful heart that God in His mercy had sent her practical human helpfulness in her time of greatest need.

Next day Dick took a shovel, and while Dinah, between her tears, read passages from her Bible, he filled in the earth so laboriously excavated, only a few days before, by that now shattered remnant of humanity underneath.

III.

The rapidity with which events had occurred in the last few days had left one definite resolve in the mind of Dick. His chivalrous Lancashire nature rebelled at the idea of leaving this pathetic little slip of a woman, now bereft of her natural protector, exposed to the many dangers he felt she must inevitably encounter alone in such wild surroundings. Keen disappointment possessed him at the curtailment of his search for adventure, with its possible chance of exciting incidents, but somehow this newer development gave him a greater amount of compensatory satisfaction. Had it been possible for an outsider to observe the many little attentions bestowed upon Dinah at this period, 'putting two and two together' would have been an easy task.

With perfect frankness he told her of his intentions, but Dinah was game, and ridiculed the idea that any harm could come to her if left. The camel teams would be up soon with provisions, and she would then decide what to do. Nevertheless, that acquired *bonhomie* she was accustomed to adopt with stray prospectors generally was beginning to give way to a feeling of shyness and reserve in the presence of her

companion. She allowed him to mix the cream of tartar and soda when a damper had to be baked, and the filling of the water-bags he took upon himself. She was aware of his purpose in undertaking this unofficial expedition far north of the Mitchell River, and her fears for his safety were increased tenfold by the appearance, passing south, of numerous small parties of blacks. The number of half-roasted porcupines they carried convinced her, from former acquaintance with such unmistakable signs, that preparations for a 'Grand Corroboree' were afoot. This knowledge was perhaps the deciding factor in allowing herself to be persuaded at last to accompany Dick back to civilisation. They left the old camp a little before noon, taking with them only absolutely necessary things, and even then Dick's horse was obviously overloaded.

Dinah, being used to bush life, proved a better walker than Dick, and he was glad, after travelling some fifteen miles, when the position of the sun warned them that time for making camp had arrived. After a frugal meal—all meals are frugal in the bush—they sat chatting, till suddenly an ominous sound Dinah knew to be the beating of tom-toms brought their conversation to an abrupt termination.

These days any one looking for trouble has no need to hire an aeroplane, and as Dick, telling Dinah to stay where she was, rushed through the undergrowth in the direction from which the sound came, he was in the way of proving the dictum.

A lurid glow in the gathering dusk lit up the sky, indicating where the circus was situated; the red-hot stones were being prepared for the fire-waltzing, and the cullet for the rib-scarifying ceremony, to be performed on all successful candidates for what passes in aboriginal morality for matrimony, was being dumped at the feet of the chief initiator.

'There was a sound of revelry by night' right enough, and as Dick shinned up a convenient tree he didn't intend missing much of the 'goings on.' Two things he was unaware of—one was the playful habit these natives have of making untenable the surrounding trees by installing live tiger-snakes among the foliage, in case any 'Peeping Toms' might be away from Coventry; and the other that Dinah had disobeyed his strict injunctions about staying in camp, and was at the moment hiding round the base of the tree he occupied. Few white men have ever witnessed a 'Grand Corroboree' and lived to give an account of what they saw. Rattling skeletons have been discovered in the remote bush country, transfixed through the eye sockets with native spears to trees, at the foot of which five peculiar stepping-stones have been laid in zig-zag angles.

From the vantage-point where Dick was, the most remarkable circumstance to him was the lavish display of colour on everything and every-

body within the magic circle. German colonisation in the neighbouring island of New Guinea had resulted in an enormous increase in the export of synthetic dye stuffs to this part of the world, and certain chiefs of tribes were known to be waxing fat. A spirit of emulation in the matter of showy daub worship could easily be pandered to here, and the rest can be left to the imagination of those accustomed to the methods adopted by what modern commercialism regards as 'pushing young men.'

Dick observed with what meticulous care not a few of the foot-roasting brigade negotiated the hot stones, and thought what perfect demonstrators of that modern slogan 'Safety first' they would have made. A craving some people display to view forbidden things from a higher pedestal than their fellows proved Dick's undoing. He clutched at a branch above him, and a six-foot rattler obligingly did the hypodermic part of the business.

Dinah guessed the reason of his sudden appearance on his back at her feet, and on her examining his right wrist her worst fears were confirmed.

Enjoining haste but strict silence, she crept back to camp with him, and it may safely be chronicled here that had it not been for her knowledge of how to proceed in cases of snake-bite, Dick Hargreaves would have been called to his fathers that night. Tightly she bound the arm below the elbow with handkerchiefs; then, fishing out from the pack a 'bushman's friend' outfit, she scarified the wound, and as the blood ceased to flow, applied the antidote liberally. Arranging his sleeping-bag, she bade him lie down and keep as still as possible. It is surprising what a strong man will quietly undergo when it comes to a case of mothering.

Dinah fed and watered the horse, for it was not good policy to let him wander away in the bush that night; then, taking up a position by the side of her patient, she sat anxiously awaiting that gentle sleep to overtake him which would herald to her the joyful intelligence that all danger was past. Presently, deep and regular breathing made her aware that that desirable stage had been reached. Wrapping her blanket round her, she kept her lonely vigil—and who can say what channels her thoughts ran into at this time?—until far into the night, when she, too, fell into fitful slumber.

IV.

As the first long slanting rays of the sun, like myriad searchlights, appeared through the trees in the morning, Dinah awoke to find Dick, very much better, quietly watching her, his eyes betraying something more than a fulsome gratitude. In that moment she felt the awakening of a newer, more sacred, and tender passion, and her whole being thrilled under the influence of

that mysterious magnetic feeling, the sex arc of love.

After breakfast, in answer to her inquiry as to his fitness to travel, Dick declared himself well enough to start, and though their progress was retarded in the forenoon, they luckily struck a cattle-station, where he purchased a pack-horse and saddle. They now took turns at walking and riding, and in this way made long forced marches, eventually striking the coast near Townsville.

Sydney harbour at nine o'clock in the morning presents one of the most delightful kaleidoscopic views to be found anywhere in the two hemispheres. Immediately on passing the 'Heads' from the open sea the voyager becomes aware of a striking similarity to a Japanese picture. The wooded knolls gently sloping down to the water's edge on either side, the patches of red and white showing where charming bungalows peep out above the greenery, the numerous jetties from which ferry-boats, suggesting amphibious tram-cars, cross and recross to Circular Quay—all go to make up a picture lovely in the extreme.

Sydney with its harbour may be likened to a gigantic shallow bowl of roses, their green stems immersed in a central pool of crystal water, across which many-hued butterflies flit in the sunshine. The coasting steamer, from whose deck Dick and Dinah viewed it, had made an uneventful trip from Townsville; and now, as they made their way towards the gangway to go ashore, Dinah linked her arm in that of her companion. She felt no qualms of regret that she had yielded to his persuasive entreaties to return home to England in his company.

During the long trek overland from the Palmer to Townsville many incidents had occurred which strengthened the trust she placed in him. A vague kind of feeling that somehow she belonged to him, and that some day he would claim her as his own, was sweet—ah, sweet, indeed!

Need we dwell upon the degree of happiness which gave impulse to all Dick's actions at this time? His mission to Australia had been gloriously satisfactory. He came to investigate and report on the country as a cotton-growing centre, and had discovered a diamond in the process. To become the sole custodian of such a gem became a feverish obsession. His crown of happiness could not be complete without this pure crystal to adorn it. Unknown to Dinah, he had negotiated the sale of that far-away gold location for a sum of £5000, and a stipulation that the new owners would not disturb that hallowed spot so humbly indicated by a little cross. The purchase-price he put in her name in the bank, and a visit to a shipping-office resulted in two berths being secured on a liner bound for London. There yet remained one momentous item to be settled, and as they sat

together on the veranda of their hotel a few days before they were due to sail, Dick marshalled his forces before the citadel, and the citadel fell to his impassioned onslaught with an unconditional 'Yes.' Just another of those sweet surrenders in which the clash of arms precedes the one supreme moment of human ecstasy.

Ever since that historic occasion in the Garden of Eden, when woman first dabbled in the fruit business, the same sense of a sad lack in the feminine wardrobe has arisen immediately she decides to go into partnership with a man. And so it was in this case. Dick interpreted his companion's many wistful peeps, as they passed certain of Sydney's fashionable emporiums, to the same hunger trait, and diplomatically approached the subject by suggesting that she should replenish her somewhat depleted outfit by the addition of a few 'creations' in readiness for the voyage.

Many men exhibit an excellent taste on the rare occasions when they are permitted, in addition to the time-honoured but somewhat dubious pleasure of footing the bill, to decide what best suits the particular form of those most dear to them. Here Dick scored heavily. Dinah had certain misgivings as she saw the parcels accumulate, but when they reached the pay-desk, and Dick, handing her a new cheque-book, proceeded

to instruct her how to draw one of those convenient adjuncts to modern business, signed with her own name, she felt some little explanation was due to her.

It would hardly seem necessary under the circumstances to go into detail as to the relative positions they occupied that evening in the palm court, while he enlightened her as to the facts of the sale of her late father's claim. Suffice it to say that whispers, interspersed with suspicious sounds that are not recognised as orthodox language, were found to be quite sufficient as a means of conveying the information.

The little church in the Westmorland valley, where, on St Valentine's day, some weeks later, they were made man and wife, had never in the memory of the oldest inhabitant contained a more representative congregation of that fair county's inhabitants. A bonnier bride never nestled closer to a more handsome bridegroom, as they dodged the shower of confetti and rice thrown with such hearty goodwill as they emerged from the porch.

And now, in her luxurious home, as she occupies many a quiet moment sewing, Dinah's eyes take on a far-away expression, the little garment drops in her lap, and she again visualises a lonely grave in a far-away land, not far removed from a pathetic little 'humpy' that never had a roof on.

'HONEY.'

DURING many years' residence on the Benue, the great eastern affluent of the mighty river Niger, I encountered on several occasions in the course of my travels about the country, on foot and horseback, attacks by wild bees, which, though troublesome, and sometimes painful, were commonplace, and 'all in the day's work.' Only once, however, did I experience the particular brand of misadventure described below, and I never heard of any one else having done so.

In the flood season one travelled on the Benue by steam launches of various types and sizes, but in the dry season on low water only the lightest draught craft could pass above Ibi, and the usual type was a steel canoe, or a very light, flat-bottomed barge, some fifty feet in length, and drawing less than one foot of water, undecked, and roofed over, leaving space at each end for three or four punters with light poles. At low river this mode of progression is satisfactory, for the poling craft moves easily along in the shoal water round the great sandbanks. But on the occasion under notice I was travelling by 'poler' because no steamer was available, the rains had not long ended, and the river had not fallen sufficiently for poling work. The consequence was that paddles had often to be used instead of poles, and the upward-bound

craft frequently had to hug a bushy bank to avoid deep water and strong currents; in some cases actually hauling by hand and rope, slowly and with difficulty, round a point of rock, jungle, or high grass, to which, normally, on low river, it would not have been near.

The party consisted of two canoes: in one, myself (the only white), my three or four native servants, my stores and belongings, and the crew; in the other, the crew, half-a-dozen native passengers, and some stores. Slowly up the river we proceeded day by day, camping at night, as usual, at some suitable spot.

One forenoon, the other canoe being half a mile ahead and out of sight, we were hauling round a grassy point, when my head 'boy,' a youth named Issa (but generally called 'Yam-head'), who had been my *fidus Achates* for some years, suddenly yelled out, 'Honey! Honey live for come!' Interpreted, this meant, 'Bees are upon us!' Instantly I snatched a mosquito-net that, contrary to custom, by the merest chance in the world, was on the floor beside my chair, having been left out of my bedding-valise that morning to be mended, as mosquitoes had interfered with my last night's rest. Drawing this all over me and my wicker chair, I sat steady to await events, and before I had com-

pleted the manœuvre bees enveloped the barge, and pandemonium reigned. Whether we had disturbed the angry swarm, or whether the barge ahead (which never saw a bee) had done so, I never knew.

The crew, practically naked, dashed overboard into the water, and my boys, all but one, did the same. Some of them struggled ashore into the long grass, hoping to dodge the bees there, but to judge from their screams and shouts they were disappointed. The remainder, in the water, clung by one hand to the gunwale of the barge, raising their heads only to snatch a breath. The barge, uncontrolled, sheered off into the current, and drifted slowly down the river, here some half a mile wide, the bees in full command, with half-a-dozen wretches in the water hanging on and screaming 'blue murder,' as they received the bees' stings on the head and exposed arm.

The one occupant of the barge beside myself was my head boy, who, stripped to the waist, and in spite of all I could say to him, with a bath-towel fought the bees to keep them from settling on his master. Surprised by cries behind me, I turned carefully in my chair, to see my smallest boy, who had lately been to England with me, fling himself out of a small cupboard over the side into the water. Unknown to me, on the sudden invasion of the bees, he had shut himself in, but the invaders had found a crevice and turned him out. After some time, perhaps ten minutes, Yamhead could stand his agonies no longer, and, half-blinded by stings, he followed the others into the water.

As we drifted down the river to the accom-

paniment of the screams of the natives and the buzzing of the infuriated bees, with nothing in sight ashore or afloat, and I was wondering how long this could go on, and how many of my companions would fail to reappear, a sound behind me caused me to turn and see the cook under a small tarpaulin cover. He was blinded by stings, and had crept from the rear end of the barge to say that he had found another mosquito curtain of mine, and might he use it? The bees now began to thin off, and the barge, having drifted for perhaps half-an-hour, and travelled over a mile, grounded on a sandbank in mid-stream.

We now were able to take stock of damages, and collect survivors. The bees that my boy had brought down lay on the floor of the barge thick enough to be swept up with a broom. We found a small canoe on the sandbank, and sent it off to the main bank for the men who had got ashore. The final muster in the afternoon showed all present but my small boy, who had not been seen after going overboard. Poor little beggar, he could not swim, and he probably made a meal for the 'crops.' Every member of the party except the writer was badly hurt, two of them seeming so near collapse that I thought they would die in the night. The only treatment for them that I could devise was copious bathing in warm water and 'Condy's.'

After a night's rest, however, camping on the bank where we had grounded, we were able in the morning, with no one actually disabled, though with most of the party showing heads of curious sizes and shapes, to continue our journey up-river with no further signs of 'honey.'

C R A S K I E.

PART III.

V.

FORTY-EIGHT hours is an interval of time which, according to circumstance, may seem exactly long or alarmingly short. With Craskie, pottering round his place in a black fury of humiliation, time halted and galloped alternately. It halted when his resolution rose again within him, and it seemed that of all things he most desired to have Sarah's formidable figure before him for a second round; it galloped when he tried to formulate his phrases for that encounter, and realised that he had none. In such moments as these he heard Sarah's step on the path, and dithered with apprehension.

What ill-natured demon had inspired the woman that night? If she had known his plans, and had been levelling a counter-attack, she could hardly have been more adroit. And the bit of it was that he had missed the op-

portunity she had given him. He had more or less promised to consider her proposals in regard to those cursed attics; at any rate, he had not—as he should have done—scouted the whole scheme, with reasons. Having made so colossal a blunder, how on earth was he to redeem the position now? It had been bad before; now, as a result of that fatal interview, it was infinitely worse.

The second day wore on, and still no Sarah. Craskie found himself developing new symptoms. He was cross to the hands; he gave many and contradictory orders; he fidgeted. He developed a distemper entirely new to his comfortable vitality—'nerves'; and the farm knew it.

Late on the second afternoon, partly to fill in the time, and partly to seek seclusion where he could find no one to quarrel with, he climbed to the top of the house; and, in imitation of Sarah, went 'ower the top attics.' Despite himself, he became interested. Sarah was right;

there were certainly two good rooms here. The flooring was sound; the place only needed windows. Then suddenly his eye fell on something that brought his mother back to him more clearly than anything had done for months. It was a family heirloom—an immense flat, 'hairy' trunk. Craskie had rarely, if ever, seen the unlovely thing without his mother; for a moment, as his eyes fell on it, it was as if she appeared before him in the room. His resolution quailed again.

He sat down on the trunk miserably, and then his eye lit on something else. Close to his hand, proclaiming by their dustless condition that they had lain there but a few days, were a tape-measure and a stub of thick carpenter's pencil. Relics these, manifestly, of Sarah's late reconnaissance.

Craskie was suddenly infuriated. He made a closer inspection of the room; sure enough, on the sloping boards of the roof he came upon great scores and crosses made with the carpenter's pencil, jottings of measurements taken with the tape. For a frantic instant he was speechless.

'The auld——!' Craskie's epithet was more forcible than polite. 'She was pretty sure of herself'. Ay!'

Human nature is an odd thing, and reacts to unorthodox motives. It was natural and prudent, it was even competent and thoughtful, of Sarah to make these measurements before launching her proposals upon him; yet to Craskie it seemed nothing but the essence of impudence. It was sheer, concentrated Sarah Beggary! It crystallised all his feelings of fury of the past two days. It was unbearable. So sure she had been that she would get whatever she wanted, so complacently persuaded that she was 'settled.' The house was hers, was it, all ready to make and remake as she thought fit? Oho! was it, then? 'Settled' she had thought herself; Craskie would 'settle' her. Ay!

He stamped out of the attic, kicking the hairy trunk as he went, filled this time with a resolve that would not fail.

In the handsome dining-room the disapproving stare of his ancestors met him again, but this time they were powerless to affect him. 'Glower awa'!' said Craskie, relapsing, as was his habit in moments of stress, into the broader Doric—'glower awa'; ye'll nae glower there much longer. Doon the feck o' ye comes the morn!'

The amazed stare of the 'girl' bringing in his tea suggested to him that he was acting like a lunatic, but his elation would not let him be quiet. 'A grand day, Jeanie!' he said affably, and realised, from a belated glance at the window, that it was pouring rain.

'It is that,' stammered the terrified maiden, and fled.

Craskie was still at his tea when the scrunch

of wheels going round to the back announced the return of Sarah. He went out to meet her in the hall, hot for battle, delightedly conscious that he was not afraid of her in the least. There she was in her sombre black—large and square and formidable; yet he wasn't afraid of her. Not one bit!

But the decencies had to be observed. He wanted to shout out at her, 'Sarah, yer time's up. I'm going to marry Peggy Maitland.' That would have been grand. But there was Sarah, dripping wet from her long moorland drive, still in her bonnet and cloak, and there was that daft-like 'girl' peering apprehensively from the kitchen. No, the moment was not yet.

'Sic a night it's come on, Mr John.' Sarah was unruffled as ever.

'Ay!' Craskie feigned commonplace speech. 'Awa' up, and change yer things.' He struggled for a moment; yes, he could at least make a move; could at least fire off the first gun. He would tell her he had something special to say to her after supper. The words were trembling on his not over-ready lips when the diabolical woman thwarted him again.

'Ay, I'm fair drookit. I'll see ye after supper, if ye're no' busy. I've something special-like to say the night.'

Was there ever such a woman for taking the wind out of one's sails! *She* had something special-like to say, forsooth; what about *him*? But she was sailing away up the broad staircase, and Craskie was sure the 'girl' was watching him through the hinges of the kitchen door. He went back into the dining-room, and slammed the door behind him.

Confound the woman! But he was forewarned now; she would not get the first word again. He would watch it.

Yet he failed again; for when, after supper, she came into the room magnificently refreshed and resplendent, Craskie was still bogging over the words of his opening; while her whole face, walk, atmosphere, expressed a prepared gambit. He was unready; she was not only ready, but brimming, bursting, coached and rehearsed to the last trick of tone and accent. She got the first word again.

'Ye'll be wondering what it is I've to say t' ye. It's no' often that I've anything by-ordnar. But I have the night. . . . It's about thae attics.'

Craskie looked up, staggered. Had the woman no sense of decency? or, like many middle-aged spinsters, was she taking a craze about the things? He had to admit that the one was as improbable as the other. Then what next?

'The attics?' he repeated stupidly.

'Ay.' Sarah was quite evidently working out a prearranged scene. 'It's jist t' say that I'll no' be needin' them after a'. Little I thocht t' say that when I drove awa' frae this hoose. . . . Ye'll laugh at me, Craskie—an' weel ye may—

but the plain fact o't is—I'm gaun t' marry Johnny Tulloch!

The staggering fact that, for the first time in recorded history, Sarah had called him 'Craskie,' instead of 'Mr John,' so clouded Craskie's perceptions that he was almost unable to take in the even more annihilating balance of her speech. His mouth fell open under the golden moustache; above his rosy cheeks his eyes bulged at her like those of a man half-drowned. Sarah surveyed him complacently. She had set her scene, and her dramatic talent had its reward. She had brought down her house.

'Ye're t' marry Johnny Tulloch!' Craskie spluttered at last. 'Godsake, Sarah, that's'—he pulled himself together hastily—'that's jist grand!'

'It's no' for the grandness o' t' that I'm daein' t', said Sarah, candidly, 'but jist a' things considered. I telt ye Johnny sent word for me t' come up. When I got tae Drumbucket what think ye I found? Nae mair an' nae less than that Meg Tulloch's ta'en the mind at long last t' wed wi' yon M'Pherson, as she micht weel hae done thae ten years syne. Weel, ye see, there's Johnny wi' naebody t' keep hoose for him—an' him a through-other body as ony atween here an' Spey, as ye ken.'

'Ay!' said Craskie, breathing deeply.

'Weel, the lang an' the short o't wis that things hae fallen oot atween him an' me as I've telt ye. We've been lang aquent, an' I ken Johnny's faults, an' he kens mine. I dinna say it's a' jist as I wad hae chosen, but we maun jist mak' the best o' what we're given, an' nae girn ower what we canna get.'

At ordinary times Craskie's ready humour would have risen to the appreciation of this very practical bride. But to-night he was flabbergasted. 'Jist that,' he said. 'Weel, Sarah——' and floundered again.

'So there's jist the ae thing left,' said Sarah, drawing herself together for her curtain. 'Ye'll jist need to set tae't an' seek a wife for yersel'. There's mony wad be ready, I dinna doot.'

The humour of it took Craskie at last. To Sarah's astonishment, he burst into a roar of laughter. 'We'll see aboot that!' he bellowed. 'Ay! . . . A-hay!'

VI.

Craskie, feeling somehow that the kind gods had dealt with him more leniently than he had any reason to expect, lost little time. It was Thursday evening that Sarah Begg returned from Drumbucket; on the following market Tuesday, Craskie enlivened Brig o' Muir by giving out his engagement to Miss Peggy Maitland.

Brig o' Muir received the intelligence in its accustomed fashion. Maitland père went about his business looking sleepier and dreamier than ever; his wife, true to the tradition of her caste, made herself needlessly absurd by assuring all

and sundry that never was she so surprised and astounded in all her life—and so on, with variations. Peggy received congratulations with a demure pleasure, but without any pretence that the event was either unexpected or remarkable. Craskie, a jovial giant once more, stood many drinks, and faced salvos of badinage, not always in the best of all possible tastes. Sarah Begg did not appear; but Johnny Tulloch was there—and not a little annoyed with Craskie for so completely overshadowing his own little sensation.

Craskie knew himself that grand thing, the successful lover, and he presumed that the world of his acquaintance viewed him as such. He would have been undeceived could he have heard all that was said.

Mrs Lockie, a weight off her mind—she had not ruined the lassie's chances after all—burst into the kitchen of the Gilzean Arms and confronted her husband with the magnificent news: 'Craskie an' the lassie Maitland! What did I tell ye?'

'Ye auld wife!' said Lockie rudely. 'Ye've gotten a nerve. What did ye tell me? What did I tell you? I telt ye the man was brawly off wi' Sarah Begg t' see till him, an' wad hae nae thocht o' marryin' so lang as she was willin' tae bide. Nae mair he wad. But once she cudna bide wi' him, then, naiturally, it was a different maitter.'

His wife was too disgusted to reply. But Lockie would have found congenial company in a corner of the bar, where sat two old men, scrubbily bearded and with mean faces. They were not among the recipients of Craskie's bounty.

'It's fell odd,' said Mr Toddock of Shores. 'Jist the verra thing I was sayin' t' ye last Tuesday. He wud, an' he wudna. He cudna mak' up's mind. And sae it was made up for him.'

Mr Skinner of Louby made an interrogative noise.

'Wha by?' Mr Toddock made play with his pipe for the sake of effect. 'Wha but Sarah Begg? (Dod, Sandy, but I wudna be in Johnny Tulloch's shoon the day! Yon's the wumman!) Ye can see fine hoo it a' fell oot. Sarah was wantin' tae get fixed up wi' Johnny, but, bein' a dacent-like wumman, she felt she cudna think o' hersel' till she'd made a bit arrangement for yon muckle gowk, Craskie. So she thocht o' the lassie Maitland—an' rale suitable too, as I winna deny—and she jist girded at Craskie till she garred him tak' the plunge. Ay, man, Sandy, that's hoo it was, an' nae doot aboot it ava.'

Mr Skinner shot a sour look towards the successful lover; his cleft palate emitted an incomprehensible but doubtless concurrent response.

THE END.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

ONE of Robert Browning's best-remembered lines is that embodying the spring-time yearning: 'Oh, to be in England now that April's there!' He is abroad at the time when thus he sighs, and sighs, as I know by the experience of many Aprils, from the depth of his soul. Separate yourself from England on some holiday-mongering business in February or March, and it is another affair; but if for months, or a year, you have worked and striven, however finely to your spiritual and human good, in distant places, where there is not only a foreign race to mix with, but another class of civilisation, you know the aching that gnaws at the soul when April comes, and a ship going back to England looks into your foreign port. Browning knew that April, with the homeland greening in the quickened life of spring, the germinal, is the month for these aches abroad. Yet, since his time, much of life has changed. April for the many was then, perhaps, more fully laden with hope and inspiration; maybe the calendar was not marked at this stage with any sinister or doubtful note. The poet had for ever done with April, its showers and sunshine, its promise and encouragement, ere the famous Victorian nineties came in. He had been long asleep in the Poets' Corner at Westminster when the Boer War was waged, and the income-tax then rose for the first time to be a prime factor in all considerations of domestic economy, rising further in the Greater War to the gloomy tyranny of a keen oppression. In our changed years any small boy of a middle-class household, keeping a keen ear at breakfast and other times to utterances indicating the family preoccupations, can tell you that April in England now is pre-eminently the month for budgets and taxation, and is regarded accordingly with apprehension. Exiles for a short season may yearn for England when April comes; but in recent years I have been in various foreign parts where colonies of our country's new poor have assembled, and the people there, reading the newspapers, have felt in April that for some reasons it was well that England no longer was their official and taxable home.

The big budgets of April in latter years have had a great effect in disappointing hopes and promoting sadder pessimism. The speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is now searched hungrily for abolitions and reductions; in Browning's day even a poet might have read the budget orations for the flowers of rhetoric contained therein, for once upon a time lofty speeches, imbued with noble feeling and refined with knowledge and culture, were made in the House of Commons on budget days. Ingenious manipulations of the intricacies of finance were performed. Figures in masses sound like harsh discords among the smooth phrasing of oration; but form and style were always features of the budgets of that time, and, levies being small, they could be read in the papers afterwards with a certain intellectual enjoyment. Disraeli once said: 'I have had many gratifying moments in my life, but the proudest of them all—the one that thrilled me with a sense of power and achievement—was when I rose to make my first budget speech.' Gladstone's budget expositions were great. Lord Morley in his biography remarks that one who had listened to all the financiers from Peel downwards said that Peel's statements were ingenious, but dry, that Disraeli was clever but out of his element, that Wood was like a cart without springs on a heavy road, and that Gladstone was the only man who could lead his hearers over the arid desert, and yet keep them cheerful and lively and interested without flagging. The people were intensely interested in his exposition of the public balance-sheet as an intellectual effort, and Gladstone himself revelled in the gigantic exercise. He said to Sir Henry Taylor, 'For nine or ten months of the year I am always willing to go out of office, but in the two or three that precede the budget I begin to feel an itch to have the handling of it. Last summer I should have been delighted to go out, now I am indifferent; in February, if I live as long, I shall, I have no doubt, be loath; but in April quite ready again. Such are my signs of the zodiac.' That was in 1864, and now one remembers that Gladstone's first budget, produced in 1853, was marked by a crisis in regard to the income-tax, which was then an interloper in national finance, hurting little but regarded

with dislike and suspicion. How sweet and pretty was the situation then, the veritable crisis, as we, licking our wounds—as we shall have to lick them for a long time yet—regard it across the span of seventy years! For the point of the crisis was whether the tax was to be endured and made permanent or abolished. It was, as Morley wrote, the keystone of the budget. Gladstone determined to renew it for a period of seven years—for two years at sevenpence in the pound, for two years more at sixpence, and for the last three at fivepence—and by that time he hoped that parliament would be able to dispense with it. In the concoction of this mighty scheme he spent thirteen, fourteen, fifteen hours a day. If he must go out to dinner he would stay up till four in the morning working on his scheme. Do statesmen now exert so much energy, such dynamic force, as some did in those times which we are too much inclined to regard as having been soft? When Gladstone was striving thus he still gave a Latin lesson every day to his second son. Having his budget ready, he went to Buckingham Palace to propound its principles to Prince Albert, and then forthwith addressed the Cabinet for three hours upon the subject! Yet a modern Chancellor might with some reason say that they did not know what budgets were in those days. Certainly the people did not imagine what taxation might be, or, being the good Christians they were, they would have prayed fervently throughout the month of April for their poor posterity. Some of the old budget traditions still remain. A Chancellor now wears the very robe that his father, Chancellor too, girt upon him on the budget day, but the time of budgets of the old classic style has gone. Chancellors still have a way of making old-fashioned jokes in a clumsy attempt, as it seems, to lighten a sordid and oppressive business, like one who would display his humour at a family funeral. They follow a lead given in this direction once by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who told the House that cocoa was his favourite beverage, and that he never touched tea or coffee except to tax them. But these speeches now are largely in the nature of lament, a dirge. They are not admired for their beauty of expression or thought. The fashion for classical quotation has disappeared; there has even been some wonderment lately when the Premier has ventured upon a slight revival.

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Yet it may be doubted if the common people like ourselves are disturbed so much about the budget and taxation as once they were. Iron has entered into the soul of the taxpayer. He has become careless and indifferent to what were aforetime prime considerations with him, and he has cultivated

a new philosophy, the essence of which is a greatly diminished belief in the future. It follows that, in part at least, he abandons the principle of thrift, since it hangs upon the future, and holds small meaning without it. The common people are banking upon no distant future. The new philosophy has it that money is to spend and to spend quickly, and with a diminished care for the wisdom of the spending. He who saves, who tries to provide for that old proverbial 'rainy day,' is regarded as scarcely more intelligent than the petty old miser who starved himself, and for the greater security of his hoard kept it in coin in a stocking or some other convenient receptacle. And provision for the next generation, and so forth? It is impossible to envisage even dimly the conditions of life in the next generation. To provide for it according to the old habit, is it not to be likened to planning for a sojourn upon the moon by a party of persons contemplating travelling there by such firework methods as are announced by the Americans from time to time? Messages from Bechuanaland lately have informed us of the remarkable discovery of the skull of a man-like ape, who must have lived about five million years ago, and is considered, in quarters where the science of anthropology is studied and investigated, to have been something in the nature of 'the missing link.' Professor Dart says that he fills up the gap between the most primitive men and the most advanced apes; that this creature of Taungs was not of the human species, but yet a much more intelligent being than the gorilla or the chimpanzee; that he could not talk, but that his brain was advanced in the direction required in a creature whose descendants would attain ultimately the power of communicating with others by speech.

* * *

Now a certain provision for the future, which after all means thrift, is an instinct of human nature. The more conscious the living thing, the more intelligent and reasoned is the system and perhaps the extent of thrift. Some of the instincts and efforts of the creature of Taungs, emerging from the beast to the freedom and responsibility of man, must have been towards the future. Sir Arthur Keith, in his remarkable book on *The Antiquity of Man*, says in reference to such discoveries as that of the Piltdown man, that these ancient beings 'must have been deeply moved by a faith in things unseen and firmly convinced of a human existence untrammelled by the flesh.' Perhaps the creature was not old enough for the exercise of thrift, since one of the early calculations made from his teeth was that he was probably not more than six years of age. But *Australopithecus Africanus*, as he is about

to be named five million years after his time, must have had many wits about him, and was evidently much advanced upon the apes. He had a long bone down his nose, which is important when ranking him, and a forehead and chin approximating to those of a man. We may know later what his brain capacity was. Not equal to that of a human being certainly, but perhaps approaching it. A thousand cubic centimetres is reckoned to be the minimum brain volume to satisfy the needs of existence as carried on by human beings, while the biggest brain of the chimpanzee occupies 490 cubic centimetres, and of a gorilla 620. The ancient man of the Piltown fame, whose skull was found down in Sussex in 1912, had a brain capacity of about 1300 cubic centimetres, and he had quite evidently risen to the human stage long before and was engaged upon some effort towards civilisation. This and the famous Rhodesian skull and now the Taungs skull constitute three prime evidences so far—by odd accidents of discovery vouchsafed to us—of the evolution of man in his earliest stages, the Piltown, of course, being far later than the Taungs, this difference representing perhaps an evolutionary process of millions of years in itself. Man, with science, can force his discoveries and inventions at almost any rate he pleases now. We discover and invent more in a year, or even in a week, than could our grandfathers in a lifetime; but when it is a question of pure nature and the living processes, the rate of change, slow and sure, cannot be disturbed by us. The stability of man in this respect is one of the exasperations of human existence. We fine men of the twentieth century can do many things in a day, but it may take another five million years to change us ourselves to the extent we are changed from Master Taungs. But change we shall if life goes on, and fancy, based on tendency and circumstance, forces the suggestion that it will be in the direction of less body and more mind; that the being of the future, towards whom we are half-way from Taungs, will be some ethereal thing with powers beyond our modern conception, beyond what we might now attribute to the gods. Having discovered and invented so much since this young century began, what cannot be done by human kind in five million years, the rate of progress being not the slow and steady arithmetical—seeming like a stodgy system that assumes all things will last, and there is time for everything—but geometrical intensified, strengthening its acceleration as the human system becomes capable of bearing more and more progress, until, as it seems to us, a kind of delirium may be approached? Would it not have been as easy for the young creature of Taungs, near the dawn of intelligence, to imagine the state to which his infinite posterity might ascend in five million years, as for us now to think of what

man may be so much farther on in time from the present day? Many civilisations may have risen, crashed, and disappeared; even it may be that human life in this or an advanced form may have surrendered to circumstance, sunk to disappearance and oblivion, and started again in a new process of evolution, which might not, and probably would not, take the line of Taungs and ourselves. Remember that the world was old when Master Taungs was born, and, if we think in terms of eternity, only a little while has lapsed since then. Taungs indeed might be said to have belonged to us. And he had much of our form, and had begun to walk in an upright posture. We should avoid the habit of exaggerating the idea of time, and thinking of these five million years as representing a long period, when, considered from what we might call the point of view of creation, they are hardly to be distinguished from a day, or the time occupied by a journey on some of our railways. If human life, and perhaps the world with it, became extinct, and then life germinated all afresh, it would take another accidental direction from that to which progress by innumerable chances has led us, and what then? Poor, vague speculations, but not entirely useless since they may tend to better our sense of proportion, the quality in which we all most fail.

* * *

One of the poorest features of Victorianism, in spite of its accentuated pose and its ostensible goodness—because of them, one might say—was its smug assumption that its present was wonderful in completeness, material, and moral. Its horizon was limited, its sense or instinct of security and endurance extraordinary. It would have pledged itself to its estimate of the appearance and condition of things ninety-nine years ahead, and could have assumed a steady continuance towards nine hundred and ninety-nine. It was capable of conjecturing whether women would have reverted then to crinolines and men to Dundreary whiskers. It was in this atmosphere that the doctrine of thrift was intensely propagated, and in an impressive degree acted upon; and, it might be added, it was in such an atmosphere, not entirely healthy to the soul, that were reared such heroes of thrift as Samuel Smiles proceeded to immortalise to the best of his ability. But I think from what I know of the early northern manufacturers—and by circumstances it is much—they were far less objectionable in the virtuous pose than their biographer pretended. Now, a year ago, when careful citizens, recognising that times and manners had, with good excuse, much changed in the last decade, were yet becoming alarmed at the persistence of what seemed excessive spending, a great banker, one of the Barclays, came upon the scene with an arresting state-

ment that 'free spending will improve the profits of trade, and lead to the greater adventure of capital, and a proportional increase in employment.' Other financial folk of lesser fame fastened quickly to this idea, and not only criticised thrift, but condemned it; nay, indeed, they roundly cursed it. One felt, on reading their condemnation, that the true thing to do with the contents of your child's money-box was to extract them, and buy therewith something out of Bond Street, the child being thus corrected for its sin of thrift. 'Why,' said one, 'the only real curse to the country is the miser;' and, said another, 'It is "easy come, easy go," and that it is which makes a nation happy and prosperous. I would like to see a further spread of the spending fever in Britain, and then there would be an automatic solution to our unemployment problem.' This, again, is such exaggeration as to be dangerous if taken seriously; but, along with time and circumstance, it does serve to shake some old standards of thrift, which themselves were evidently bad in their warping effects upon the spirit. The new generation may like the counsel given by Henry Ford, the American motor manufacturer, who, they should remember, is hardly to be considered disinterested; and, apart from superb business attributes, embraces some strange whimsicalities, which must place our faith in him on a lower stage than the highest. We still recall how, with grandiose intentions, he came to Europe a few years ago, on what was called 'a peace ship,' with the pious intention of stopping the war himself, by special arrangement with those he met. But, alas! the soldiers kept on fighting. Henry Ford now says this: 'Until he is forty, a man should be gaining experience; he should be learning all he can, particularly how to spend money. That is why I told you that the best advice I could give to a young man anxious to succeed is: Spend your money—on yourself; get all the experience you can. Don't try to save money and be a miser.' If Mr Ford should at any time encounter a ghost fresh out from its grave, presenting an attitude of violent anger and offensiveness, he will know, without the asking, that it is the wraith of old Samuel Smiles, too much disturbed for further rest by these appalling dicta.

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Governments have done little in recent years to restore the sense of thrift among the masses of the people. When one section lives on doles, and another is so much taxed that veritably it seems it must work hard for the means to pay its taxes, there is small place for thrift in thought or conduct. Perhaps governments cannot help themselves; it is hard to say. The whole idea of being and existence has changed as the result of the events of the last few years, and the new sense of the present is subtly strengthened by all

the anthropological and archæological discoveries and investigations that are made. A little thinking will suggest that the connection is much closer than might be assumed. One might almost say that the half-man of Taungs, who died so young, yet lived long enough to drive another nail into the coffin of thrift five million years afterwards; for, ask the spenders, the party of To-day, the Neo-Khayammmites, what shall it help to think of the next generation when it is so certain that the whole system of values, existence, and everything else will be changed, perhaps as the result of more wars, or even without them? To maintain a fortune now is to build on quicksands, they say. Five million years! What is the use of reckoning with time and existence? The actuaries can quote us average periods of life, but event and circumstance overcome them. Besides, the medical and other scientists are enormously keen upon the track of discoveries which they feel may greatly lengthen life, perhaps double or treble it, or very much more than that. How then about the next generation if the existing one continues with its mortal coil, and needs the means for its continuance and sustenance? The Neo-Khayammmites, believing only in To-day, and abandoning the old temples of thrift, have the worldly conviction that it is 'best to make sure,' for 'one never knows'—homely old platitudes containing mountains of cold, hard sense. That is why there are millions more of motor-cars on our roads than there were before the War, and why we may suspect the butcher's boy of an intended purchase, and why the traffic through London streets is so intense that there is talk of ripping up our parks for new and wider roads. The old idea was to save desperately in order to create a capital sum, the interest from which would maintain the saver for the rest of his days, and which would provide his descendants with a fortune, or part of one, according to their number, reducing their risks in life. This was the consummation of perfect thrift of the old standard, but, especially in its sheltering of the next generation, it does not seem on the moral or ethical side wholly without flaw, and no generation had a better right than this of ours to insist on its successors working hard and taking risks. And there is something doubtful about the economics. The new generation, in so far as it has any system or principle of its own, seems to lean more to the side of the annuity principle, reckoning up how much it possesses, and proceeding to spend capital and diminishing interest at such rate that, given a fairly long life, it will just last out. The difficulty, of course, in such a self-regulated scheme is to adjust the sums, allowances, and periods exactly; and indeed, the term of life not being known, it cannot be done, and the spender has before him always the horrible possibility of his being still alive when the last crumb of capital is spent, with the only and

doubtful consolation that he will be too old to care. But here, so subtly, comes in thrift again, murmuring, 'Prepare; you must prepare!' And in some form, and not exaggerated or dressed

up hypocritically, it is evident that in a world of moderate tranquillity and stability thrift must win. We should know in April now if it is to be given a better chance or not.

THE PRIMA DONNA.

By H. K. DERRY.

I.

BRISTOW first observed her as he sprawled in his deck-chair, pipe in mouth, hat tilted forward, gazing at the sea. She sat usually a few yards away, either knitting or staring also at the gently heaving water; and her eyes, unlike those of the other female passengers, never shot inquiringly sideways, so that he was able to regard her lengthily from under his shabby brim.

For a time it was a strictly impersonal regard, his eyes merely watching her flickering needles, while his mind revolved its own particular problems. He had never been introspective, and it teased him that he should have such problems at all. He dubbed himself peevish; blamed his liver and the cramped life on shipboard. But really he knew it went deeper than that.

Till a year ago, life had raced him along too fast for him to reflect how he disliked the pace. Existence had been a jangle of pianos and voices, the jangle thinning in proportion as he mounted the ladder of success. Now he was so near the top that the pianos had ceased to crash. He owned a soft-carpeted, sound-proof room at the Conservatoire; the right to say 'No' to any timid knocker without; the privilege of hearing a dozen grimacing girls perform vocal gymnastics, and afterwards of granting or denying them the right to a row of letters after their names. He strolled into concert halls; and next day, in the papers, commended or condemned the performer. His name figured on the cover of half-a-dozen songs. In fact, at the early age of thirty-five, he had 'arrived' in that exclusive set of artistic people that form the musical world. Then his health had failed. Sudden devastating weariness of the daily round took possession of him. He snapped at the full-bosomed, confident young women who sang to him; loathed his comfortable, song-strewn music-room; sickened at the sight of a concert hall.

'Nerves,' the doctor had said. 'Go to South Africa.'

'Nerves,' said his friends. 'In six months you'll be pining for the sound of a top C again.'

So he went to South Africa. His brother owned a farm and a piano, and for ten vivid months he drank in the sunshine and peace; then, with a pucker of discontent in his broad

forehead, he climbed on a steamer to come back again. But his friends had been wrong. His nerves had vanished, but the feeling about his pupils had not altered in his mind. On the farm he had composed some 'real' music. That was more valuable than the tuition of a crowd of ogling, self-satisfied women. Scarcely one of them could sing with an ounce of artistic perception.

A ball of wool rolled past his line of vision into the scuppers. He snatched at it, pulled out of his chair, and carried it to its owner. She extended a brown hand, and smiled. 'Thank you. I'm afraid I was dreaming, and didn't notice it fall.'

'It's a place to dream,' said Bristow; 'on a ship. Do you like the sea?'

She shook her head. 'Not much. I'm not dreaming about it. I've come from a farm; and I keep thinking of it, and what they're doing, and how the shadows lie on the hills.' Her voice sounded a trifle wistful.

'I've come from a farm, too,' said Bristow; and then, becoming suddenly conscious that he had nothing further to say, sauntered back to his chair. He was not accustomed to social communications with young women. He only knew how to say, 'Open your mouth'; 'Arpeggios, please'; and things of that sort.

II.

Yet, in a day or two, he had drifted into a quiet sort of friendship with Miss Garland. They would sit together, one knitting, the other reading, in companionable silence, occasionally looking up to gaze at the water and exchange reflections. Strangely, it was usually Bristow who began a conversation. He had always considered women chatterboxes, but Miss Garland was a colonial born, and the silence of great spaces seemed still around her. When she spoke, it was because she wished to express a thought, and though she possessed a whimsical gaiety, there was a fugitive air of sadness about her that puzzled him.

Her complete domesticity he found satisfying after the type of London girl he knew. He was sure that she had never heard of the 'Blues'; that the word 'shingle' merely reminded her of the seashore; that if he told her of his position at the Conservatoire it would convey nothing at all to her.

But though he did not tell her that, he told her a great many other things about himself; how he dreaded returning to the old, stifling life in London; how he seemed to have found his real self in the big African spaces; how he longed to purchase some land and settle there; but how, a Londoner born and bred, he feared the solitude of the life.

She looked straight at him, without embarrassment, and made the obvious suggestion, 'You could marry.'

He spread his hands hopelessly. 'Of course I could; if I could find someone of whom I shouldn't be heartily sick in a fortnight.'

She laughed at that. 'Why, in Africa it's hard enough for a man, but surely not in England. I thought there were so many women.'

He frowned at her. 'That's just it. There are so many that you can't get to know one! You can't speak to a girl without people coupling your names together, and her mother badgering you to come to the house. People pity the superfluous women; they never pity the *un*-superfluous man, watched and pounced on till his life is a perfect misery.'

To his surprise she pealed with laughter—laughter so clean and gay that presently his irritable look vanished, and he laughed with her. 'It's all very well for you,' he protested. 'You don't know what London is like—the crowds and the noise and the rain.'

She sobered, and the sparkle died in her eyes. 'No,' she said; 'but I soon shall.'

Bristow smiled whimsically as he pictured her in Piccadilly, with her tanned face and swinging skirts. 'You'll probably love it. Just for a spell it's good fun. Are you staying long?'

She was quite grave now. 'Yes. I expect so. I'm not going to have a good time at all. I shall have to work very hard. I am going to train—as a singer.'

She did not look at him, or she would have realised that his silence was one of stupefaction.

'My people are fearfully keen about it. I have always sung—ever since I was tiny, but I never thought anything of it. Last year they took me to Professor Vanheern, and he said I must come home and train, that I had a wonderful voice. I am going to the London Conservatoire; so I shall have the very best teachers.'

'Yes,' agreed Bristow, in absent-minded conceit; 'oh, of course!' He paused miserably; then burst out, 'Somehow I can't imagine you in that sort of world at all. I have always pictured you in—in the wide spaces. London—so sordid and noisy and sophisticated—you can't belong to it!'

As she looked at his rebellious expression a faint flush stole over her face. 'I always

thought so, too,' she admitted; 'but, you see, father is so keen. And, after all, the life of a singer needn't be sordid. It's a glorious profession.'

The sound of the dinner-bugle saved Bristow from making reply. Abruptly he gathered up her rug and cushions, and followed her in silence along the deck.

III.

That night as he lay in his berth the tumult of his thoughts drowned the snores of the man above him. He had had no idea, till he received that shock before dinner, how fond he had grown of the Garland girl. Now that his castle of dreams had collapsed, he realised that days ago, subconsciously, he had decided to ask her, eventually, to marry him. He had been making delicious pictures of a little bungalow in the wilds, with a grand-piano and a grave-eyed girl as companions in the solitude. Whereas, really, in a few weeks' time she would be standing by his piano in his familiar room, singing to him. And in a few months she would be on a platform before crowds. The thrill of it, after her lonely life, would intoxicate her. He would sit at concerts, and review her performance in the *World* next day. Miss Elizabeth Garland! What a name for a prima-donna!

It was strange how he never doubted her possession of a wonderful voice. Bristow, the critic, who was accustomed to smile cynically at the eulogies of singing-masters, forever sending him pupils with the written belief that they had 'extraordinary' voices! But Miss Garland was so genuine. She had told him so impersonally, as if it were something quite apart from her individuality. She had not seemed in the least elated about it; that fugitive look of wistfulness had looked from her eyes while she told him. Possibly she was wondering if Professor Vanheern had been right in his prognostications of amazing success.

He wondered, tossing uneasily about in his cramped quarters, whether he could bring himself to undertake her training. It would be purgatory to leave her to any other master; but it would be purgatory too to watch the effect of her new life working its change in her; to see her growing 'smart' and modern, shedding by degrees that clean, frank look that reminded him always of the fresh wind off the mountains. No, he couldn't bear that. He was glad he had never told her where his work really lay.

IV.

The next morning, as they passed the music-room together, he paused with his hand on the door. 'You might sing to me sometime,' he said.

She peeped inside. 'There's nobody there

now. I'll fetch my music. It'll keep me in practice;' and she ran down to her cabin.

When she returned Bristow took the songs from her. 'What have you got? Shall I play for you?'

She looked up in surprise. 'Do you play? It's very good of you, but I'm used to playing my own. I feel more at home.'

She sat at the piano, and Bristow dropped into a chair, half smiling. Evidently she had suffered from male accompanists. He visualised a young farmer, with great brown hands, pounding the keys. Then he settled himself to listen, and after a few opening bars she began to sing. It was a sentimental air, something about a rose and a girl, but he had not expected a classic.

She sang two songs before she turned to look at Bristow, her expression showing faint surprise that he had made no comment. He was sitting with his hand shading his face, but at the sound of the closing of the piano he looked up swiftly, and immediately she guessed why he had not spoken. His silence meant more to her than the compliments she was accustomed to receive, for her colour deepened as she picked up her music and walked to the door. She half-expected he would call her back and ask her to continue, but he merely rose awkwardly, and, murmuring 'Thank you,' held the door open for her to pass. He did not follow her, and she sauntered out on to the deck and settled herself in her chair.

v.

Half-an-hour had passed before, glancing up, she saw him coming towards her. His face was so white and set that she pulled forward his chair, and, as he dropped into it, asked concernedly, 'Is anything the matter?'

His muscles relaxed slightly, and his mouth twisted into a half-smile. 'Yes. I've had a shock—a shock that forced a difficult decision on me. But I've made my mind up now. It's something to do with you.'

'With me?'

He was fumbling in his waistcoat pocket, and finally produced a card-case. His fingers were a trifle unsteady. 'I believe I have never told you what my profession is; but I think you had better know now; it will give more weight to what I am going to say. I'm afraid I've got some bad news for you. Of course, it is only one man's opinion.'

She took from his extended hand one of his professional cards, and examined it with a pucker of mystification. Then she looked up at him. 'You're on the staff of the London Conservatoire?'

He nodded miserably, his eyes fixed on her face.

'Then, what——' The corners of her mouth lifted whimsically. 'Oh! Is it—that you

don't think I have such a wonderful voice, after all? I knew something had struck you in the music-room; but perhaps——'

Bristow clenched his long fingers. It was no good beating about the bush. She would hate him, of course, for being brutal, but it was kinder in the end. Far easier it would be to wait silently till she had received the blow from other lips in London, and then, at the height of her disappointment, to appear comfortingly with another suggestion. He had often told disagreeable truths before, but never, through his career, had it hurt him so much. He jerked his head and looked out over the sea.

'You've no sort of a voice at all. Nothing that would take you further than a drawing-room party. Your people and that Professor Whatsisname have made a tremendous mistake. Of course, I don't know what the standard is in the colonies, but in England a voice like yours doesn't count at all. It would scarcely take you into the chorus of a musical comedy. I've tested hundreds of women's voices. That's my candid opinion.'

His lips closed again. His eyes were riveted on a foam-flake far out on the waves. But his ears were strained to hear the first catch of her breath, or the short gasp that heralded a rush of tears. (Oh, he had made them cry before, on such an occasion, and scarcely even felt compassion!)

But she sat so still that at last he added, in a gentle tone, 'I'm frightfully sorry. I know it must be an awful blow. But I felt it wasn't fair to let you get to London without knowing the truth. It would have been much worse there.'

Then he turned to her, and suddenly, as he saw her face, the colour flooded into his own. 'You're smiling!' he stammered. 'Then—then, don't you——'

She broke into a laugh. 'Mind? Of course I don't! Oh, you thought you were breaking my dreams, but really you were letting me out of prison! Why, don't you remember how once you said you'd always pictured me in the wide spaces? You were right; I belong there, and always shall. I hated the idea of London. Only when my people were so keen, I tried to pretend I was pleased. Besides, if I really *had* had a marvellous voice—well, I suppose it would have been one's duty, in a way. Now I shall go to the Conservatoire and listen to another man saying what you have said; then I shall climb on a 'bus and drive round London, and then I shall get on a steamer and sail straight home again. Oh, I was miserable at leaving the Cape! I wonder how you never saw it.'

For a moment there was silence. When Bristow spoke again, his look had travelled to the horizon. 'I had been dreaming,' he said in a low voice, 'before you told me about your

voice, that one day I might have a home in South Africa—in the wide spaces—and that possibly we might manage to be very happy there together; with a grand-piano and a few cattle!’

His eyes left the horizon and travelled slowly to her face. ‘Was it an impossible, foolish dream of mine, do you think?’ He had to bend his head very near to hear her softly-whispered ‘No.’

COLLECTIVE HYPNOTISM.

By JOHN DILL ROSS

I RECENTLY read a novel in which the heroine possesses the faculty of collective hypnotism, by means of which she creates a variety of remarkable episodes to the utter undoing of the villain of the plot. I do not know whether such a thing as collective hypnotism really exists, having had but little time or disposition to study this and other phenomena connected with hypnotism. But during my long residence in Singapore I saw three performances given by Indian jugglers which I wish to describe, as I could never obtain any satisfactory explanation of them.

(1) I was on board the Russian Volunteer Fleet troopship *Kostroma*, lying at Tanjong Pagar Wharf, Singapore, busy arranging her despatch to Odessa. While I was on the quarter-deck an Indian juggler with a woman assistant begged permission to give a performance. A space was cleared on the upper deck so as to make a stage for them, and the Indian began by putting the woman into a coarse net, which he fastened securely. He then folded the woman up and put her inside a small oblong basket, trampling her body with his feet until she exactly filled the basket, which he closed with a tightly-fitting cover. It would have been hard to believe that the compact little basket really contained a human body, had we not seen the brutal way in which he packed the woman into it. He next took a long, sharp sword and ran it through the basket in every direction. When he had finished wiping the blood from the blade he opened the basket, and took out an empty net! The woman was found outside the ring of sailors and soldiers who had been eagerly watching the whole thing, which took place in broad daylight on the teak deck of the *Kostroma* before some hundreds of spectators. I got the juggler to repeat the trick at my house next day for the benefit of some of my friends. This time he worked on a floor paved with large squares of polished Italian marble, but with exactly the same result as on board the Russian steamer.

(2) Some friends and I were having tiffin with a man who lived in a house just outside the town of Singapore. At the conclusion of the meal two Indian jugglers came in, and prayed permission to rid the house of the snakes with which they declared it was infested. Our host objected that he had never seen a snake

anywhere near the place, but the Indians rejoined that they would ask no fee if they found no snakes. They then stretched two large gunny sacks on the floor, while one of them, squatting down, commenced playing on a pipe. No sooner had he started piping than first one snake and then another appeared, and within two minutes the room was simply swarming with the reptiles. The Indians set to work with feverish energy to stuff the snakes into the sacks with both hands. When they had been paid their money they left the house with two great sacks on their backs full of wriggling snakes of all sorts and sizes. It was a most unpleasant performance to watch. Not a snake was seen about the house either before or after the visit of the jugglers.

(3) Early one morning I was strolling along the beach near Tanjong Katong with two friends, when we came across two Indian jugglers whose stock-in-trade seemed very simple. They filled a large chatty or earthenware pan with seawater. One of the Indians then took half-a-dozen little ducks, carved out of wood, from a small bag, and threw them into the chatty, where they floated absolutely still. But directly his confederate began to play on a pipe the little wooden models came to life, swimming round the chatty, diving to the bottom, and generally comporting themselves like real ducks in a pond. Whenever the piping ceased they stopped and became little bits of carved wood; directly it started again, they swam and dived as before. There could be no question of the models being manipulated by strings or any other such device. We were standing between the Indians and the chatty. Nor had they any mysterious ‘ray’ at their disposal.

How are these things done? I have an idea that certain Indians know much more about hypnotism and things occult than any European. Is it possible that those various jugglers *willed* that we should see exactly what they intended us to see? If so, in the case of the experience on board the *Kostroma* they must have hypnotised some hundreds of strong men simultaneously, which seems to be beyond the bounds of credibility. Perhaps some of your readers may have a theory.

I have stated what I have seen quite correctly and truthfully, without the least effort to colour or exaggerate effects.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER VIII.—*continued.*

THEY wandered back to the house, and Janet gave Sir Archie tea in a room full of faded chintzes and Chinese-Chippendale mirrors. Then when the sun was declining behind the Carnmore peaks Roylance at last took his leave. His head was in a happy confusion, but two ideas rose above the surge—he would seize the earliest chance of asking Janet to marry him, and by all his gods he must not make a fool of himself at Muirtown. She had challenged him and he had accepted the challenge; he must make it good before he could become in turn a challenger. It may be doubted if Sir Archie had any very clear notions on the matter, but he was aware that he had received an inspiration, and that somehow or other everything was now to be different. . . . First for that confounded speech. He strove to recollect the sentences which had followed each other so trippingly during his morning's walk. But he could not concentrate his mind. Peace treaties and German reparations and the recognition of Russia flitted from him like a rapid film, to be displaced by a 'close-up' of a girl's face. Besides, he wanted to sing, and when song flows to the lips consecutive thought is washed out of the brain.

In this happy and exalted mood, dedicated to great enterprises of love and service, Sir Archie entered the Crask smoking-room, to be brought heavily to bed by the sordid business of John Macnab.

Leithen was there, reading a volume of Sir Walter Scott with an air of divine detachment. Lamancha, very warm and dishevelled, was endeavouring to quench his thirst; Palliser-Yeates, also the worse for wear, lay in an attitude of extreme fatigue on a sofa; Crosby, who had sought sanctuary at Crask, was busy with the newspapers which had just arrived; while Wattie Lithgow stood leaning on his crook staring into vacancy, like a clown from some stage Arcadia.

'Where on earth have you been all day, Archie?' Lamancha asked sternly.

'I walked over to Glenraden and stayed to luncheon. They're all hot on your side there—Bandicott, too. There's a general feelin' that young Claybody wants takin' down a peg.'

'Much good that will do us. John and Wattie and I have been crawling all day round the Haripol marches. It's pretty clear what they'll do—you think so, Wattie?'

'Alan Macnicol is not altogether a fule. Ay, I ken fine what they'll do.'

'Clear the beasts off the ground?' Archie suggested.

'No,' said Lamancha. 'Move them into Sanctuary, and the Sanctuary is in the very

heart of the forest—between Sgurr Mór and Sgurr Dearg at the head of the Rearsuill. It won't take many men to watch it. And the mischief is that Haripol is the one forest where it can be done quite simply. It's so infernally rough that if the deer were all over it I would back myself to get a shot with a fair chance of removing the beast, but if every stag is inside an inner corral it will be the devil's own business to get within a thousand yards of them—let alone shift the carcass.'

'If the wind keeps in the west,' said Wattie, 'it is a manifest impossibeelity. If it was in the north there would be a verra wee sma' chance. All other airts are hopeless. We maun just possess our souls in patience, and see what the day brings forth. . . . I'll awa' and mak' arrangements for the morn.'

Lamancha nodded after the retreating figure. 'He is determined to go to Muirtown to-morrow. Says you promised that he should be present when you made your first bow in public, and that he has arranged with Shapp to drive him in the Ford. . . . But about Haripol. This idea of Wattie's—and I expect it's right—makes the job look pretty desperate. I had worked out a very sound scheme to set my Lord Claybody guessing—similar to John's Glenraden plan, but more ingenious; but what's the use of bluff if every beast is snug in an upper corrie with a cordon of Claybody's men round it? Wattie says that Haripol is fairly crawling with gillies.'

Crosby raised his head from his journalistic researches. 'The papers have got my story all right, I see. The first one, I mean—the "Return of Harald Blacktooth." They've featured it well, too, and I expect the evening papers are now going large on it. But it's nothing to what the second will be to-morrow morning. I'm prepared to bet that our Scottish Tutankhamen drops out of the running, and that the press of this land thinks of nothing for a week except the salmon Sir Edward got last night. It's the silly season, remember!'

Lamancha's jaw dropped. 'Mr Crosby, I don't want to dash your natural satisfaction, but I'm afraid you've put me finally in the cart. If the public wake up and take an interest in Haripol, I may as well chuck in my hand.'

'I wasn't such an ass as to mention Haripol,' said the correspondent.

'No, but of course it will get out. Some of your journalistic colleagues will hear of it at Strathlarrig, and, finding that the interest has departed from Harald Blacktooth, will make a bee-line for Haripol. Your success, which I don't grudge you, will be my ruin. In any

case the Claybodies will be put on their mettle, for if they are beaten by John Macnab they know they'll be a public laughing-stock. . . . What sort of a fellow is young Claybody, Archie?

'Bit shaggy about the heels. Great admirer of yours. Ask Ned—he said he knew Ned very well.'

Leithen raised his eyes from *Redgauntlet*. 'Never heard of the fellow in my life.'

'Oh yes, you have. He said he had briefed you in a big case.'

'Well, you can't expect me to know all my clients any more than John knows the customers of his little bank.' Leithen relapsed into Sir Walter.

'I'm going to have a bath.' Lamancha rose and cautiously relaxed his weary limbs. 'I seem to be in for the most imbecile escapade in history, with about one chance in a billion. That's Wattie's estimate, and he knows what a billion is, which I don't.'

'What about droppin' it?' Archie suggested; for, though he was sworn to the 'John Macnab proposition,' he was growing very nervous about this particular manifestation. 'Young Claybody is an ugly customer, and we don't want the thing to end in bad blood. Besides, you're cured already—you told me so yesterday.'

'That's true,' said Lamancha, who was engaged in tossing with Palliser-Yeates for the big bath. 'I'm cured. I never felt keener in my life. I'm so keen that there's nothing on earth you could offer me which would keep me away from Haripol.—You win, John. Gentlemen of the Guard, fire first, and don't be long about it. I can't stretch myself in that drain pipe that Archie calls his second bath-room.'

Dinner was a cheerful meal, for Mr Crossby had much to say. Lamancha was in morbidly high spirits, and Leithen had the benignity of the successful warrior. But the host was silent and abstracted. He managed to banish Haripol from his mind, but he thought of Janet, he thought of Janet's sermon, and in feverish intervals he tried to think of his

speech for the morrow. A sense of a vast insecurity had come upon him, of a shining goal which grew brighter the more he reflected upon it, but of some awkward hurdles to get over first.

Afterwards, when the talk was of Haripol, he turned to the newspapers to restore him to the world of stern realities. He did not read that masterpiece of journalism, Crossby's story, but he found a sober comfort in the *Times* leading articles and in the political notes. He felt himself a worker among *flâneurs*.

'Here's something about you, Charles,' he said. 'This paper says that political circles are lookin' forward with great interest to your speech at Muirtown. Says it will be the first important utterance since Parliament rose, and that you are expected to deal with Poincaré's speech at Rheims, and a letter by a Boche whose name I can't pronounce.'

'Political circles will be disappointed,' said Lamancha, 'for I haven't read them. Montgomery is taking all the boxes, and I haven't heard from the office for three weeks. I can't be troubled with newspapers in the Highlands.'

'Then what are you goin' to say to-morrow?' Archie demanded anxiously.

'I'll think of some rot. Don't worry, old fellow. Muirtown is a second-class show compared to Haripol.'

Archie was really shocked. He was envious of a man who could treat thus cavalierly a task which affected him with horrid forebodings, and also scandalised at the levity of his leaders. It seemed to him that Lamancha needed some challenging. Finding no comfort in his company, he repaired to bed, where healthful sleep was slow in visiting him. He repeated his speech to himself, but it would persist in getting tangled up with Janet's sermon and his own subsequent reflections, so that, when at last he dropped off, it was into a world of ridiculous dreams, where a dreadful composite figure—Poincarini or Mussolinaré—sat heavily on his chest.

(Continued on page 284.)

AS TOLD BY THE SHIP'S SURGEON.

PART II.

THERE are still professional gamblers loose on the Atlantic, ready to play with any one who has more money than brains. The present set are fairly crude, and they lack the soft, sweet ways of some of the pre-War polished crooks. It is not in public rooms that they get busy—but in private rooms. After hours they put in fine work and pull the fleece off innocent lambs. But it takes two at least to gamble, and if, in the face of prominent warning notices posted every-

where, the fly chooses to walk into the spider's parlour, then he deserves to lose a wing or two.

The ship's concert is still a feature of the voyage, and is given mainly in order to collect funds for the seamen's charities. With this in view these entertainments are tolerated, and travellers are remarkably benevolent year after year in their donations. Otherwise, passengers are bored to death with them, and avoid them unless there happen to be prominent artists on

the programme. Even amongst the professionals, many of them, tired out and requiring a rest, do not wish to be disturbed. The big stars are unwilling to be heard under any unfavourable conditions, while not a few of them are strictly prohibited by the terms of their contracts from singing on board. Nor will some great violinists expose priceless instruments to sea air, which invariably damages them. Therefore it is unfair even to ask them, and I never call upon their services unless they themselves make the first offer. Many artists whose close friendship I enjoy are always willing to give unstintingly of their best for the good cause. Out of a long list I would mention casually John M'Cormack, Josef Hoffman, Marie Novello, William Backhaus, Elsie Janis, Nora Bayes, Ruth St Denys, Maurice and Leonora Hughes, and the Dolly Sisters.

In the old days the amateurs on board fairly revelled in these concerts, and the trouble was to prevent their all singing at once—and all night at that. Poor dear old Paolo Tosti! How often, I wonder, have I heard his 'Good-bye' song murdered by singers of all sizes and shapes, more than one of whom would insist on saying, 'Good Boy, Summer!' Of many funny incidents I recall one on the *Celtic*. A tall, raw-boned westerner was singing some weird prairie song. His lady accompanist was doing her best, but he had taken a dislike to her methods. Half-way through the second verse he stopped short and, turning round to her, said, 'For heaven's sake stop playing and let me finish it alone.' She did so, and it nearly finished the audience, who were convulsed with laughter. Quite likely, for many of the concerts I did organise, I ought to have been imprisoned; but the audiences were always friendly, and we got money for the orphans—so what did it matter?

To-day the dance is the thing, and the dance they will have. On long voyages there is nothing to compete with the fancy-dress ball, where I have seen original costumes that would have won prizes at a Covent Garden festival. On a fast liner, where the voyage is over before you know your neighbour's name, there is no time to organise one; but with masks and dominoes you can make a merry evening of it.

A few items concerning the ship's crew. On my present ship, the world's largest liner, *Majestic*, there are three departments—the deck, engine, and victualling.

The deck has seventy members all told. Not many of them are real 'sailors.' Most are young fellows who can do the paint-work and the washing of decks. I miss the 'shell-back' of olden days. He was gruff, and loved to growl; but he was good-hearted, and had a choice vocabulary in bad weather. Rarely did he sham sickness, but when off colour he made a fuss about it, and liked to be coddled—especially if he thought a tot of rum was in sight.

The chief engineer has seventy engineers under him, besides many other experts. These are needed to keep going 240 fires fed by oil fuel, of which 5000 tons are consumed during a five and a half days' voyage from New York to Southampton. The oil attendants and cleaners necessary are but a few compared with the firemen and trimmers of coal days. These oil chaps rarely are sick or get maimed. Theirs is a gentleman's job, and I often chaff them about wearing evening dress down below. The 'Black Gang' of coal days were a different breed. They were supposed to be the thorn in the surgeon's side. Perhaps they were. Some of them were high-class malingerers, if they could get away with it—but otherwise good sports. Once, on the *Baltic*, they got hold of a new chum who was in my place for a voyage. What with 'heart disease,' 'exhaustion,' 'pains all over,' 'can't sleep or eat,' they nearly had the ship stopped half-way across.

The victualling department is large, and totals 700 out of the 1090 of crew carried. These stewards, scullions, &c., are known collectively as 'the boys' (some of them are over fifty), and live in quarters known for generations as the 'Glory-hole.' Many of these boys are what Tom Webster, cartoonist of the *Daily Mail*, would call 'lads of the village,' which includes a variety of accomplishments not mentioned in the ordinary text-books. They have to work hard, and most of them do so apparently with good nature. Now and then one comes across the 'sea-lawyer,' who would like to argue the point whether he should or should not work; but there are too many ex-service men waiting for vacancies, and therefore 'strikes' to-day are not fashionable. Bedroom stewards and stewardesses are experts in dealing with the quips and crank-spots and vagaries of the thousand and one varieties of travellers of all nations and natures who insist upon having large breakfasts in bed, and who love to play symphonies on the bells which summon attendants to their presence.

Frank King, my senior hospital attendant, is a host in himself, and the uncrowned king of all the 'lads.' He has served the White Star Line faithfully for over thirty years, and looks good for another thirty. He knows the pedigree of every steward, scullion, baker, and butcher in the fleet. What he does not know about their imaginary ailments is not worth writing home about.

There are several real 'girls' on the ship—stewardesses, hairdressers, manicurists, telephone operators, bath attendants, and a mermaid in the swimming-pool. They are all too good-natured and prosperous to be sick.

I am bad at figures, but I think I am right in saying that, for one voyage alone, the ship carries: 40 tons of meat, 14 tons of fish, 6 tons of sugar, 5 tons of butter, and 60,000 eggs, besides tons of other food-stuffs. In the linen

department over 170,000 pieces are stored away.

Purser McElroy, the ever genial, clever, witty Irishman who went down with his brother-heroes on the *Titanic*, was responsible, I think, for saying, 'There are three kinds of people in the world—men, women, and passengers.' It needed a ship's officer with long experience and deep knowledge of human nature to make such a subtle classification.

They say that everything good, bad, and indifferent is apt to come out in a community of travellers thrown together in a ship at sea. Probably it does in a long voyage, where there is time to unmask. On the Atlantic the camouflage may be more difficult to detect. Some are natural, and really are what they say they are and seem to be; others act well, and are nothing like what they would have you believe they are. More certain it is that, even in one week, water will find its level, and birds of a feather will flock together. The real 'nice people' and the 'just plain' folks, as the late President Harding called them, will manage to commingle; the 'high-brows,' both social and financial, will meet on deck, but not before luncheon; the 'cultured' ones will only discuss art, literature, or anything else they know nothing about; politicians will settle everything their own way; noisy ones will talk louder the more there are round to annoy; the adventur-ers and -esses will signal and cross-signal to each other; thirsty ones will be chummy with the smoke-room 'boys'; gamblers claim certain corners as their own; exclusive ones wear the veil throughout; and the Jap remain the eternal mystery.

Each voyage there is sure to be a number of folks who 'complain' about their accommodation, or the ventilation, or the food, or the service, or the decks being too wet, or the ship's 'noises' keeping them awake, or a hundred and one other matters. A large number of these complaints are foolish and unnecessary, but they have to be listened to, mainly by the purser and the chief steward, whose patience and forbearance and self-control are really remarkable.

Meanwhile, the ship's surgeon, if he has any experience or tact, will be friendly with all passengers, irrespective of their race, position, or pretensions. Personally, I have found some travellers quite bad, a great many of them very good, be they English or American, rich or poor, Jew or Gentile, white or black. All might well take lessons from one another—gathering in the good points, discarding the bad ones. The resultant would then be Utopia. Half the complaints the Englishman makes about the American and *vice versa* are purely imaginary, and due to ignorance of the grand old rule of 'Give and Take.'

Of course, on the *Majestic* I meet a great many more Americans than English. I am proud to say that I possess amongst them many

hundreds of valuable friends, whose kindness and hospitality to me have been unbounded. Not a voyage nowadays passes without my having some of them around me, and it is a pleasure and a privilege to be on the great Atlantic lines of communication, and keep up the good work of promoting goodwill between the two great English-speaking nations.

From the first I have always had a real affection for the third-class passengers or emigrant class. Here let me state that the word 'steerage,' as applied to them, is out of date and discarded—very rightly so, because their quarters and personal status have been so much raised that the objectionable word 'steerage' (that is, belonging to the steering end of the ship) no longer applies. I admire the patience, perseverance, and pluck which leads them, whole families at a time, to pack up what little they possess and start out on the great quest for the Land of Promise—thousands of miles away. The idea that the emigrant is always ill and a trouble to the doctor is quite wrong. On the contrary, he is hardy, and will even try to conceal his illness rather than be prevented from landing in America.

On the subject of sea-sickness, I cannot do better than give a transcript of a short 'speech' I made recently at the big radio broadcasting station at Newark, New Jersey, U.S.A. It is as follows:

'After making five voyages round the world, and having crossed the North Atlantic over seven hundred times, I have received a suggestion that I may know something about sea-sickness. For once in history you are going to get the truth from a doctor, when I tell you I know as little about the cause of sea-sickness as I did thirty years ago, when I made my first voyage to New York.

'It is only proper that the folks who know most about the complaint are land-lubbers—the people who don't know the sharp from the blunt end of the ship. In my time I have addressed several medical societies on the subject of sea-sickness. I have blamed every square inch of the human body as being the starting-point of the trouble. No doubt I owe a humble apology to every one of them. As for 'cures,' a new one comes out every week. I must have tried five hundred of them myself. This leaves the fifty-seven varieties of pickles away back. Most of them make the patient worse than ever. If I knew the real cure I would have given up sea-life long ago, and have occupied an elegant suite in Fifth Avenue, where my staff would hand out the dope at two dollars a packet while I was spending the winters running round Palm Beach in a gold-plated car.

'The very best cure for sea-sickness is to stay at home. Even that sometimes fails, for I know a Philadelphia lady who gets sick while she is in the agent's office booking her passage; so

that Philadelphia is more ahead of the times than you would think.

'What little we do know about sea-sickness is that it is a symptom and not a disease. What it is a symptom of, nobody knows; but every one guesses. It never kills—which the patient sometimes thinks unfortunate, for generally he wishes he was dead. One always feels better after it is all over, and it is a great pity we don't have it on land to counteract over-eating.

'On our large modern liners the complaint has diminished very greatly. During fifty crossings on the great and wonderful *Majestic*, I have not had two cases that caused me a minute's anxiety.'

They say that many a 'true thing is said in jest. At any rate, truth is always stranger than fiction—which I offer as a justification of my remarks on sea-sickness.

So much has been written about the Great War, of which we Mercantile Marine men (and women) had enough and to spare, that I feel disposed to say only very little about it.

In common with thousands of my mates, I made some 102 crossings over danger zones in various ships of the White Star Line fleet. During all these I was extremely lucky, for I never once 'got my feet wet,' as a pal of mine expresses it. But I escaped on four occasions from torpedoes actually fired at ships on which I was serving. The closest shave was on the *Baltic* one fine morning in July, when a big torpedo shot past our bow and missed only by inches. At the same time we were on the limit of the zig-zag which was taking us towards the projectile; otherwise we should probably have been hit amidships. On the *Megantic* a torpedo shot past us, only forty feet away, but parallel to our own course. As it was going double our speed, we were safe enough. Off Holyhead one evening a patrol boat and a destroyer sank a 'sub' with depth bomb charges. We were five hundred yards off, but the concussion shook the big *Baltic*, and brought her to a standstill almost for a few seconds. Two hundred and fifty American nurses on board behaved with the greatest coolness, walking up to their boats as if it were an ordinary boat drill. Any women on board always behaved admirably during any crisis. One only did I meet during the whole War who was fear-stricken, and for precaution's sake we landed her at Halifax before sailing east. Poor soul, she was brave enough too, for she was going over to try to get news of her soldier son who had been reported from the 'Front' as missing for six weeks. The night the *Tuscania* was hit my ship was just in front of her in the convoy. I left the *Cymric* the voyage before the Huns got her. The great and beautiful hospital ship *Britannic* I also left the voyage before she was torpedoed in the Aegean Sea. I was on the *Olympic* the memorable day

she stood by the sinking battleship *Audacious* for six hours outside Lough Swilly. Four great hawsers broke while we tried to get hold of her and tow her into safe waters; so with great sorrow we had to leave her to her fate.

The first six weeks of the submarine danger were perhaps the worst. I was foolish enough then to lie down at night all dressed, with my lifebelt at my side. One morning I woke up to realise that the remedy was going to be worse than the disease, and that the system was getting on my nerves. Thereafter I undressed as usual, having, after a couple of rehearsals, found that in seventy seconds I could be ready to get into a boat.

There are many instances of ship's men who were torpedoed once, twice, and up to five times, yet who signed on again as soon as possible after getting to shore. I may add that I do not know of one single instance of any stewardess who ever refused to go to sea even when the submarine danger was at its height. To them and to all the brave women ashore who never flinched from duty during those dreadful years, I am proud to take off my hat.

THE END.

SOME FORGOTTEN GRAVES.

THEY lie in their graves on the moorland
The men of a by-gone race,
And winds sweep in from the seaward
And sigh o'er the lonely place.

No mourner remains to bewail them,
And no one to spare them a tear;
They rest from their labours in silence
While year slips away after year.

They heed not the years that are passing,
They heed not the change of days;
No cry of the battle could rouse them
To speed o'er the moorland ways.

They lie unwept and forgotten,
Alone in their lonely graves,
With never a record to tell us
If once they were kings or slaves.

They lived, and they loved, and they suffered—
No stirring of life is there,
Excepting the swift, soft passing
Of feet of the moorland hare.

No voice breaks into the silence,
Excepting the curlew's cry,
Or, sharply, the call of the moor-cock
To his mate, as he passes by.

And sheep, perchance, may stray over,
And bleat to their lambs as they pass;
Treading their way through the heather
In search of the moorland grass.

But no one can tell us the story
Of those who lie, silent and still,
Wrapped o'er with a shroud of the heather,
On the seaward slope of the hill.

ALICE M. CAMPBELL.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE ROTOR SHIP.

MOST readers of *Chambers's Journal* must long ago have seen descriptions and illustrations of what is known as the 'Rotor Ship.' Any reference to it in these pages has been purposely postponed until reliable data were available. Fantastic claims were made at first for what the rotating towers would do, but these have since been greatly discounted, though it remains true that their propulsive effect is greater than that of sails, and that they have other important advantages. The principle upon which the towers work was discovered by a German named Magnus about the middle of last century. The method of applying the principle to the propulsion of ships was devised recently by Flettner, another German, who also originated the rudder which was described in our issue for January 1923. Effects only are dealt with in the following description—not how they are brought about. Imagine, in the first instance, a vertical cylinder or tower upon which a wind is blowing. The wind will cause a pressure on the side towards the wind, and a suction on the opposite side. One important point to be borne in mind is that the suction is much more powerful than the pressure. If the cylinder is made to rotate (say, by a small electric motor), two very interesting effects are produced: (1) the combined pressure and suction increases with the speed of rotation, until the result may amount to twelve times the force on the stationary cylinder; (2) the direction of this combined force (a pull) moves round against the direction of rotation until its angle with the wind is reduced from 180 degrees (directly opposite) to 100 degrees at the highest speed. This means that a ship fitted with the Flettner towers sails fastest when the wind is 10 degrees aft of a right angle with her keel, because the pull is then straight ahead. Experiments have shown that to get the most powerful pull the peripheral speed of the cylinder should be between three and four times the velocity of the wind. It may be explained at this point that a ship need not have more than one tower, although the experimental ship has two. It is simply a question of getting enough power. Larger vessels may require more than two towers. Some may object that, with the wind right aft, the pull will be to one side—instead of right ahead, as with sails. Sails, however, do not give the most powerful results with the wind right aft, and, although the pull of the towers under this condition is not so great as that of sails, once the wind comes a little to one side the towers have the advantage. On the average, if we take all points of sailing into considera-

tion, the towers have a greater propulsive effect than sails of twelve times their area, reckoning the area of the towers as being represented by the height multiplied by the diameter. Now we come to a very curious feature, namely, the greatly decreased risk of capsizing in a gale shown by the tower-equipped ship as compared with one fitted with sails. This arises from the fact that the pull on the towers varies with their speed of rotation relative to that of the wind. We will suppose that the towers have a peripheral speed of 82 feet a second—about $3\frac{1}{2}$ times that of a wind of 16 miles per hour. If the wind increases, the capsizing force will increase up to about 30 m.p.h., but after that it remains almost constant up to hurricane force. A wind of 16 m.p.h. is a nice working breeze, in which a sailing vessel will just carry all sail and make her best speed. The captain of a rotor ship need not worry about gales; all that he has to do is to see that his towers are not running too fast. No crew is required to attend to the sails, as in a sailing vessel. It is true that the towers have to be rotated, and that power is needed for this purpose, and that some one must attend to the machinery; but the power required is very small, only 9 h.p. for each tower in the experimental ship, with the towers giving a propulsive effect equal to 800 h.p. Time alone will show whether the rotor ship has come to stay. It seems to have possibilities for sailing craft, and the towers may be utilised to save power in steamships and motor vessels.

PAMPHLETS ON RURAL INDUSTRIES.

To this valuable series of booklets, referred to in our issues for March and July of last year, there have recently been added pamphlets dealing with 'Book-keeping for Small Rural Industries,' 'Costing for Small Country Workshops,' 'The Country Wheelwright and His Outlook,' and 'Water-Power.' Copies may be obtained from the Secretary, Rural Industries Bureau, 258-262 Westminster Bridge Road, London, S.E.1.

A COT-SETTEE.

In these days of small families, that necessary but costly item of the household, the baby's cot, has but a short useful life. A novel type that has been lately brought out is convertible into a settee after its occupant has grown too big for it, while it possesses unusual features as a cot. Built of wood, the cot's outstanding departure from the standard design is a removable side which tucks away under the mattress when out of use. In position, the top and bottom are secured at the ends by ball and socket fittings, the releasing of which entails the lifting of the side bodily, an operation

beyond the strength of any infant. The bottom ends slide in under the mattress on metal guide-bars when the side is removed. The other side is also removable, and is secured in a similar way, but as it is only taken off temporarily to make the bed, no provision is made for stowing it under the mattress. When both sides are out, the ends are firmly held by the iron frame of the spring mattress. This frame is of a specially strong type, to support two 'grown-ups' as a settee. Deeper and therefore safer than the usual pattern, these cots are handsomely finished in white enamel, Jacobean or fumed oak, or in polished mahogany. The metal fittings, which include castors, are of nickel-plated brass.

A REFRIGERATOR FOR THE HOME.

We are fast approaching the time when a refrigerator will be considered a necessity for every well-to-do household, so advantageous is it to be able to keep foods fresh in the hottest summer weather. Several makers of small freezing-machines are fully alive to this development, and one or two which are suitable for household use are already on the market. One has already been described in these columns; another, which we recently saw working, is a particularly compact and reliable outfit, and has some special features. A most important item is the cabinet, which houses the machine and the cool chambers. This cabinet is very strongly made; the doors are a close fit, and have nickel-plated metal fittings of massive design. A compartment in the bottom contains the machine; the upper part is divided down the middle into two. The left-hand compartment is again divided by a horizontal partition, the upper chamber containing the brine tank which does the cooling, and the lower chamber serving as a storing place for foods and drinks. Five movable wire shelves are fitted in the right-hand compartment, which also serves for the storing of foods. The two food compartments are lined with steel enamelled in white porcelain, which is easily kept clean. The whole of the upper part of the cabinet, including the doors, has double walls, between which is a most efficient heat-insulating material. With bevelled paneling and white enamel all over, the cabinet is a handsome piece of furniture. It measures 68 inches in height, 39½ inches in width, and 25½ inches in depth. We will now try to explain briefly how the cold is produced. All refrigerators are based on the fact that certain liquids boil and give off vapour at very low temperatures. The liquid chosen in this case is sulphur dioxide, which boils at 14° F. Now to turn a liquid into a gas heat is required; e.g., to turn water into steam fire of some sort is necessary. Heat and cold, however, are relative terms. Compared with the temperature at which sulphur dioxide boils and turns into gas, the atmosphere,

except on a very cold winter's day, is hot; in fact, it supplies the heat required to make this liquid boil. If a saucer of liquid sulphur dioxide were placed in the cabinet and the doors were closed, the temperature would be quickly lowered, because heat would be taken from the air to boil the liquid. But the process would not be continuous; either the sulphur dioxide would all be changed into vapour, or the temperature would be so much reduced that the change would no longer take place. What is wanted is apparatus which will allow the evaporation to go on, and then convert the gas into a liquid again, ready to be used once more. This is exactly what a refrigerating-machine does; but the gas is confined to pipes instead of being allowed to escape into the cold chamber. Liquid is admitted in very small quantities into a pipe which passes from the machine and into the brine tank, in which it takes the form of a coil making many turns. Here it takes heat from the brine to turn it into gas, and the brine in turn takes heat from the air in the cold chambers, thus reducing the temperature in the chambers to the necessary point. In the machine is a tiny gas compressor driven by an electric motor, which draws the gas from the coil and compresses it within a water-cooled dome. Here it is condensed into liquid again, ready for admission into the cooling coil once more. The machine is entirely automatic, the motor being started and stopped by a thermostat in the cold chamber, which switches it off when the temperature falls below a certain point, and starts it again when it rises to that point once more. But what most distinguishes this machine from others is a patented device which entirely prevents any escape of gas when the machine is stopped and the pressure rises, as, apart from the gas being an irritant, its escape would soon deplete the supply in the machine. Much trouble has been experienced from this difficulty before this device was thought of. To prove the general reliability of the outfit, the makers started one running on 2nd June, which was still working satisfactorily at the time of our visit on 9th January, having had no attention during the interval. This period of continuous running is considered to be equivalent to four years of ordinary use. The power required is very small, the cost of current for a year amounting to about 50s. at 4d. a unit. It may be added that there are in the brine tank specially constructed drawers for the purpose of making cubes of ice for table use or for freezing creams or dessert.

A NOVEL VACUUM CLEANER.

Continuous efforts are being made to improve the vacuum cleaner, some of which have been recorded in these columns. A model which has recently been introduced from the United States and is now on sale in this country possesses several novel and advantageous features. To begin with,

the form differs widely from that of other vacuum cleaners. The case is shaped roughly like a stepped cone with a rounded apex. This case is of aluminium, and is fitted with a convex lid at the broad end. A tiny electric motor is installed in the small end of the cone, and this carries a powerful air-exhausting fan on the upper end of its spindle. In the big end of the cone is the dust bag, which is prevented from being sucked into the hole over the exhauster by a wire cage. A rubber ring at the mouth of the dust bag makes an air-tight joint between the cone and the lid. The motor is connected by flexible leads to a lamp-socket. When it is switched on, the armature, with the fan, whizzes round at a high speed, and creates a strong suction under the dust bag, through which the air passes, leaving the dust behind. The air is discharged through holes in the side of the machine. A length of flexible pipe is attached to the middle of the lid of the case and terminates in a nozzle which can be used for cleaning upholstery. For floors and curtains a rigid length of pipe is pushed into a socket in the base of the nozzle, this pipe having the usual wide nozzle at its outer end. Access to the dust bag is obtained in a few seconds by unscrewing two thumb-screws for a few turns, when a slight twist releases the lid of the case. When at work the machine rolls about the floor, accommodating itself to the demands of the operator. An outstanding feature of this cleaner is its lightness, the weight being only $7\frac{1}{2}$ pounds. The flexible pipe allows of corners and the narrow spaces under low furniture being reached. Special bearings are fitted, through which the oil percolates slowly, the result being that they require no further lubrication until new carbon brushes are needed, a period of from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 years, according to the amount of use. Finally, the price is very moderate.

TYPING BY ELECTRICITY.

Apparently the electric typewriter has come to stay, as that described below is the second to which reference has been made in these notes. The machine which has recently been brought out is very similar to the one that formed the subject of a paragraph in *Chambers's Journal* for July 1923, such differences as exist between them relating to details rather than to the general principles involved. It is not necessary, therefore, to give a lengthy explanation of the second. The essential feature is a shaft with teeth on it which crosses the machine under the type-levers. This shaft is rotated at 300 revolutions per minute by a tiny electric motor. The lightest of touches on the keys engages the type-levers with the teeth on the rotating shaft, which operate them as would be done by the fingers. Whether the keys are touched lightly or hammered down makes no difference to the weight of the blows struck by the type; the

typing is, therefore, absolutely uniform. Means are provided for increasing the strength of the imprint for several carbon copies or for stencilling, while safety devices ensure only one movement of a type-lever if a key is held down, and prevent the operation of two levers at the same time should two keys be pressed down at once. The motor is of the universal type that will run on continuous or on alternating current, and on any ordinary supply voltage. It can be connected to any lamp-socket, and the amount of current consumed is almost negligible. Apart from the electric driving, the typewriter is similar to other high-class machines.

THE BIGGEST SUSPENSION-BRIDGE IN THE WORLD.

The United States has always specialised in the biggest features of the world's industrial equipment, and its bridges seem likely to form no exception to this rule. A bridge across the Hudson River has been in contemplation by the municipal authorities of New York since 1910. According to *Irish Engineering* new plans for the bridge have been worked out recently by Engineer O. H. Ammann of New Jersey. A suspension-bridge is proposed, with a span of nearly two-thirds of a mile between supports, which will rise to a height above the water-level of 689 feet. This span is exactly double that of the suspension-bridge over the Delaware at Philadelphia, which is at present the longest of its type. The main roadway, which is to be 80 feet wide, will accommodate eight lines of vehicles, and walks at each side will have a width of 15 feet. The most unusual features of this bridge, however, are two lines of tramways below the sidewalks, intended for express traffic. The total width of the bridge is 126 feet, while the height above the water-level is 210 feet. This bridge is designed to carry half as much traffic again as any other in existence or being built. It is to be supported on enormous chains, which are arranged in pairs, the one above the other, at each side. The cost is estimated at \$35,000,000, or about £7,250,000.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, Chambers's Journal, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

For its return in case of ineligibility, a stamped and directed envelope (or postage-stamps) should accompany every manuscript.

To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

A COUNTER-ATTRACTION.

By ROWLAND BURGESS, Author of *Luck of the River*, *The Doom of the Zeppelin*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

I.

SIR WILLIAM ROTHERTON was disturbed. Mayor of Porthampton, and managing director of the mammoth drapery and general store that bore his name in letters of gold over its vast expanse of plate-glass window, he was giving audience to the shop-walker of the 'Foreign Fancy' department.

'Quite right to mention it, Mr Johnson. How long has it been going on?'

'Ever since Lieutenant Rotherton's ship came into port, Sir William.'

Sir William's shaggy brows came down over his keen eyes, and he ran his fingers through his iron-gray hair. 'Humph! The boy's a sailor, and has a breezy way with the girls. Maybe it's only a counter flirtation.'

Mr Johnson looked grave. 'I'm afraid not, sir. Miss Maddison gave notice to leave this morning.'

'Did—eh? Then there's nothing more to be said. Good-morning.'

Mr Johnson bowed, and retired from the presence with flat-footed dignity.

Sir William, alone in his luxuriously-furnished office in the heart of the huge building, leaned back in his chair, with his elbows on the padded arms and the tips of his fingers touching lightly, and remained for some minutes deep in thought. 'Another of Johnson's mare's nests,' he decided at last; 'Harry's straight. Some fluffy-haired little fool—leaving, is she? Still—well, let's have a look at the girl.'

He unhooked the house-telephone that kept him in touch with all departments. 'Foreign Fancy. That you, Johnson? Send Miss Maddison to me. Serving? What's that? Mr Harry? Soon as she's disengaged, then.' He slammed the receiver on its hook with a crash.

II.

If it is true that 'all girls love a sailor,' there could have been few whole hearts left in Rotherton's. Even the dapper young men hurrying back and forth laden with rolls of dress material felt adventure faintly stirring in their blood, as

Harry Rotherton, of H.M.S. *Dragonfly*, with dark hair crisped by the salt wind, and cheery, smiling face tanned to the colour that only rain, sun, and the breath of the sea can give, passed them on his way to the 'Foreign Fancy' department.

In the heated air of the crowded, bustling shop, where, in spite of the whirling fans overhead, the faint odours of wool and dye-stuffs still lingered, the young sailor seemed strangely out of place.

Mr Johnson of the flat feet and supple backbone, smilingly headed him off from Rose Maddison's counter, and summoned a flamboyant damsel with yellow hair to wait upon him.

He was a young man of direct methods, however. 'Thanks, Mr Johnson. Don't quite know what I want yet. I'll look round a bit, and wait until Miss Maddison is free.'

Mr Johnson hung about in the offing while Miss Maddison produced cigar-cases for Harry's inspection, until the plaintive cry of 'Sign' summoned him to a distant counter.

Harry wasted no time. 'Confound all this trash,' he said, impatiently pushing aside the goods he had been examining. 'You know well enough it isn't cigar-cases I want to talk about, but with this beastly counter between us, and all these folk prancing about—here comes that rubber-neck again—yes, this one will do, thank you.'

Again the frock-coated shepherd was called away by the bleat of a distant sheep.

'Now, Rose—'

'Please, Mr Rotherton! Remember this is not a garden-party at Seagrove Court. That is all ancient history. I am a shop-girl now, with my living to earn, and you are making it terribly difficult.'

'If you'd only be sensible, and let me talk to you somewhere else. Hang it all—here he comes again!'

A drunken croquet-ball came wobbling along the overhead switchback, and fell with a thump into the leather-padded rat-trap by Rose's side.

The momentary touch of her hand, as she handed him bill and change, sent the hot blood

racing to Harry's head, but the bland and oily presence of the shop-walker at his elbow prevented further speech. With firm, set jaw and angry, determined eyes he strode through the swing-doors into the street.

Mr Johnson, with a gleam of triumphant malice in his eyes, delivered the summons to Sir William's office, and, with his hands clasped behind his back, resumed his slow promenade of the floor.

III.

Sir William, seated in lonely state at the head of the leather-topped table that graced his office, expecting the advent of some pretty, flighty shop-miss, to whom he proposed to read a homily on the sin of counter flirtations, more especially when the customer happened to be the son of the firm, was somewhat taken aback when confronted with a tall, graceful girl, her severely-plain black shop-dress falling in soft, natural folds around her slender figure as she moved with a quiet dignity across the thick Turkey carpet, seeming far more at home in the sober luxury of her present surroundings than ever she did at the counter.

She stood facing him, a courage akin to his own shining out of her brown eyes, waiting for him to set the note of the interview.

Repressing his first impulse to rise and bow, he asked her to be seated—a rare honour in this room—and for once in his life seemed at a loss for words. 'Ah—Miss Maddison, I—ah—you are acquainted with Lieutenant Rotherton, I am given to understand?'

She bowed in answer, a slight smile playing round the corners of her lips at the great man's embarrassment.

'You are, of course, aware that it is a rule of the house that all relations with customers must be kept on a strictly business footing?'

'As an employee of the firm, of course I have read the rules, Sir William.'

'Quite so. Now it has been reported to me that there seems to be some sort of——'

'Plain speaking will be best in this case, I think,' she interrupted him, two flaming spots of colour mounting to her cheeks. 'I am accused of flirting with your son; is that it?'

'Since you prefer frankness, that is so.'

'You have a right to know the facts. Mr Rotherton wishes to renew an old friendship that existed between us some years ago, under far different conditions, when we were little more than boy and girl. I quite realise, as he does not yet appear to do, that in the circumstances this is utterly impossible.'

'Hm! A strange story! How far had this "friendship" gone, and what were the "different conditions"?''

Miss Maddison rose from her chair, and stood facing him with blazing eyes. 'I thought you were a gentleman, Sir William!'

'Now just sit down again, Miss Maddison. You asked for plain speaking, and you shall have it. In the first place, I know honesty when I see it, and I don't doubt that every word you have told me is true. Had you been the sort of girl I expected to see, you would have been sent back to your counter with a word of warning. Having seen you, I take a more serious view. I am not so sure that, on Harry's side, at any rate, the feeling will stop at "friendship"—unless men have changed greatly since I was young. You are a sensible sort of girl, and I look for a straight answer to this question: Is there any necessity for me to take action in the matter?'

'Beyond waiving the formality of notice, and allowing me to leave your employment at once, there is none, Sir William.'

He leaned back and thought for a minute. 'Ay, ay, perhaps that's best. You are a plucky girl, and I'm sorry. It isn't my "ungentlemanly" language alone that decides you, I take it?'

There was a spark of humour growing in his eyes, and for the first time Rose showed signs of confusion. 'Indeed it is not. Your frankness I take as complimentary. But, please, need we discuss the matter any further?'

'Still a bit nettled, eh? Well, well, I see pretty well how matters stand; we will let it go at that. Gentleman or not, if I have hurt your feelings——'

'Oh don't, Sir William. I am so sorry——'

'No apologies needed. I like your spirit, and the way you got down to it with the gloves off at the start. Care to tell me anything about the "different conditions" you spoke of?'

'Does it matter?' said Rose, rather wearily. 'It is the present conditions only that concern us.'

'Just as you like. I shall pay you a month's salary in lieu of notice—I think you are entitled to that, and I expect you would bite my head off if I offered more—but that won't last long. I feel sort of responsible for you, and want to help you all I can.'

He turned to his desk, and wrote a note, which he handed to the girl.

'Margrave and Wilson; best firm in the West End,' he said, indicating the address on the envelope. 'You are just the type of girl to suit them. You will do better there than in a cheap middle-class trade like ours. Managing director is a personal friend of mine, and I'll write him privately. Anything more I can do for you?'

'Nothing, thank you. But believe me, Sir William, I am grateful for your kindness.'

'That's all, then. Stop a bit, though. Tongues will be wagging downstairs by this time. Come back here when you have got

your hat on, and we'll give them a better tune to wag to.'

Twenty minutes later, whispering groups of assistants dispersed hastily, and broke into feverish activity, electrified by the sight of Rose Maddison, in outdoor dress, chatting in a friendly manner with Sir William, who escorted her to the door, and shook hands with her ere she passed into the street.

Nothing short of paralysis of the tongue would have stopped gossip, naturally, but the rags and tatters that Rose's character were being busily torn into were instantly transformed into glittering silken robes.

CHAPTER II.

I.

BENEATH the age-old trees that bordered the smooth lawns of Cedar Grange, Lady Rotherton sat preening herself. Her tennis-party was going well. Harry was playing an athletic game with Irene Seagrove for partner, an arrangement that met with his mother's entire approval.

True, she could have wished that the girl would observe a trifle more reticence in the display of limb, and wear just a *little* more underclothing beneath that extremely thin frock, which might with advantage be six inches longer. And was it necessary, when serving, to stand on one leg, and kick the other high in the air, or to chase the ball *quite* so vigorously, with such long, inelegant strides?

Tennis was quite a different game when she was young, and if the girl were *her* daughter—well—perhaps . . .

Certainly they were well matched. The cousinship was a *very* distant one, and Irene's father was something important at the Admiralty, a very useful connection for Harry—that is—if . . . One could never be sure with young folks of the present day.

Harry seemed impervious to hints. He agreed readily—too readily—with her that Irene was a charming girl—a 'good sport and a ripping tennis-player' was his own version; but beyond that . . . Perhaps his father, if he were not so wrapped up in his business . . .

The 'business' was ever a thorn in the flesh to Lady Rotherton. She was herself a Seagrove; she had married when by no means in her first youth, and Sir William already middle-aged—and wealthy. It had turned out remarkably well, as such marriages often do, when neither partner expects too much devotion from the other.

Still, in Porthampton, it was impossible to ignore the fact that she was the wife of a tradesman, although an extremely successful one. All her friends had been very nice about it, however, and showed no hesitation in coming

to her dinner-parties. Indeed, with the men Sir William was *persona grata*, and even their wives admitted that he was 'an old dear, and really almost—'

If only he would retire, and stand for Parliament! But this was the one point on which he was adamant; yet, curiously enough, he was by no means disappointed that his son should not have followed in his footsteps.

II.

The game finished, Irene came and sat by Lady Rotherton, while Harry went in search of tea.

'Don't you think you should put on a cloak, or something, dear? You must be hot, and your dress is *so* thin.'

Irene laughed. 'Hot? Why, it was only pat-ball, auntie. We smothered them standing still!'

'Indeed? To me it seemed an extremely strenuous game, and I thought you and Harry played *so* well together.'

'Oh, Harry's a trier all right, but he's not up to Wimbledon standard. You know I've entered for the ladies' singles at a tournament next week?'

'So he told me. Poor boy! At sea all the time, he gets so very little practice. You must teach him the modern methods. I am *so* pleased that you are such good friends.'

'Why, of course we are, auntie. Didn't he pull me out of the pig-sty by the heels when I overbalanced, trying to tickle the sow with a stick? And didn't I push him into the duck-pond?'

'Ah! You were but children then. It is different now.'

'What is different, mums?' said Harry, coming up with a tray of tea-cups, in time to catch his mother's last words.

'Auntie and I were sentimentalising over the days of your vanished youth, Harry. Do you remember putting teasels in my hair?'

'Do I not? I found my pyjamas sewed up that night, and holly leaves in my bed. But you caught it later on, my lady!'

'I know. A wet sponge gives me the shudders yet. But perhaps it would be more decorous to draw a veil over subsequent details.'

'Much better, *my* dear,' hastily interposed Lady Rotherton.—'There is your father's car, Harry. I must run in and speak to him. You might show Irene the new rose garden; I am sure she would be interested.'

She sailed away, and for a time there was an awkward silence between the two young people. Their eyes met, and they both laughed.

'Well?' said the girl.

'Well?' countered Harry.

'Aren't you going to propose, then? That's what your mother left us alone for, you

know. She said I was to "teach you modern methods"!' "

'Should love to, if I thought you'd promise to "be a sister to me." Will you?'

'Will I what?'

'Oh, come along to the beastly rose garden, and let's have it out. Too many people about here.'

'All right. Is this a "way they have in the navy"?' "

(Continued on page 303.)

SLAVERY IN MOHAMMEDAN COUNTRIES.

By J. D. LECKIE.

I.

THE very name of slavery is abhorrent to most Britons, who make the proud boast that slaves cannot breathe on British soil. Some of this abhorrence, doubtless, is due to a mistaken idea of slavery, or, at least, of the system of slavery which exists in some countries. No doubt there are, or have been, forms of slavery that are utterly abhorrent, though even in the Southern States of America, the scene of the greatest anti-slavery agitation recorded in history, the condition of the slave generally was not so bad as readers of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are apt to imagine. Of this the writer speaks from personal knowledge.

In many Mohammedan countries slavery still exists in the old patriarchal form recorded in the Scriptures. Major-General Sir George Younghusband, in his work *Forty Years a Soldier*, mentions the fact that he had met slaves in Africa who assured him that they did not wish to change their condition, and that they even looked down with contempt on salaried menials. The Mohammedan slave regarded himself as a permanent part of his master's household, if not indeed as one of the family. He felt that his master's interests were bound up with his own, while the paid worker was a mere hireling and outsider. Household slavery, of course, is a different thing from agricultural slavery on a large scale, such as was practised in the Southern States; yet even in America, it may be noted, the anti-slavery agitation came, not from the slaves themselves, who were often quite contented with their lot, but mainly from such whites as had no practical knowledge of the system as it existed in the South.

The British have steadily maintained war on the slave trade, and rightly so. But the slave trade and slavery as practised in Mohammedan countries are very different things. In this connection Sir George Younghusband relates a rather amusing story. A British man-of-war had arrived at an Egyptian port with a cargo of rescued slaves on board. In the war against the slave trade prize-money was granted to the sailors for every slave rescued. The result of the capture, however, was rather unexpected. The slave-dealers were in the habit of taking their 'wares' to Cairo, Alexandria, or elsewhere, and disposing of them to the best

advantage; that is to say, in the case of the girls, to the fattest and richest pasha. But when the British intervened and rescued these slaves a complication arose. It was impossible to send them back to the remote interior of Africa where they had been recruited, and it was therefore decided that they should be sent on to their original destination, which was Suez, and that there kind and philanthropic people should be asked to find homes for them, as domestic servants or agricultural labourers. Now, by a curious coincidence, these kind and philanthropic persons proved to be the same rich pashas who formerly could afford to buy the slaves. Piously blessing Allah and the noble British nation, these pashas gratefully offered a happy home, more especially to the best-looking and plumpest females. The free gift of a commodity which formerly had to be bought as a luxury was a bargain dear to the Oriental heart.

II.

That the position of the slave in Mohammedan countries was not necessarily an unhappy one is proved by the fact that many former slaves have risen to the highest positions in the state, including that of Grand Vizier. Even a sultanate is within their grasp. The Sultan Zobeir Rabah, who gave so much trouble to the French in their conquest of Central Africa, took his name from Zobeir Pasha, whose former slave he was. That he adopted the patronymic of his former master seems to denote that the bond of sympathy so often found between the Mohammedan slave and his master existed in this case also. Zobeir Pasha was a man of special ability and a friend of General Gordon, who had a great regard for him. Rabah in 1893 overthrew the Sultan of Bornu, a rich and prosperous African state larger than England. Then in 1897 he fell on the neighbouring state of Baghirmi, and forced the Sultan and the French Resident to flee. He then made war on France, and though at first defeated, raised a fresh army, and for a while waged a successful campaign. It was not until he was killed in battle, in April 1900, that the French were able to overthrow his government.

That slaves in Mohammedan countries were, as a rule, humanely treated can be shown by many examples. The Moors, after they had

been expelled from Spain and Portugal under circumstances which involved great hardships, made war on all Christendom, in which they were joined by their fellow Mohammedans of the Mediterranean. Thus arose the famous depredations of the Barbary corsairs, which lasted for centuries. The Christians captured during these raids were enslaved, but appear to have been, on the whole, well treated. They were not compelled to renounce their religion, but those of them who voluntarily turned Mohammedan were given their freedom and enjoyed certain privileges. These facts are confirmed by the records of slaves which have come down to us. One of these is the famous Spanish author, Cervantes. He was captured by a Barbary corsair, and for five years was held as a slave in Algiers. He was treated indulgently, and spent much of his time in literary work. Even the fact that he several times attempted to escape, and aided others to do so, does not seem to have brought with it any severe punishment. In *Don Quixote* and his other works, Cervantes incidentally alludes to this captivity, and nowhere, so far as the writer is aware, does he complain of harsh treatment as his lot. He ultimately obtained his freedom by ransom. St Vincent de Paul, another victim of the corsairs, was even better treated, his master (in this case a renegade Christian) actually assisting him to escape from the country.

III.

Slavery still exists in those parts of British Africa which are not yet under effective control, but as British influence extends it will gradually disappear. Although Morocco is now a French protectorate, it is said that slaves are still publicly sold in the markets in such parts of the country as have not been effectively occupied by the French.

In Zanzibar, when it became a British protectorate, slavery was a flourishing institution. One of the first acts of the British Government was to urge the Sultan to emancipate the slaves, to which advice he gave a diplomatic approval, but added significantly that 'the Conservative party was very strong in Zanzibar,' and even the Sultan had his limitations. As early as 1873, however—that is, seventeen years before his country became a British protectorate—he had undertaken to suppress the slave trade, of which Zanzibar was an important centre. The legal status of slavery was finally abolished in the protectorate in 1897, though not without complications and complaints in parliament.

The story is told of a Christian slave who, while working in the garden belonging to a rich Moor of the Barbary States, captivated the affections of a Mohammedan lady. On her proposing to marry him, he answered sorrowfully that such a course was impossible, as he already had a wife living in his own country.

Nothing daunted, the fair inamorata explained that such a circumstance was no obstacle, as by Mohammedan law he could marry a second wife, and she was quite willing that, if he regained his liberty, he should divorce and leave her, this procedure being also permissible by Mohammedan usage. Overcome by such forcible arguments, the slave consented to the marriage, and had no reason to regret it. But when, at a later date, he regained his freedom, his thoughts reverted to his distant home and the wife who was still hopefully awaiting his return. His second wife, notwithstanding the agreement entered into at the time of the marriage, offered to accompany him to his distant destination. The two wives met, became great friends, and the double conjugal union lasted till death. All three were buried in the same grave. Such is the story as it is told; it may be true, or it may not, but such a romance could only take place in a Mohammedan country.

As a matter of fact, the position of a Mohammedan slave often corresponds to that of the retainer of a chief in the old feudal times. He was sometimes the trusted employee and confidant of his master, and could rise to a position of responsibility in his service. The tie which united the two was one of common interest. It was the master's duty to provide for his slave and minister to his comforts so long as he performed his duties faithfully, even in illness, infirmity, or old age. What's in a name? is often asked. A great deal, sometimes. Call the Mohammedan 'slave' a retainer, and prejudice vanishes. Call him a slave, and the very name conjures up intolerable associations.

THE SONG OF THE CELTIC EMIGRANT.

THERE'S no time for tarrying,
For tear-flow or sigh,
The wind is up, the wave is strong,
The moon is riding high:
My back is to my father's house,
My boat is in the bay,
And every hour's an iron hand
That's pulling me away.

A clutch of grief is on our hearts,
A seal is on our speech,
A threnody of days gone by
Is poignant each to each;
For I must try one tilt with fate,
And you must linger here,
To tend the hearth and trim the lamp,
And watch the waning year.

Then farewell to broad river
And green girdling plain,
And farewell to the hoary keep
Brow-beaten by the rain:
Where e'er I tread the wide world,
Or sail the restless sea,
My thoughts shall come on wings of love,
And take their rest with thee.

BARBARA ROSS McINTOSH.

KING O' THE MOORS.

By MACDONALD RAE.

I.

TOPPING the crest, and silhouetted against the western sky, the old tower stood solemn and majestic, dominating the far-flung strath, sentinel-fashion. Eastwards, in successive broken leaps, the ridge dropped down, merged with the general level of the uplands; rolled onward, and, rising abruptly skyward, lost itself in a clump of wind-blasted larch-trees. In between swept the moor, gorse-covered, heather-grown, boulder-studded.

Out of a maze of pop-holes, at the junction of the dry-stone dykes, something emerged—something white, brown, long, and sinewy, that moved in short, jerky motions, suggestive of nerves. It was a polecat; not a common every-day member of the tribe, but a super-polecat, acknowledged king of the moors.

From the old rubble-heap in the larch wood, high up on a projecting spur of the range, he had come, because he had got notice to quit—notice in the shape of a steel trap generously baited with rabbit entrails. Being wise in the ways of the wild, he did not stop to argue the pros and cons of fixity of tenure. He just went.

Whether the fact that someone had begun to 'sit up' and take notice of his existence appealed to his vanity, I do not know; but certain it is that the rabbit entrails appealed to his palate—so he took them, chuckling the while.

Moving westward and up-wind, he struck the old turf dyke skirting the wood, and followed it until he came to the fissure in the rock, where the water trickled into the drinking pool. He crossed the mud-ooze in the full glare of the afternoon sun, and paused to listen. This was new territory to him; from this his journey would be in the nature of a prospecting expedition.

He drew himself up to his full height, balancing himself on his hind-legs, and took in every sound. It was then that one saw the justification of his name. The white of his breast and throat stood out boldly against the dark background of rock: the sun caught and held his sleek coat in a mass of shimmering bronze, while his alert and spring-like poise suggested muscular strength of a steely consistency. Twenty-six inches he measured from tip to tip, twenty-six inches of silent, lightning death.

Surely this was a spell of uninterrupted silence—you or I would have said it was; but, to the listener by the pool, the place was teeming with life. He moved two feet, and sat up again; he was taking no chances; he never did. That's why he had been a polecat so long.

His keen, sharp-pointed ears caught and recorded a myriad infinite sounds, which were duly interpreted, analysed, and diagnosed by his subtle brain. These sounds were danger-posts on the highways of the wild. That low, vibrating, continuous noise clearly indicated that the flock was moving down to the lower pastures, and, from the curlews' wild and plaintive call, he deduced the fact that there was some one with the flock. There was no danger immediately above him; of this he was sure, because of that woodpecker he could hear at work amongst those blasted larch-trees. Also, he was keenly aware of some sort of an early insect at work behind that tuft of wire-grass, and those two blue-bottles cutting fantastic figures in the shaft of sunlight. Yes! he was taking it all in, even to his own shadow in the pool.

Ah! what was that? He grew two inches, or at least seemed to; his head turned to one side, and his eyes peered questioningly upwards. Suddenly, there was the sound of wings, and a hen-kestrel swept over the edge of the rock, stalled, flattened out, and dropped right on the spot where the king had been. With the first hint of danger—that woodpecker had abruptly stopped its rat-tat-tat—he was alert, and when a darkening shadow shot between him and the heavens he just went; disappeared as if the earth had swallowed him. Not that the polecat is common prey for a kestrel, but then, you never can tell what a kestrel will do, and the king evidently knew that he would be a polecat much longer if had no arguments with one.

II.

With the night, the king again came into being, emerging from his fastness after a careful analysis of the various scents borne to him by the evening wind. He crossed the ooze to the water, where, perched on a corner of rock, he carefully and elaborately made his toilet, frequently stopping to listen and question the breeze. Finished at last, he loped off through the rough grass into the forest of gorse. The moon, shooting her horns above the fir-belt topping the back range, found him following the sheep-track, crossing and re-crossing, this way and that, seeking, always seeking, goaded by his inherent instinct to kill. He surprised a mole disporting itself in the soft earth around a clump of whins, and promptly fell upon it. Really he had no time for moles, but they were much better dead.

Leaving the track, and turning back in a half-circle, he crossed the overflow of the drinking-pool. Here he collided with a hedgehog, and

there emanated from that little hollow the worst thing in cursing a polecat has ever attempted. The king stood, back up, fur bristling, and fore-paw raised, swearing horribly, while the hedgehog, with disconcerting deliberation, rolled himself into a ball, presenting a formidable array of interwoven spikes, a defence which he knew to be impregnable. Had it been at all possible to accomplish that hedgehog's demise, the king would have found means. But it wasn't possible. With a parting curse he pursued his course up the slope from the stream and through a labyrinth of bracken stems, with the moonbeams bursting fitfully through the intermittent breaks in the green and gold canopy of the overhead foliage. On the outer edge of this miniature forest he introduced himself to a grass-mouse, and left it lying, hind-legs convulsively twitching, for the night-birds to devour.

He picked up a rabbit-run and followed it, down the rocky face of an old stone quarry, and up the ascent on the far side; through a maze of pop-holes in a dense forest of whin, and out again into the moonlight. Then it was that he got mixed up with a rabbit-snare; went heels-o'-er-head, so to speak, and swore on half-a-dozen different keys.

It frequently is the case that, when the unexpected happens, you miss that for which you were really seeking. With the king this was almost the case. He nearly missed, but not quite; the wind told him something—told him that that molehill over there was a rabbit.

It is fairly common knowledge that a snake can throw some magnetic spell over a bird; the weasel tribe is endowed with a like power. The rabbit sat quivering; eyes starting out of their sockets, and terror showing in their liquid depths. It was waiting for the end. The king covered the intervening space in a series of side-long, hunched-up leaps, and got busy. A long-drawn, high-pitched squeal told its own tale to every denizen of the wild within hearing. Again it came, wild and shrill, like the last cry of a lost spirit on that lonely moor. But this time it stopped short, as if severed with a sword. It was the death-knell of Brer Rabbit.

In the fir-plantation, hard by the stubble-field, a cushat cooed to his mate, and, reassured, settled himself to sleep again. A cock-pheasant, in a spruce-tree, split the silence with his noisy alarm, causing a score of black-faced hogs to scurry from under the branches, and a dog-fox to halt in his investigation of a rabbit-warren.

The king stood clear, his white vest dyed a deep crimson, his tongue flicking round his sensitive snout in apparent relish. He surveyed his victim and then the wild, where everything kept gray and still. Then, seemingly imbued with a spirit of bravado—or was it arrogance?—he fell on the rabbit again, and,

with a parting 'worry,' was gone, flitting out into the ghostly moonlight like a nomad of the night.

III.

A rabbit-run led him to the dry-stone dyke, and through he went—but not by the rabbit-run. No—he came out on the farther side *viâ* a drain-pipe! Skirting the edge of the field in the lee of the wall, the king passed through an upright wire net. The scent of sheep was now predominant, for here a flock of black-faces were being 'finished off.' He followed a trail, hard-baked by many cloven feet, that ran towards the feeding-troughs. In the lee of the first he stopped and took his bearings. That sharp, black shadow cutting the softness of the light was the turnip-cutter, and the miniature mountain beyond represented turnips. That was quite in order; it was the scent that puzzled him.

Oil-cake and oats—these were quite obvious to his supersensitive proboscis. But mingling with the familiar smells was something else, which he could not at the moment identify. He moved down six yards and found the scent had become more elusive. Six yards more and it had run out; so he turned back and picked it up again. It was a 'wavy' night breeze; faint, and rather uncertain in its direction, it confused him considerably. Persistence triumphed, however; he discovered, on moving to the right, that the scent improved, became distinctly good, and brought him up in the shadow of another trough. He was getting 'hot' now! Hugging the shadows, he sat up; his long, sensitive whiskers twitching in sympathy with his questioning nose. 'Rat,' he said, and vanished. He was still there, but you could not see him; he had become part of the trough.

Then came the sound—'tick, tick, tick' and 'tap, tap, tap.' Though certainly not loud, to the king, crouching under the boarding, it was magnified tenfold. Moving stealthily this way and that, he analysed sound and scent until he knew just where that rodent was. With wonderful precision he struck. There was a high-pitched, knife-edged squeal, a scratching, scuffling, rough-and-tumble sort of encounter, and a dead, half-grown she-rat was nervously twitching in the bottom of the trough. Like Achilles, the king dragged his victim out into the open and left it lying in the eye of the silent moon.

Only a half-grown she-rat—that was all. Yet already there was some living thing that had sensed another tragedy, had heard that death-knell cut into the heavy stillness. And that thing was Scarred-face, the founder of the rat colony. Nor was it the first time he had heard that call! Now that he heard it again, he got busy; that is, his brain got busy, while his body became part of the turnip-cutter under which he

was sitting. His was a master brain. The subtlety of his cunning was surpassed only by the boldness of his daring. In his own sphere, he was an outstanding, magnificent personality; in short, a veritable Napoleon. Hero of a hundred fights, victor of them all, he was acknowledged to be the biggest thing in the rat-world between the fir-plantation and the gorse-covered uplands. And fight again he must. The polecat must be intercepted before he reached the turnip-heap, because of those young rats ensconced there. Scarred-face must act quickly.

The king flitted into the patch of moonlight ten yards in front and sat up, nose working overtime. Scarred-face's twin orbs became two pin-points of green light, staring into the night like gems in an ebon setting.

The king tried the breeze, looked this way and that, and came on again. Four yards away he stopped to scrutinise the shadows around the legs and framework of the turnip-machine, and stiffened involuntarily. What was that? He had caught the hard, luminous sheen of Scarred-face's eyes, and his every move became one of caution. Creeping off to the right in a half-circle, he reached the upright wire net skirting the turnip heap, and came up behind Scarred-face, getting the pull of the wind. He said 'rat' right away, and became immovable. Scarred-face had faced about, and now each beheld the other, while each waited for the other to show his hand. Scarred-face was only a deeper shadow in a mass of shadows; the king looked like an apparition.

Scarred-face had blundered, and now he knew it. He had let the king get between him and the rat colony. So fight he must. As a patch of cloud drifted across the moon's face, he shifted. The king never saw the movement, but nevertheless he knew that Scarred-face had gone. The scent told him that. Then followed a game of hide-and-seek amongst the shadows, but the polecat kept his advantage. In the end, Scarred-face streaked for it, but had no luck. The king, seeming to divine his intentions, started level, and the climax came when they both tried to get through the same mesh in the wire net at exactly the same moment.

IV.

There was no time lost. Scarred-face came in, low down and quick. With wonderful precision he laid open the king's shoulder and was out again. Back he came with lightning speed, and got home two wicked cuts, just as the king cut a fancy pattern out of what was left of the old warrior's right ear. There was no quarter, absolutely none. Scarred-face fought in the style peculiarly to all rats—charge—slash—break—cut and come again! He put all he knew into it, and at each encounter a streak

of fur was neatly chiselled from some part of the polecat's anatomy.

The king's white frontage showed crimson, but all along he was fighting bull-dog fashion, a silent, strong, give-and-take battle. And so far he had done most of the taking. He had lost quite a bit of fur, but was gradually forcing his opponent back, with eyes skinned for an opening. If the king was an expert at the game, Scarred-face was a master. He feinted, drew back, thrust, and covered up—never leaving a possible opening. Time after time he countered with lightning rapidity, and the effects of his strokes were already manifest.

The white of the king's breast had now practically merged with the deep bronze of his coat, but unflinchingly and untiringly he came on, again and yet again, relentlessly forcing his opponent back, and watching for some false move that would give him his opportunity. And that move came. They were now in the shadow of the turnip-heap, and Scarred-face, slipping the polecat's lead, went back right up against the turnips and overbalanced. The king took him side on; clinched, and held with locked jaws. He had struck too near the shoulder, and not far enough round, but if he could only hang on, the opportunity would surely present itself again.

Scarred-face served up his best tricks; tried everything he knew. He jumped, bucked, doubled, rolled, twisted, and scratched, while the king hung on with closed eyes, and wondered if he could manage. There was nothing between them in the matter of weight, and Scarred-face had the pull as far as experience went. Scarred-face braced himself up for a last desperate effort, and, using a turnip as a purchase for his feet, he 'bucked.' There was a dull thud, and something struck them, almost pounding the lives out of them, while the whole earth seemed to shake. A stream of turnips rolled past, and Scarred-face streaked for home. That one turnip, which was the key to the whole heap, had been dislodged in the *mêlée*, and the others, being piled on the slope, had gone careering downhill. The king also had gone—gone with speed—right back to the pop-hole where we first met him.

V.

Just as the first streaks of day were tinting the rough grass, there came a sound cutting into the deep hush of the moor. 'Caw' it came, far away at first, then nearer. 'Caw' again, now almost overhead, and the black one stalled, banked, and came down in a half spiral beside that rabbit of the night before. He was a raven, foraging early from the larch wood on the far shoulder of the hill. With head to one side he looked askance at the deceased furry one. He had seen rabbits dosed with strychnine before, and was taking no chances. Everything seemed

all right, and possibly the wire snare reassured him, so he started in. Two minutes later his mate joined him in the carving, and for some time there was heard the incessant jab, jab, jab of ebon bills. Then 'Cluck,' said the raven, and was motionless, his eye taking on a grimmer gleam. 'Cluck,' he exclaimed again, and, for no evident reason, went up aloft; his mate trailing after him.

A minute later, the keeper loomed big behind a clump of gorse, and that keeper was trying to ease his feelings by uttering words that are seldom printed. Also, he was thinking.

VI.

The level sun, gleaming full into the mouth of the disused rabbit-warren, woke the king. Here he had spent the night and the greater part of the day in a bed of dry leaves. Now, well-fed and well-rested, he felt fit. A trickle of water at the foot of the bank provided him with means for his toilet; and, thus refreshed, he set off, right westward, into the face of the sinking sun.

Everything was still, save for the incessant chirping of a stone-chatter atop of a burnt whin. The king gambolled in a patch of sunshine in front of a clump of gorse, and struck at an early blue-bottle disporting itself in the warmth. He had no definite object in view; and when, later on, he ran into the sheep-track, he inadvertently followed it, finally branching off on to the rabbit-track leading to his kill of the previous night.

But now the scene was changed. There was another object in the picture, for, beside the frame-work of the rabbit, was a black, helpless, fluttering thing, held in the remorseless grip of a steel vermin trap. It was one of the early morning visitors from the larch wood, who, raven-like, had returned to the spoil, quite oblivious of those traps which Lawson, the keeper, had set, cursing the while.

The king laughed inwardly as he ambled leisurely forward, regarding his latest victim from different angles. Next to the joy of killing was the anticipation thereof! He moved nearer, sideways; hesitated for a moment, then bounded in. They resolved themselves into a veritable ball of fur and feather, a whirling vortex of living demons, which subsided suddenly, for the king, finding his mark, bit deep, clean through the spinal cord, and the raven collapsed, a limp, trembling heap.

At this point, Nemesis descended from the blue in the shape of the raven's mate. He came at speed, and it was a pretty scrimmage while it lasted. A crimson streak was plainly visible on the polecat's front, and for him it was humiliating, to say the least.

The raven retired, dishevelled, to the top of a small, moss-covered whinstone, and remained motionless, feathers still ruffled. He knew his

mate was dead—he had seen death too often; and now he was to gamble with it again. He surveyed the scene. There was the king, and beside him his dead mate; here, just two yards from where he sat, was a patch of ruffled moss and the entrails of a rabbit. In his eye shone his last desperate calculation of chances, and he chuckled inwardly. Then, for no obvious reason, he rose, wheeled slowly round with awkward, flapping wings, and came to earth beside that patch of moss. 'Cluck,' he said, and was silent. Possibly his eye took on a harder gleam.

There he sat, inoffensive enough to look at, but, in reality, deliberately inviting the king to come and get him. And the king came in a series of bounds, and full of purpose. Half way he paused, possibly astonished at the black one's bravado, and approached with caution. He sprang just as the raven shot up aloft. There was a sharp click, and steel trap number two caught and held the 'King of the Moors.' The feathered one had played his trump!

Back to earth the raven came and, from his previous perch atop of the whinstone boulder, watched the murderer of his mate writhe in agony. 'Cluck,' he said, and smoothed his plumage; 'Cluck,' again, and dropped a foot from the king. Motionless he sat for a moment, and the gleam in his eye was razor-edged; then, with half-lifted wings he struck, and his javelin beak went straight through the eye to the brain.

Two nights later, when the moon shone clear, and the hill breeze rustled in the larch-trees topping the range, a polecat, suspended by the nose from the barbed wire on the top of the stone dyke, swayed gently to and fro, while, from the shadows beneath, a rat, large and old, with a battered ear and a scaly tail, gazed wonderingly upward.

A LANDSCAPE.

(As seen from the window of the train from Glasgow to London.)

A HEATHERED hill—
And 'neath, a little stream
Reflecting clouds of blue and gray,
Whilst rippling on its merry way.

A little field—
And on its curvèd length
The plough is turning fragrant earth,
Where soon the corn will have its birth.

A silver shower—
Seems cast upon a furrow
Like fairy coins, by mortals found,
With luck, on famed Tom Tiddler's ground.

We passed—
The coins took instant wings—
A flight of gulls in sunlit sky,
That fluttered down when we'd passed by

ETHEL MARY BORLAND.

LLOYD'S AND LONDON CITY LIFE SIXTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

By A CLERK OF THE PERIOD.

I.

I SUPPOSE most readers are aware of the fact that Lloyd's is an association in London of merchants, underwriters, and brokers interested in the business of insuring vessels at sea, carried on at the Royal Exchange. It was originally started in a coffee-house in Tower Street, London, kept by one Edward Lloyd, and the earliest notice of it occurs in the *London Gazette* of 18th February 1688, about ten months before the flight of James II. to France. The establishment removed to more commodious business quarters in Lombard Street in 1692, and Mr Edward Lloyd gave another proof of his enterprise and foresight by starting a weekly newspaper giving commercial and shipping news, under the name of *Lloyd's News*, still continued under the name of *Lloyd's List*. With the exception of the *London Gazette*, *Lloyd's List* is the oldest English newspaper. The insurance business also made rapid strides, and its headquarters removed to the Royal Exchange in 1774.

At that time marine insurance policies were usually hand-written, and different wordings were used, which were found occasionally to lead to disputes. In January 1779 the Committee of Lloyd's proposed a general form, which was finally approved by the members. It is of interest to note that with only a few slight alterations the same policy is used to-day, nearly a century and a half afterwards.

II.

I was employed in the later 'fifties of last century as a clerk to an underwriter at Lloyd's, who was also a wealthy India and China merchant. My duties were to attend at Lloyd's daily at 10 A.M., and to make notes of the principal shipping casualties from the books there, and return with these to my employer's office in Broad Street between noon and 1 P.M. Except on very rare occasions this work could usually be got through in half-an-hour, and the rest of the time I occupied in perusing files of the various English papers received there from all parts of the world. I also was able to add considerably to the collection of used postage-stamps which I had commenced when at school. I have often thought since that if I had possessed the slightest idea of the ultimate value used foreign stamps would acquire within a half-century of my frequenting Lloyd's reading-rooms I might be richer to-day by many hundred pounds, had I been able to keep them in good condition for so many years. Triangular Capes, Ceylon pennies, Mauritius, and other countries—

for which I read pounds sterling are sometimes paid by ardent collectors at the present time—I met with every day, and as I was good friends with the door-keepers, who collected the letter covers and waste-paper thrown away by members, I might have enlisted their services to collect for me. But my aims in those days were very humble, being limited to getting only one or two of any sort I had not previously seen, and these I could easily obtain in the reading-rooms for myself.

The rooms at Lloyd's are supposed to be available only to subscribers and members. But at the time I am writing about clerks also had free entry, and I never had my right disputed during the three years I frequented them from 1858 to 1860. During all that time I never saw any one of the female sex in the rooms. Possibly in these days, when Women's Rights seem to be so universally admitted, and we have women barristers and women sitting as jurors and as members of Parliament, it will not be easy to keep them from being underwriters, provided they are able to deposit the necessary security of £10,000 as a guarantee for meeting their engagements, and pay the usual fees.

III.

My employer used to take losses in a very quiet and philosophic manner when they were reported to him. He would sometimes remark, 'If there were no losers there would be no winners.' There was no telegraph to India in my time, and no means of getting news from there in a few hours, as is possible now. I remember one of my notes causing some excitement. It recorded the destruction by fire nine days before of a vessel called (if I remember right) the *Red Gauntlet*. The loss was posted in Lloyd's books right enough, but how the news had arrived so quickly startled everyone.

There is some resemblance between the business of underwriting and that of book-making or laying the odds against horses in a race. A man owning a single ship or steamer could not afford to run it if every voyage had to be undertaken solely at his own risk. Insurance to him is therefore a necessity, as without it he might be ruined if his vessel was wrecked. A racehorse owner similarly might not be able to afford to undergo the heavy cost of training and keeping up a costly establishment if his reward was to consist solely in the money given as a prize if his horse won. The underwriter therefore steps in, and for a small premium safeguards the owner of a vessel against ruin by returning him its value if it should be wrecked;

and he can afford to do so because he insures perhaps a hundred or more vessels, and the law of average comes into force, and they cannot all be casualties. The bookmaker does similar offices for the racehorse owner, and through betting makes it possible for him to obtain something over and above the comparatively small amount of money he would receive if his horse won.

There is this important difference between the two businesses. The premium paid to the underwriter belongs to him, and, whatever happens, is never returned. He pays up the insurance money in event of loss, but the premium remains his own. The bookmaker if he loses by the horse winning gets nothing from the owner he pays. But as only one horse can win a race, he usually manages to indemnify himself by laying against all the other horses in the races. There may be twenty or thirty, so he usually comes out on the right side. In the old days of ready-money bookmaking, now illegal, a backer had to deposit his money beforehand when he made a bet, but this was duly returned intact with the winnings if the horse backed won the race.

Large companies owning a number of steamers do not generally insure them. They open an underwriting account in their own offices, crediting it with what would be the premium, and debiting it in the rare case of a loss with the value of the steamer. It usually happens that this underwriting account turns out a substantial profit yearly, when weather conditions all over the world are received and published daily, and the 'law of storms' has been studied everywhere during the last forty or fifty years by those whose business connects them in any manner with the seas.

IV.

My duties, after taking my reports from Lloyd's to the office, principally consisted in copying letters, or adding up columns of figures in various ledgers. There was always something to do until 5 P.M., when our day was over. Most of us lived some four or five miles from the city, and there were not then so many conveniences for travelling as there are now. I generally went to and fro by omnibus; our office hours were from 9.30 A.M. to 5 P.M. Occasionally, on mail days to India and China, we would be detained a little longer, but this very seldom happened. Copying letters would now be done by typewriters, but they had not been invented in those days. The Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park had done something towards stimulating invention. I remember being taken there as a child on three occasions. Steel pens and blotting-paper were used in London in the 'fifties, but they were novelties, and many old people did their writing with quill pens even in 1858. When staying at Boulogne for my holidays I

recollect seeing a clerk in the Post Office using sand to dry what he had just written. I never saw a Sedan chair used in England, but they were still used in Boulogne in 1849, for I remember being conveyed in one with my sister to a children's party in that year.

Perhaps the day of the greatest excitement I ever witnessed in London during my life there as a clerk was the 17th April 1860, when the fight between Tom Sayers and Heenan the 'Benicia Boy,' as he was called, took place at Farnborough, Aldershot. Heenan was a big American, five inches taller than Sayers, and the fight was one for the boxing Championship of England. Sayers was a Sussex man known as the most scientific boxer of the day. He exhibited the utmost bravery in the fight, and towards its conclusion continued it with only one arm against his gigantic antagonist. Ordinary business seemed to be suspended in the City, and groups of men assembled in what were generally the most busy quarters could talk of nothing else than what was going on at Farnborough and the progress made in the fight. It ended by the ropes being cut, which probably saved Sayers's life. Some years afterwards boxing without gloves was put a stop to, and made an offence. Whilst there is no doubt that, as was stated in one of the leading London papers after the fight between Sayers and Heenan, boxers often display in their miserable trade qualities which in higher fields make individuals and nations great, the prize-fights which so often took place during the first half of the nineteenth century in England collected mobs of the lowest scum of our large cities, who attacked and plundered anyone in decent attire who may have taken interest in boxing as a science, and occasionally they proved more than a match for the police. The events of 1914-18 showed that Britons have not suffered in any way in the qualities which go to the making of good soldiers by the fact that prize-fighting with ungloved fists has now been stopped for over a generation in England.

I do not know what remuneration clerks receive at the present time, but it may interest them to know that I was paid £60 yearly salary, which for a lad not yet out of his teens was liberal enough. The hours of work are probably longer now. We left office at 2 P.M. on Saturdays, and were allowed a fortnight's holidays each year. My omnibus fare cost me something like £15 a year, but as I was living with my family, my board and lodging cost me nothing. If I had had to provide for my own 'keep' the salary would have left little for clothes and amusements. Yet it was thought a desirable position for one of so young an age at the time, and there were doubtless many quite as competent clerks receiving even smaller remuneration than I did, who managed to live without the advantages I enjoyed.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

By JOHN BUCHAN, Author of *John Burnet of Barns*, *Greenmantle*, &c.

CHAPTER IX.—SIR ARCHIE INSTRUCTS HIS COUNTRYMEN.

CROSSBY was right in his forecast. The sudden interest in the Scottish Tutankhamen did not survive the revelation of Harald Blacktooth's reincarnation as John Macnab. The twenty correspondents, after lunching heavily with Mr Bandicott, had been shown the relics of the Viking, and had heard their significance expounded by their host and Professor Babwater; each had duly despatched his story, but before nightfall each was receiving urgent telegrams from his paper clamouring for news not of Harald but of Harald's successor. Crossby's tale of the frustrated attempt on the Glenraden deer had intrigued several million readers—it was the silly season, remember; and his hint of the impending raid on the Strathlarrig salmon had stirred a popular interest vowed to any lawless mystery and any competitive sport. In the doings of John Macnab were blended the splendid uncertainty of a well-matched prize-fight and the delicious obscurity of crime. Next morning the news of John's victory at Strathlarrig was received by the several million readers with an enthusiasm denied to the greater matters of public conduct. John Macnab became a slogan for the newsboy, a flaming legend for bills and headlines, a subject of delighted talk at every breakfast-table. Never had there been a more famous eight-pound salmon since fish first swam in the sea.

It was a cold gray morning when Lamancha and Archie left Crask in the Hispana, bound for the station of Bridge of Gair, fifty miles distant by indifferent hill-roads. Lamancha, who had telegraphed for clothes, was magnificently respectable below his heavy ulster—which was not his usual habit, but a concession to the urgent demand for camouflage. He was also in a bad temper, for his legs were still abominably stiff, and, though in need of at least ten hours' sleep, he had been allowed precisely six. At long last, too, his speech had begun to weigh upon him. 'Shut up, Archie,' he told his host. 'I must collect what's left of my wits, or I'll make an exhibition of myself. You say we get the morning's papers at Bridge of Gair? They may give me a point or two. Lord, it's like one of those beastly mornings when they rake you up at two to climb Mont Blanc, and you wish you had never been born.'

Sir Archie had no inclination to garrulity, for black fear had settled on his soul. In a few hours' time he would be doing what he had never done before, standing before a gaping audience, which was there to be amused and possibly instructed. He had a speech in his pocket, care-

fully fashioned in consultation with Lamancha, but he was miserably conscious that it had no relation to his native wood-notes. What was Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba? Why on earth had he not chosen to speak about something which touched his interest—farming, for example, on which he held views, or the future of the Air Force—instead of venturing into the unknown deserts of foreign affairs? Well, he had burned his boats and must make the best of it. The great thing was to be sure that the confounded speech had been transferred from paper to his memory.

But as the miles slipped behind him he realised with horror that his memory was playing him false. He could not get the bits to fit in; what he had reeled off so smoothly twenty-four hours ago now came out in idiotic shreds and patches. He felt himself slipping into a worse funk than he had ever known in all his tempestuous days. . . . For a moment he thought of throwing up the sponge. He might engineer a breakdown—it would have to be a bad spill, for the day was yet young—and so deprive Muirtown of the presence of both Lamancha and himself. It was not the thought of the Conservative cause or his own political chances that made him reject this cowardly expedient. Two reasons dissuaded him; one, that though his friends continually prophesied disaster, he had never yet had a smash with his car, and his pride was involved; the other, that such a course would reveal Lamancha's presence in his company too near the suspect neighbourhood, and might expose the secret of John Macnab. . . . No, he had to go through with it, and, conning such wretched fragments of his oratory as he could dig out of his recollection, Sir Archie drove the Hispana over the bleak moorlands till he was looking down on the wide strath of the Gair, with the railway-line scarring the heather, and the hotel chimneys smoking beside a cold blue-gray river. He had glanced now and then at his fellow-orator, whose professional apathy he profoundly envied, since for the last dozen miles Lamancha had been peacefully asleep.

They breakfasted at the hotel, and presently sought the station platform in the quest for papers. They were informed that papers came with the train for which they were waiting, and when the said train arrived, half-an-hour late, and Lamancha according to arrangement had sought a seat in the front while Archie favoured the rear, the latter secured a London evening paper of the previous day and that morning's

Scotsman. The compartment in which he found himself was crowded with sleepy and short-tempered people who had made the night journey from the south. So on a pile of three gun-cases in the corridor Archie sat himself, and gave his attention to the enlightened press of his country.

He rubbed his eyes to make certain that he was not dreaming. For there, in conspicuous print on a prominent page of a respected newspaper, was the name of John Macnab. There was other news, of outrages in Mexico and earthquakes in the Pacific, of the disappearance of a solicitor, and the arrival in London of a cinema star, but all seemed dwarfed and paled by Crossby's story. There was news of Harald Blacktooth, too, and authentic descriptions of the treasure-trove, but this was in an unconsidered corner. Cheek by jowl with the leading article was what clearly most interested the editor out of all the events on the surface of the globe—the renaissance of Harald Blacktooth phoenix-like from his ashes, and the capture of the Strathlarrig salmon.

Archie read the thing confusedly without taking much of it in. Then he turned to the London evening paper. It was a journal which never objected to breaking up its front page for spicy news, and there on the front page was a summary of the Strathlarrig exploit. Moreover, there was a short, hastily-compiled article on the subject, and a number of stimulating notes. John Macnab was becoming a household name, and the gaze of Britain was being centred on his shy personality. . . . The third act in the drama would be played under bright light to a full gallery. . . . Archie's eyes caught the end of the first *Scotsman* leader, which contained a reference to the Muirtown meeting, and a speculation as to what the Secretary of State for the Dominions would say. Archie, too, speculated as to what Lamancha was saying at that moment at the other end of the train.

This new complexity did something to quiet his nerves and take his mind off his approaching ordeal. There was no word in the papers of the coming raid on Haripol—Crossby had had that much sense; but, of course, whatever happened at Haripol would be broadcast through the land. The Claybodys, if they defeated John Macnab, would be famous; ridiculous, if they were beaten; and while the latter fate might be taken with good humour by the Bandicotts, it would be gall and wormwood to a young gentleman with strong notions on the rights and dignities of landed property. It was mathematically certain that Johnson Claybody, as soon as he saw the newspapers, would devote all the powers of a not insignificant mind and the energies of a stubborn temper to the defence of Haripol. That was bad enough, but the correspondents at Strathlarrig were likely to have heard by this time of the third of John

Macnab's wagers, and the attempt might have to be made under their argus-eyed espionage. Altogether, things were beginning to look rather dark for John, and incidentally for Sir Archie.

These morose reflections occupied him till the train stopped at Frew, the ticket-station for Muirtown. Here, according to plan, Sir Archie descended, for he could not arrive at the terminus in Lamancha's company. There was a cold gusty wind from the north-west which promised rain, the sky was overcast, and the sea, half a mile distant across the sand-dunes, was gray and sullen. Sir Archie, having two hours to fill before the official luncheon, resolved to reject the ancient station fly and walk. . . . Once again the shadow of his speech descended on him. He limped along the shore road, trying to see the words as he had written them down, trying especially to get the initial sentence clear for each paragraph, for he believed that if he remembered these the rest would follow. The thing went rather better now. Parts came in a cascade of glibness, and he remembered Lamancha's injunction not to be too dapper or too rapid. The peroration was all right, and so was the exordium; only one passage near the middle seemed to offer a snag. He devoted the rest of his walk exclusively to this passage, till he was assured that he had it by heart.

He reached Muirtown within an hour, and decided to kill time by visiting some of his friends among the shopkeepers. The gunmaker welcomed him cordially and announced his intention of coming to hear him that afternoon. But politics had clearly been ousted from that worthy's head by the newspaper which lay on his counter. 'What about this John Macnab, Sir Erchibald?' he asked.

'What about him? I'm hanged if I know what to think.'

'If Mr Tarras wasn't deid in Africa I would ken fine what to think. The man will likely be a gentleman, and he must be a grand fisher. I ken that bit o' the Larrig, and to get a salmon in it wants a fair demon at the job. Crask is no' three miles away. D'ye hear nothing at Crask?'

It was the same wherever he went. The fishmonger pointed to a fish on his slabs, and observed that it would be about the size of the one taken on Strathlarrig. The bookseller, who knew his customer's simple tastes in letters, regretted that no contemporary novel of his acquaintance promised such entertainment as the drama now being enacted in Wester Ross. Tired of needless lying, Sir Archie forsook the shops and went for a stroll beside the harbour; but even there John Macnab seemed to pursue him. Wherever he saw a man with a paper he knew what he was reading; the people at the street corners were no doubt discussing the same subject—nay, he was sure he heard the very

words spoken as he passed. . . . The sight of a blue poster with his name in large letters reminded him of his duties, and he turned his steps towards the Northern Club.

He was greeted by his host, a bailie of the town—the provost belonged to the enemy camp—and was presented to the other guests. 'This is our candidate for Wester Ross, my lord,' and Archie was introduced to Lamancha, who smiled urbanely and remarked that he had had the pleasure of meeting Sir Archibald Roylance before. The Duke of Angus would not arrive till the hour of meeting, but Colonel Wavertree was there, a dapper red-faced gentleman who had an interest in breweries, and Mr Murdoch of Nova Caledonia—immense, grizzled and bearded, who had left the Lews as a child of three for the climes which had given him fortune. Also there was Lord Claybody, who came forward at once to renew his acquaintance.

'Very glad to see you, Sir Archibald. This is your first big meeting, isn't it? Good luck to you. A straightforward declaration of principles is what we want from our future member, and I've no doubt we'll get it from you. Johnson sent his humblest apologies. He drove me in this morning, but unfortunately a troublesome bit of business took him back at once.'

Sir Archie thought he knew what that business was. He had always rather liked old Claybody, and now that he had leisure to study him the liking was confirmed. There was much of the son's arrogance about the eyes and mouth, but there was humour, too, which was lacking in Johnson, and his voice had a pleasant Midland burr. But he looked horribly competent and wide-awake. One would, thought Sir Archie, if one had made a great fortune oneself, and he concluded that the owner of Haripol was probably a bad man to get up against.

At luncheon they should have talked of the state of the nation and the future of their party; instead they talked of John Macnab. It was to be noted that Lord Claybody did not contribute much to the talk; he pursed his lips when the name was mentioned, and he did not reveal the challenge to Haripol. Patently he shared his son's views on the matter. But the others made no secret of their interest. Colonel Wavertree, who had come in from a neighbouring grouse-moor, was positive that the ruffian's escapades were not over. 'He'll go round the lot of us,' he said, 'and though it costs him fifty pounds a time, I daresay he gets his money's worth. I believe he is paid by the agents to put up the price of Highland places, for if he keeps on it will mean money in the pocket of every sporting tenant, besides the devil of a lot of fun.' Mr Murdoch said it reminded him of the doings of one Pink Jones in Nova Caledonia forty years ago, and told a long and pointless tale of that

hero. As for Lamancha, he requested to be given the whole story, and made a very good show of merriment. 'A parcel of undergraduates, I suppose,' he said.

But the bailie, who gave him the information, was a serious man, and disapproved. 'It will get the countryside a bad name, my lord. It is a challenge to law and order. There's too many Bolsheviks about as it is, without this John Macnab aidin' and abettin' them.'

'Most likely the fellow is a sound Tory,' said Lamancha, but the bailie ventured respectfully to differ. 'If your lordship will forgive me, there's some things too serious for jokin',' he concluded sententiously.

It was a dull luncheon, but to Archie the hours passed like fevered seconds. Agoraphobia had seized him once more, and he felt his tongue dry and his stomach hollow with trepidation. Food did not permit itself to be swallowed, so he contented himself with drinking two whiskeys-and-soda. Towards the close of the meal that wild form of valour which we call desperation was growing in him. He could do nothing more about his infernal speech, and must fling himself on fortune.

As they left the table the bailie claimed him. 'Your agent is here, Sir Archibald. He wanted a word with you before the meeting.'

A lean red-haired man awaited them in the hall. 'Hullo, Mr Brodie. How are you? Glad to see you. Well, what's the drill for this afternoon?'

'It's that I was wantin' to see you about, sir. The arrangement was that you should speak first, then Lord Lamancha, then Colonel Wavertree, and Mr Murdoch to finish off. But Bailie Dorrit thinks Lord Lamancha should open, him bein' a Cabinet Minister, and that you should follow.'

'Right-o, Brodie! I'm game for anything you like. I've been a slack candidate up to now, and I don't profess to know the job like you.' Sir Archie spoke with a jauntiness which made his heart sick, but the agent was impressed.

'Fine, sir. I can see ye're in grand fettle. Ye'll have a remarkable audience. There's been a demand for tickets far beyond the capawcity o' the hall, and I hear of folk comin' from fifty mile round.'

Every word was like a knell to the wretched Archie, but with his spirits in the depths his manner took a ghastly exhilaration. He lit a cigar with shaking fingers, patted Brodie on the back, linked his arm with the bailie's, and in the short walk to the hall chattered like a magpie. So feverish was his behaviour that, as they entered the building by a side door, Lamancha whispered in his ear, 'Steady, old man. For God's sake, keep your head,' and Archie turned on him the face of a lost soul.

(Continued on page 291.)

THE APPLE.

By JAMES T. JOHNSTON.

I.

FROM time to time new and startling theories are propounded regarding some staple article of diet, one of the latest being that the consumption of too much sugar in its various forms is responsible for 'neurasthenia, emotional instability, anger, degeneration, and national decay.' We had hitherto regarded sugar as beneficial to the healthy, and a promoter of muscular power, and had understood that the negroes in sugar-cane regions depended largely upon the juice of the cane for nourishment. Excess in any form is known to be harmful, but the perusal of this latest diatribe is not sufficiently convincing to stop us from sugaring our tea, and enjoying sweetmeats, cakes, and jam as heretofore. A horrid plausibility attends some of the theories which trace our feelings to our food, and it is as humiliating to be convinced that our thoughts and passions are derived from a chemical process as to believe that our noble emotions are not a matter of soul but of stomach.

There is, however, one article upon the beneficial properties of which all authorities appear to agree—namely, the apple. Though such a common fruit, many are not fully aware of the apple's valuable medicinal properties. It is claimed on its behalf that the apple is an excellent brain-food, owing to the amount of phosphoric acid it contains in an easily digestible form; that it excites the action of the liver, promotes sound and healthy sleep, and thoroughly disinfects the mouth, assists the kidney secretion, prevents the formation of stone, obviates indigestion, and is one of the best preventives of diseases of the throat; and last, but not least, it is said, next to the lemon or the orange, to be the best antidote for the thirst and craving of those addicted to the alcohol and opium habits.—This reads like the legend of the wonderful apple of Samarkand in *The Arabian Nights*, the mere smelling of which was a remedy for every human ailment. Its botanical name *malum* (despite the long 'a') is a libel, seeing it is all good. We have a couplet that 'an apple a day keeps the doctor away,' especially when eaten just before going to bed; and the Americans, who have always been great 'boosters' of the fruit, have another jingle:

Are you feeling kinder sick,
Like a rag the chickens pick?
Are you feeling cross and worried?
Wish, almost, you're dead and buried?—
Eat an apple;

which, while not ranking high as poetry, reveals the proper spirit towards the apple. In 1905 the Americans started an 'Apple Week,'

which bids fair to become a national institution, and very amusing are some of the notices that herald its advent—for example, 'Eve viii. 1, Adam viii. 1-2'—and now that Prohibition is in active operation they will doubtless be enlarged upon year by year, though, to judge from the recent increase in tea-drinking in the United States, the inhabitants are trying to drown their dryness in 'the cups that cheer, but not inebriate.' Following this lead, a 'Fruit Week' has been inaugurated in various centres of Great Britain, when a great amount of advertisement is focussed on the health value of fruit, and children are invited to compete for barrels of apples or boxes of oranges. Scotland has taken up the idea with enthusiasm.

II.

Persons who want to work well are advised by a physician to eat apples. It was through eating one (for the 'forbidden fruit' is popularly supposed to have been an apple) that our first parent (on the maternal side) started manual labour. 'I always feel so sorry for Adam and Eve having had no childhood,' wrote one of our human novelists lately; 'I am sure that is where the trouble came in, for all children steal apples, and if they had only been children when they ate the forbidden fruit it would not have been half so hard upon them.' Lovers of *The Pilgrim's Progress* will remember how when Christiana and her children were resting at the inn kept by Gaius, and a dish of apples was served at supper, the lad Matthew asked if they might eat them, 'since they were such by and with which the serpent beguiled our first mother;' and how Gaius replied:

Apples were they with which we were beguiled:
Yet sin, not apples, hath our souls defiled.
Apples forbid, if eat, corrupt the blood;
To eat such, when commanded, does us good.

This fruit, more, perhaps, than any other, has played a part in the affairs of man. Many are the legends connected with it in Mythology, and modern times can boast the parallel traditions of William Tell and William of Cloudesly. Mention of it is fairly frequent in Holy Writ, as where Solomon asked to be comforted with apples. And in the region of science stands pre-eminent the story of Newton's falling apple in his garden at Woodthorpe, which is said to have suggested to him the theory of universal gravitation, that attractive force which causes each body, whatever its size, to draw every other towards it, and which, acting across an interval of 95,000,000 miles, holds the earth as surely in her path as if she were connected with a chain

to the sun, as well as all the other planets in their respective orbits.

The apple has been dangerous to man ever since the days of our first parents, and, almost as long, a token of love. In the Middle Ages, owing, doubtless, to the feudal system with the rights of wardship, and as a consequence the sale of the marriage of heiresses to the highest bidder, marriages between infants were by no means uncommon. Evelyn tells of the union of the Duke of Grafton, aged nine, with Lord Arlington's only daughter, aged four, 'a sweet child if ever there was one,' when the ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury; and we read that the younger of the little princes murdered in the Tower was provided with a wife when he was four. There is also the pleasant tale of a boy of three being allured, in the year 1538, by an apple to go to church in his uncle's arms, and being so married; and of a certain James Ballard meeting a damsel in 1565, and being enticed by her with two apples to go to Colne church and marry her.

'Malo me Galatea petit lasciva puella.'

III.

Further, the apple is a vintage fruit, and what more refreshing and wholesome than a draught of cider?

Heaven's sweetest blessing, hail !
Be thou the copious matter of my song,
And thy choice nectar,

sang John Philips two hundred years ago in his eulogistic poem on the red-streak apple; which recalls the tragedy of the 'Micah Rood' apple, a fruit with a spot of red, like blood, in its heart. The story runs that in 1693 a pedlar with jewellery called at the house of a prosperous farmer named Rood, in Franklin, and next day was found murdered under an apple-tree in his orchard. The crime was never brought home to the farmer, but in the following autumn all the fruit on the fatal tree bore inside a red spot called 'Micah Rood's curse.' The farmer died soon after.

How an apple-stall in Hyde Park, kept by one Ann Hicks, grew by cunning small additions into a small house and garden, which she was requested to remove as being an obstruction on one of the routes to the Great Exhibition of 1851, was discussed in Parliament; though now but a matter of history, it furnishes a good example of how private rights are respected in this country. In 1738 some legal curmudgeon failed in his attempt to oust another apple-woman from one of the entrances to Lincoln's Inn, and one is still to be seen with her rosy wares spread out to tempt those passing up and down Chancery Lane. Nothing much in this, perhaps—an ordinary bit of street life; but she is the heir of long generations of apple-women, for we read that as far back as 1531—nearly four centuries

ago—there was a 'wyff' selling at that self-same Tudor gateway.

This country is very much favoured as regards the supply of this health-giving fruit since, in addition to those we grow ourselves, we receive others in a regular cycle from all the orchards of the world, and so are enabled to enjoy it fresh every day of the year. In this connection it is interesting to observe the order of supplies to Covent Garden. In July, near St Swithin's Day, the first English apples arrive, and in a normal season they are available until the following March. From the middle to the end of September early varieties are received from Nova Scotia. A little later, early varieties arrive from the Pacific Coast—California, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. These are followed by consignments from Ontario and the eastern States of America—Virginia and New York. Then come the main crops from the Pacific Coast, and supplies from the United States and Canada are available until the middle of April. Then Australia and New Zealand fill the gap before the English fruit again makes its appearance in July.

'EACH MAN MUST CARRY HIS PACK.'

As we trudge through the valleys, or climb o'er the hills

That lie on our life's varied track,
There are bundles for all made of goods and of ills—

And each man must carry his pack.

Stern fate has apportioned—to each is his own—

Let him set him to learn the knack;
And the lesson that e'en without pith or backbone
Each true man must carry his pack.

Let him not then complain to his neighbour, and say,

'Friend! courage and strength do I lack,'

But brace him to march with his load on the way,

For each man must carry his pack.

There are many who wander and light play the fool,

And some who are careless and slack;

But why for their sakes should we break through the rule

That each man must carry his pack?

Let him strive to go gladly and up with the dawn,

Strap his burden tight, tight on his back;

For present and past with one voice spur him on,
Shouting, 'Each man must carry his pack.'

But, alas and alack for those hopelessly maimed,

Swept frail 'mid life's spindrift and wrack;

May we all, though our aid be unsought and unclaimed,

Help each weak one to carry his pack.

MARY M. CURCHOD.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE LITTLE MARE.

By Lieut.-Colonel H. M. DAVSON, C.M.G., D.S.O.

I.

I FIRST saw her out hunting in Tipperary. She was ridden by a gunner, and it was to him that my attention was first directed. His appearance was revolting to the soul. He was minus a cap; his serge jacket must have been one of the original issue; he wore trousers which had worked half-way up to his knees; and his boots were devoid of blacking.

Hounds had checked, and I was making my way to him to utter a word of protest, when the line was picked up again, and my friend went off like a catapult.

There was no doubt that the man could ride. He let the mare rip, certainly, but he sat quite still, and never hustled her at her fences. She needed no help, for she slid over the banks like a cat; and, with an honest, straight-necked fox in front, I regret to say that before we rolled our quarry over in the open the distance between the gunner and me had considerably increased.

I slid off my horse and loosened the girths—for the run had been fast—and then I walked over to him. He was still mounted, contemplating the obsequies like Napoleon surveying the field of Austerlitz.

I was in orthodox hunting kit, but when I asked him where he came from and why he showed himself to the world improperly dressed, he seemed to tumble to the fact that I was an officer, for he poured forth the various excuses which I think some soldiers must learn by heart. He was on leave; he had lost his cap and had written to the Q.M.S., but had not got another yet; his pants were torn, and he had not been able to get them mended, &c.

Then I looked at the mare he rode. She was a mean little thing, not up to much weight (and he must have walked eleven stone), but she was thoroughbred from the tips of her ears to the soles of her little feet. A good shoulder; wonderfully well let down behind; a bright bay, and not a white hair on her. 'You ought to take care of that little mare,' I said as we parted. 'She is not nearly up to your weight, and she has carried you jolly well.' After that he had the grace to get off her. Hounds did little more that day, and I rode home, never expecting to see rider or horse again.

II.

I was engaged in barracks next morning when an orderly arrived to say somebody wished to see me. So I went round to the square, and found a burly farmer on an equally burly horse, followed by my friend of the previous day on the little mare. The farmer began negotiations at once. He said he had heard I had admired the mare yesterday, and had thought perhaps I should like to own her. I thanked him for his thoughtfulness, but said I had all the horses I wanted; and in any case the mare was too small for a hunter and too big for a polo pony.

I will skip the next twenty minutes. Those who have bought horses in Ireland will be able to fill in the gaps. When I had persuaded him that she was only four off, and not five, and that she was really 15 hands, and not 14·2 as he declared, he dropped the polo pony stakes and concentrated on her being 'the sweetest little mare that ever looked through a bridle, and would go all day out hunting and never put a foot wrong.'

I then began to hesitate. I was going to be married, and thought that when in condition she might make a good lady's hunter, and inquired the price. That did it, of course, and in another quarter of an hour I had bought her, and the burly one rode off with a cheque in his pocket. The little mare remained. The gunner walked.

I then began to wonder if I had done wrong, but the cheque was a small one, and I consoled myself with the thought that if the worst came to the worst I could stand the loss of most of it. The vet's opinion, subsequently obtained, was optimistic.

When properly cared for and fed on good English oats she grew out of all recognition, but she also developed certain light-hearted tricks which obliged one to keep one's wits about one, and which were certainly disconcerting to a lady who objected to being half torn out of the saddle by a succession of corkscrew pig jumps.

I hunted her for the remainder of the season, as did my wife and any guest who happened to stay with us, for, so far as carrying a stranger

across Tipperary was concerned, one could trust her with absolute confidence. And then I was ordered to India. I did not want to part with her, and fortunately a brother who had had a day's hunting on her, and who belonged to one of the London Yeomanry regiments, offered to keep her whilst I was away. So she was transferred to London and became a charger.

There was no need to school her, as she seemed to possess a super-equine intelligence as to what was required of her. In due course she took an honourable part in King George's Coronation procession, and then she fell into a decline, and lost condition so much that, after sundry letters, it was suggested that she should either be sold or destroyed. I objected to both proposals, and am very glad I did so. For when, after eighteen months, I returned home and took her into the country, she put on flesh to such an extent that I was chiefly concerned in keeping her in hard condition. She then became my second charger, and was used continuously as charger, hunter, lady's hack, and general pet, and she incidentally won the first prize for hacks at one of the principal horse shows. She was not a very good hunter in England. Timber or a well-cut fence she would always jump, but she hated being scratched, and negotiating a hairy fence on her was ever a moment of discomfort. But she never refused, and never once put me down. I think I can say the same of two other horses which I have owned, but I paid a great deal more for them than I paid for her.

And then the War came. She went out to France in 1914 and returned in 1919, and I rode her regularly from start to finish.

III.

I took two chargers out to the War. They were known locally as the Big Mare and the Little Mare. The Big Mare was wounded three times; the Little Mare went through it untouched—and she had some marvellous escapes. I do not suppose that many horses which went through the War escaped scathless under similar possibilities.

The first escape was in the Château of Reigersburg, outside Ypres, on the morning of the capture of Hooze. There was a three-stall stable in the grounds, and in it were my two chargers and my adjutant's. A shell entered the stable a yard over the Little Mare's head and burst in the corner. The splinters ricocheted round the walls, covered the Big Mare with small pieces of iron, brick, and mortar (we picked thirty-three bits out of her afterwards), and killed the adjutant's horse. The Little Mare was untouched.

The second occasion was after the retreat across the Ancre in 1918, when I had taken up my headquarters in the village of Bresle. It was a pretty sequestered village, built of

wood and plaster, and the farm which I occupied was surrounded by a courtyard which would have delighted the heart of Constable or Morland.

I reserved for myself a room looking into the courtyard, and next to me, in a sort of turnip-house, was the Little Mare. For twenty-four hours all was peace in the village itself, and then it was enfiladed from the north. This seemed to occasion a good deal of turmoil in the only street, and I went out through the old arched gateway to see if I could assist in calming matters. When I returned twenty minutes later I found my room smashed, 'Tom the Cook'—a faithful Scot from Hamilton, whose real name was Simmonds—lying dead inside it; the door of the turnip-house splintered to atoms; my groom, who had been inside, propped against a wall, with a pal applying restoratives, and the Little Mare standing inside unmoved and unhurt.

The next day was slightly worse, and I was obliged to move to the far end of the village, where it was hoped things would be better, and the telephone wires might be trusted to remain connected for more than an hour at a time. This farm also was good and picturesque, and it still had an old Frenchman in it—the only inhabitant who remained—who said he was too old to move. He found later that he wasn't. My mares were put in a stable divided by a lath and plaster partition from a large barn, wherein were horses and men belonging to one of the batteries in action on the ridge in front. At 6 A.M. next morning two complete gun teams and their drivers were destroyed in that barn, and my two mares were led out from the debris with not a mark on them.

Number three was when the wagon lines were near Varennes with an observation balloon overhead. The Boche proceeded to attempt the extermination of this balloon with high explosive. Apparently an enemy gun-layer made a mistake, as one of these shells burst low and beyond the target. The Big Mare received a small splinter in her wither—it is there now—and several other chargers which were picketed about here were injured. The Little Mare, who was standing close beside the Big Mare, was untouched.

The last scene is the courtyard of a farm at a cross-roads, west of Westoutre. Two mares were standing side by side with their heads poking out of loose boxes. A shell burst in the courtyard, causing several casualties and striking the Big Mare in the face, which necessitated a piece of bone as large as a penny being removed from her skull. The Little Mare escaped unhurt.

IV.

And yet, perhaps, the luck was not all on her side. When my division was withdrawn from the Somme battleground in 1916, the

Little Mare was brought up to me to ride back to rest billets near Corbie. I had waited behind to complete the handing over, and then cantered back over the downs. I noticed that she made a curious noise, but tried to think that it was owing to her being out of condition, as she was pig-fat, and I had not ridden her or seen her for over a month. At the first opportunity I had her out and examined her, and then with a sinking heart sent for a veterinary surgeon. The result was as I had feared—broken wind. The vet. was more hopeful than I was. 'She is not very bad,' he said, 'and when she is fit she will be better still. She will last you through this war anyhow.' It will be noticed that in August some of us were still optimistic that the Somme offensive was the beginning of the end.

But the vet. was right. She not only lasted me to the end of the War, which was much farther off than either of us foresaw, but in the interval she won for me a couple of gymkhana races, a tent-pegging competition, and I played her at polo. She had never played polo, but she took to it like a duck to the water. I imagine she considered it an improved form of tent-pegging. Her performance made me regret that she had not originally stood a few inches lower at the wither. I bought her back from government when the end came. I was advised not to do so on account of her infirmity, but I knew what would be her lot if she were sold, and I preferred to see her end her days in England.

But I recognised that as a hunter or a charger her career was finished, so she was turned out to grass and covered by St. Melruan, a Persimmon horse. Again I refused to take advice. She was too old, people said, and in any case, a broken-winded horse never bred. This advice I knew was good, but I ignored it, and in due

course she dropped a filly foal the very image of herself.

Then the end came. She gave very little milk, and milk at that time was impossible to obtain. The result was that the foal did not thrive, and one night she trod on it, and it never recovered. After that the Little Mare's future became a matter of moment. My first idea was to let her end her days in peace in some grassy paddock, but I was still soldiering at the time, and had not one of my own, and I had found since the War that hire of pasture had risen in value, so I hardened my heart and sent word that she was to be destroyed.

So passed one of the most faithful four-footed companions that I have ever owned. Nearly eleven years before my Irish horse-dealer had described her as the 'sweetest little mare that ever looked through a bridle,' and, as far as my experience goes, he was correct. She was never lame and she was never ill, and, except for her period in London, she never lost condition. I have paid four times her price for hunters that I would not have exchanged for her at any time when she was in her prime.

The Big Mare is grazing in a paddock outside my window as I write, but all I have left of the Little Mare is a pair of small polished hoofs that are mounted in my front hall. Dear little hoofs that I used to like to watch flicking out in front of her on the long hacks homeward on a winter evening, or during the interminable journeys over the pavé roads of north-eastern France. When she was gone the words of Whyte Melville came strongly to my mind, and although the fulfilment of his wishes require more imagination than most of us possess, I could only hope that it would be granted to me in life to have human companions as faithful and devoted to me as was the Little Mare.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER IX.—*continued.*

THE Town Hall of Muirtown, having been built originally for the purpose of a drill-hall, was capable of holding inside its ugly walls the better part of two thousand people. This afternoon it was packed to the door, presumably with voters, for the attendants had ruthlessly turned away all juvenile politicians. As Sir Archie took his seat on the platform, while a selection from the Muirtown Brass Band rendered 'Annie Laurie,' he seemed to be looking down as from an aeroplane on a strange unfeatured country. The faces might have been tombstones for all the personality they represented. Some of his friends were there, no doubt, but he could no more have recognised them than he could have picked out the starling which haunted the Crask lawn from a flock seen next day on the hill. The

place swam in a mist, like a corrie viewed in the morning from the hill-tops, and he knew that the mist came out of his own quaking soul. He had heard of stage-fright, but had never dreamed that it could be such a blackness of darkness.

The Duke of Angus was very old, highly respected, and almost wholly witless. He had never been very clever—Disraeli, it was said, had refused him the Thistle on the ground that he would eat it—and of late years his mind had retired into a happy vacuity. As a chairman he was mercifully brief. He told a Scots story, at which he shook with laughter, but the point of which he unfortunately left out; he repeated very loudly the names of the speakers—Sir Archie started at the sound of his own like a scared fawn; in a tone which was almost a

bellow he uttered the words 'Lord Lamancha;' and then he sat down.

Lamancha had the reception which is always accorded to a man whose name is often in the newspapers. Most of the audience had never seen him in the flesh, and human nature is grateful for satisfied curiosity. Presently he had them docile under the spell of his charming voice. He never attempted oratory in the grand style, but he possessed all the lesser accomplishments. He had nothing new to say, but he said the old things with a pleasant sincerity and that simplicity which is the result only of a long-practised art. It was the kind of speech of which he had made hundreds and would make hundreds more; there was nothing in it to lay hold on, but it produced an impression of being at once weighty and spontaneous, flattering to the audience, and a proof of the speaker's easy mastery of his trade. There was a compliment to the duke, a warm tribute to Sir Archie, a bantering profession of shyness on the part of a Borderer speaking north of the Forth. Then by an easy transition he passed to Highland problems—the land, emigration, the ex-service men, and thence to the prime economic needs of Britain since 1918, the relation of these needs to world demands, the necessity of meeting them by using the full assets of an empire which had been a unit in war and should be a unit in peace. There was little to inspire, but little to question; platitudes were so artfully linked together as to give the impression of a rounded and stable creed. Here was one who spoke seriously, responsibly, and yet with optimism; there was character here, said the ordinary man, and yet obviously a mind as well. Even the stern critics on the back benches had no fault to find with a statement from which they could only dissent with respect. None recognised that it was the manner that bewitched them. Lamancha, who on occasion could be profound, was now only vamping. The matter was a mosaic of bits of old speeches and answers to deputations, which he put together cynically with his left hand. But the manner was superb—the perfect production of a fine voice, the cunning emphasis, the sudden halts, the rounded cadences, the calculated hesitations. He sat down after forty minutes amid a tempest of that applause which is the tribute to professional skill and has nothing to do with conviction.

Sir Archie had listened with awe. Knowing now from bitter experience the thorny path of oratory, he was dumbfounded by this spectacle of a perfection of which he had never dreamed. What a fiasco would his halting utterance be in such company! He glanced at the notes in his hand, but could not read them; he strove to remember his opening sentences, and discovered them elusive. Then suddenly he heard his name spoken, and found himself on his feet.

He was scarcely aware of the applause with which he was greeted. All he knew was that every word of his speech had fled from his memory and would never return. The faces below him were a horrid white blur at which he knew he was foolishly grinning. . . . In his pocket was an oration carefully written out. If he were to pluck it forth and try to read it, he knew that he could not make sense of a word, for his eyes had lost the power of sight. . . . Profound inertia seized him; he must do something, but there was a dreadful temptation to do nothing, just to go on grinning, like a man in a nightmare who finds himself in the track of an express train.

Nevertheless, such automata are we, he was speaking. He did not know what he was saying, but as a matter of fact he was repeating the words with which the chairman had introduced him. 'Ladies and gentlemen, we are fortunate in the privilege of having heard so stirring and statesmanlike an address as that which His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Dominions has just delivered. Now we are to hear what our gallant and enterprising friend, the prospective candidate for Wester Ross, has to say to us about the problems which confront the nation.'

He repeated this exordium like a parrot. The audience scented a mild joke and laughed. . . . Then in a twittering falsetto he repeated it again, this time in silence. There was a vague sense that something had gone wrong. He was about to repeat it a third time, and then the crash would have come, and he would have retired gibbering from the field.

The situation was saved by Wattie Lithgow. Seated at the back of the hall, Wattie saw that his master was in deadly peril, and took the only way to save him. He had a voice of immense compass and he used it to the full. 'Speak up, man,' he roared; 'I canna hear a word ye're sayin'.'

There were shouts of 'Order,' and the stewards glared angrily at Wattie, but the trick had been done. Sir Archie's eyes opened, and he saw the audience no longer like turnips in a field, but as living and probably friendly human beings. Above all he saw Wattie's gnarled face and anxious eyes. Suddenly his brain cleared, and, had he desired it, he could have reeled off the speech in his pocket as glibly as he had repeated it in the solitudes of Crask. But he felt that that was no longer appropriate. The situation required a different kind of speech, and he believed he could make it. He would speak direct to Wattie, as he had often lectured him in the Crask smoking-room.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' he said, and his voice had become full and confident, 'your gallant and enterprising friend is not much of a hand at public speaking. I have still my job to learn, and with your help I hope soon to learn it. What I have to say to you this afternoon is the

outcome of my first amateurish study of public questions. You may take it that my views are honest, and my own. I am not a gramophone.'

In this last sentence he lied, for what he said was for the most part not his own; it was the sermon which Janet Raden had preached him the day before in the clear air of the Carnmore tops. Mixed up with it were fragments of old discourses of his own to Wattie, and reflections which had come to him in the last ten years of a variegated life. The manner was staccato, the style was slangy and inelegant, but it was not a lesson learned and recited, but words spoken direct to those into whose eyes he was looking. He had found touch with his audience, and he held their attention in a vice.

It was a strange, inconsequent speech, but it had a curious appeal in it—the appeal of youth and candour and courage. It was philosophy rather than politics, a ragged but arresting philosophy. He began by confessing that the War had left the world in a muddle, a muddle which affected his own mind. The only cure was to be honest with one's self, and to refuse to accept specious nonsense and conventional jargon. He told the story from Andersen of the Emperor's New Suit. 'Our opponents call us Tories,' he said; 'they can call us anything they jolly well please. I am proud to be called a Tory. I understand that the name was first given by Titus Oates to those who disbelieved in his Popish Plot. What we want to-day is Toryism—the courage to give the lie to impudent rogues.'

That was a memory of Leithen's table talk. The rest was all from Janet Raden. He preached the doctrine of challenge; of no privilege without responsibility, of only one right of man—the right to do his duty, of all power and property held on sufferance. These were the thoughts which had been growing in his head since yesterday afternoon. He spoke of the changing face of the land—the Highlands ceasing to be the home of men and becoming the mere raw material of picture post-cards, the old gentry elbowing out and retiring to suburban lodgings with a few trinkets and pictures and the war medals of their dead. It all came of not meeting the challenge. . . . What was Bolshevism but a challenge, perhaps a much-needed challenge, to make certain of the faith that was in a man? He had no patience with the timorous and whining rich. No law could protect them unless they made themselves worth protecting. As a Tory he believed that the old buildings were still sound, but they must be swept and garnished, that the ancient weapons were the best, but they must be kept bright and shining and ready for use. As soon as a cause feared inquiry and the light of day, that cause was doomed. The ostrich, hiding its head in the sand, left its rump a fatal temptation to the boot of the passer-by.

Sir Archie was not always clear, he was often ungrammatical, and he nobly mixed his metaphors, but he held his audience tight. He did more, when at the close of his speech he put his case in the form of an apologue—the apologue of John Macnab. The mention of the name brought laughter and loud cheering. John Macnab, he said, was abroad in the world to-day, like a catfish among a shoal of herrings. He had his defects, no doubt, but he was badly wanted, for he was at bottom a sportsman, and his challenge had to be met. Even if the game went against them the challenged did not wholly lose, for they were stirred out of inaction into life.

No queerer speech was ever made by a candidate on his first public appearance. It had no kind of success with the bailie, nor, it may be presumed, with Lord Claybody; indeed, I doubt if any of the distinguished folk on the platform quite approved of it, except Lamancha. But there was no question of its appeal to the audience, and the applause which had followed Lamancha's peroration was as nothing to that amid which Sir Archie resumed his seat.

At the back of the hall a wild-eyed man sitting near Wattie Lithgow had been vociferous in his plaudits. 'He ca's himsel' a Tory. By God, it's the red flag that he'll be wavin' soon.'

'If you say that again,' said Wattie fiercely, 'I'll smash your heid.'

'Keep your hair on,' was the reply. 'I'm for the young ane whatever he ca's himsel'.'

Archie sat down with his brain in a whirl, for he had tasted the most delirious of joys—the sense of having moved a multitude. He had never felt happier in his life—or, let it be added, more truly amazed. A fiery trial was over, and brilliantly over. He had spoken straightforwardly to his fellow-mortals with ease and acceptance. The faces below him were no longer featureless, but human and friendly and interesting. He did not listen closely to Colonel Wavertree's remarks, which seemed to be mostly about taxation, or the ex-Premier of Nova Caledonia, who was heavily rhetorical and passionately imperial. Modest as he was, he had a pleased consciousness that, though he might have talked a good deal of rot, he had gripped his hearers as not even Lamancha had gripped them. He searched through the hall for faces to recognise. Wattie he saw, savagely content; the colonel, too, who looked flushed and happy; and Junius, and Agatha. But there was no sign of Janet, and his failure to find her threw a dash of cold water on his triumph.

The next step was to compass an inconspicuous departure. Lamancha would be escorted in state to the four-forty-five train, and he must join it at Frew. While 'God save the King' was being sung, Sir Archie escaped by a side-door, followed by an excited agent. 'Man, ye went down tremendous,' Brodie gasped. 'Ye changed your mind—ye told me ye was goin' to deal wi'

foreign policy. Anyway, ye've started fine, and there'll be no gettin' inside the hall the next time ye speak in Muirtown.'

Archie shook him off, picked up a taxi-cab at the station, and drove to Frew. There, after lurking in the waiting-room, he duly entered a third-class carriage in the rear of the south-going train. At six o'clock he emerged on the platform at Bridge of Gair, and waited till the train had gone before he followed Lamancha to the hotel. He found his friend thinking only of Haripol. 'I had a difficult job to get rid of Claybody, and had to tell a lot of lies. Said I was going to stay with Lanerick, and that my man had gone on there with my luggage. We'd better be off, for we've a big day before us to-morrow.'

But as the Hispana started up the road to the pass, Lamancha smiled affectionately on the driver and patted his shoulder. 'I've often called you an idiot, Archie, but I'm bound to say to-day you were an inspired idiot. You may win this seat or not—it doesn't matter—but sooner or later you're going to make a howling success in this silly old game.'

Beyond the pass the skies darkened for rain, and it was in a deluge that the car, a little after eight o'clock, crossed the Bridge of Larrig. Archie had intended to go round by one of the peat-roads, but the wild weather had driven everyone under shelter, and it seemed safe to take the straight road up the hill. Shapp, who had just arrived in the Ford, took charge of the car, and Archie and Lamancha sprinted through the drizzle to the back door.

To their surprise it was locked, and when in reply to their hammering Mrs Lithgow appeared, it was only after repeated questions through the scullery-window that she was convinced of their identity and permitted them to enter. 'We've been sair fashed wi' folk,' was her laconic comment, as she retired hastily to the kitchen after locking the door behind them.

In the smoking-room they found the lamps lit, the windows shuttered, Crossby busy with the newspapers, Palliser-Yeates playing patience, and Leithen, as usual, deep in the works of Sir Walter Scott. 'Well,' was the unanimous question, 'how did it go off?'

'Not so bad,' said Archie. 'Charles was in great form. But what on earth has scared Mrs Lithgow?'

Leithen laid down his book. 'We've had the devil of a time. Our base has been attacked. It looks as if we should have a rearguard action to add to our troubles. We're practically besieged. Two hours ago I was all for burning our ciphers and retiring.'

'Besieged? By whom?'

'By the correspondents. Ever since the early afternoon. I fancy their editors have been prodding them with telegrams. Anyhow, they've

forgotten all about Harald Blacktooth, and are hot on the scent of John Macnab.'

'But what brought them here?'

'Method of elimination, I suppose. Your journalist is a sharp fellow. They argued that John Macnab must have a base near by, and as it wasn't Strathlarrig or Glenraden, it was most likely here. Also, they caught sight of Crossby taking the air, and gave chase. Crossby flung them off—they didn't recognise him—but they had him treed in the stable-loft for three hours.'

'Did they see you?'

'No. Some got into the hall, and some glued their faces to this window, but John was under the table, and I was making myself very small at the back of the sofa. Mrs Lithgow handled them like Napoleon. Said the laird was away and wouldn't be back till midnight, but he'd see them at ten o'clock to-morrow. She had to promise that, for they are determined ruffians. They'd probably still be hanging about the place if it hadn't been for this blessed rain.'

'That's not all,' put in Palliser-Yeates. 'We had a visit from a lunatic. We didn't see him, for Mrs Lithgow lured him indoors and has him shut up in the wine-cellar.'

'Good God! What kind of lunatic?' Sir Archie exclaimed.

'Don't know. Mrs Lithgow was not communicative. She said something about smallpox. Maybe he's a fellow-sufferer looking for Archie's company. Anyhow, he's in the wine-cellar for Wattie to deal with.'

Sir Archie rose and marched from the room, and did not return till the party were seated at a late supper. His air was harassed and his eyes were wild. 'It wasn't the wine-cellar,' he groaned; 'it was the coal-hole. He's upstairs now having a bath and changing into a suit of my clothes. Pretty short in the temper, too, and no wonder. For Heaven's sake, you fellows, stroke him down when he appears. We've got to bank on his being a good chap and tell him everything. It's deuced hard luck. Here am I, just makin' a promisin' start in my public career, and you've gone and locked up the local Medical Officer of Health, who came to inquire into a reputed case of smallpox.'

(Continued on page 307.)

SILENCE.

THERE is a silence deep at dead of night

When through the hushed city slumber creeps
With noiseless footstep, and each lonely light

A feeble vigil o'er the darkness keeps;

When Nature fast is sunk in sweet repose

By field and fold, nor any cries arise

Of bird or beast, not e'en a rustling goes

Through sleeping leaves beneath the sleeping skies.

There is a deeper silence—though the town

Resound with all the turmoil of the day,

Though fertile plain, hill, wood, and rolling down

Awake to vigorous life or careless play:

Such is the silence when one voice is still,

The emptiness no other sound can fill.

G. F. BUCK.

THE FISH MARKET.

By KENNETH ANDREW.

I.

THE scene is the quay-side of a little Cornish seaport, the time 9.15 of a bright January morning. The tide is out and the harbour dry, save for the fresh-water stream of the river running through it.

Standing on the edge of the quay wall, one may see all that is going on aboard the scores of luggers moored, two and three abreast, along its length. These boats have all come in on the tide during the dark hours of the early morning, having been at sea since the previous noon.

Here is one that has not been very lucky; her decks swept and washed, her hatches in place, everything ship-shape, and no one on deck. On the hundred-yard stretch of cemented quay that is dignified with the name of 'market' stand the ten 'mauns' (baskets) that testify to her modest catch, with a member of the crew on guard. She has no right to be moored in her present position, and many comments, more forcible than polite, are made upon the arrogance of her skipper in tying-up against the market quay when there are others with 'boat-loads' of fish, that will now have to be carried over her decks, instead of being hauled up the wall direct. When a fisherman speaks of a boat-load, he is referring to something worth seeing; one thinks of a boat coming into port with her scuppers awash, her decks hidden from stem to stern under a mass of fish and nets. Let us glance at one of these other boats.

She is literally smothered in herrings; her coamings and hatchways have disappeared; to the top of her rail she brims with herrings—and still they are being shaken out. The crew, standing knee-deep in silver fish, pass between them a net which is within measurable distance of having every mesh occupied by a member of the finny tribe. The men have been working thus—with a half-hour interval for breakfast—ever since they arrived at three o'clock, and they will be here until three o'clock comes round again. They are plastered to the very eyes with the fine, clinging scales of the fish; seaboots, oilskin jumpers, hands, faces, beards, and headgear—all are reduced to a uniform shimmering grayness by the adhesive film. On the quay two great piles of the fish, each calculated to contain ten long thousands, which were landed in the cold gray dawn, bear witness to their industry.

At a little distance is another lugger that has been less lucky. Fishing apart from the rest of the fleet, she has had the misfortune, in finding the herrings, to fall foul of the dogfish as well.

Her nets have been cleaned (freed of fish), but remain on deck, and it is possible to see that several are nothing but tattered shreds hanging from the headropes. Opposite her on the quay lies her catch of herrings, and a pile of the sea-scavengers that have wrought such destruction. Their form of body, so well adapted to rapid movement, has a certain grace, but the *ensemble* is repulsive; there is so much that is suggestive of their terrible kinsfolk—the vicious head, the gaping maw on the under side, the skin, harsh and rough as any file.

Farther along the quay, by a low stone building, lie three or four boats that have shaken out their nets and are now engaged in discharging fish. At the top of the harbour wall opposite every boat stand two of her crew. Each holds a four-fathom length of small rope terminating in a blunt iron hook. These are lowered to the boat and adjusted to the handles of a maun; at the word 'Right!' the two men haul together, and there soars into view a couple of hundreds of . . . of . . . of . . . why, yes! of Pilchards! For this is a salting-house, and the few boats have brought home part of a belated shoal of Cornwall's fish that must have been picked up and led astray by the great herring army. Here it is another matter to get covered with scales, for those of the pilchard are almost the size of threepenny pieces, and the coating of his seaboots and upper legs gives each fisherman a grotesque appearance, like some novel satyr of the sea; some comic Triton, man above and fish below.

II.

'Ding! . . . Ding! . . . Dong! . . . Ding-Dong-Ding!' It is time we returned to the market.

The cement pavement is now crowded; little notice is taken of those still so hard at work in the luggers. Everyone sticks his hands in his pockets, or on his hips, and stares earnestly at one of the scores of piles of fish set out for sale.

'Dong! . . . Dong!' Here comes the auctioneer. He is also harbourmaster, and we all know him as 'Alf,' seeing that he is a native of the town, and popular; but his little gold-laced cap must be respected just now, and the 'gen'lemen' must bid up for these fine fish. He halts before the nearest catch, tucks his big hand-bell under his arm, produces a notebook and pencil from nowhere, and the sale is on. . . .

'Four shillin'. . . . Four shillin'. . . . Who'll say five? . . . Five shillin'? . . . Nobody say five?' Alf is pained; he pushes his cap back, glances round, and makes a

modest little speech, eulogistic of the fish in question (those under the hammer are always the best of the catch!); but it is all to little avail—his eloquence produces but one three-penny advance, and the fish are knocked down at four-and-threepence a hundred.

He moves on, and comes to the dogfish we have noticed.

'Lot o' dogs here, gen'lemen. . . . How many? . . . Two hundred? Two hundred dogs here, gen'lemen. Wottami bid for the dogs? . . . Seven . . . eight . . . nine . . . ten. . . . All done?' And again he moves on.

Thus the fish is sold, lot by lot. Sometimes a boat-load as yet only partly discharged is put up and auctioned off at so much per 'cran,' whatever the final total may prove to be; sometimes two hundreds of fish from an unlucky boat are sold to a fish 'jaunter' or 'jouster,' who will carry them off in his donkey-cart to be sold at cottage doors throughout the district; sometimes it is a matter of dozens of ray, ling, or conger, from a boat that has commenced boltering¹ too soon, and thus missed her chance of herrings; sometimes it is a score or two of whiting, picked up by an adventurous longshoreman from an open boat. All payments pass through the harbourmaster's office, where a little something is deducted for expenses and the upkeep of the harbour.

The only fish not put up to auction are the pilchards. These the boats contract with the various curing houses to sell throughout the season at a standard price, which, when fixed at the beginning of that period, is usually greeted by the fishermen with forceful objurgations, and which gradually declines as the season advances.

When the fisherman can sell his catch as it lies on the quay he does not concern himself further in the matter; but if he sells to a dealer by sample, or 'as they lie' in the boat, he is expected not only to bring the fish ashore, but to tip them into boxes, barrels, or baskets, as the case may be, to the satisfaction of the purchaser. This is not, perhaps, very fair, as it entails a lot of extra work and wasted time on the part of the over-tired fisherman, and the dealer always has his own workpeople at hand to look after the receptacles.

III.

Herrings are sold, when scarce, by the hundred of 120 or 123, and the fishermen throw them into the mauns in casts or 'hands' of four; counting aloud up to thirty 'hands,' when the hundred is complete. The extra three per hundred are always conceded, if called for by the dealer, when the fish are a little undersized.

When the catch is a large one it is impossible to count them all out, and the vendor and purchaser agree upon what shall be called a 'cran.'

¹ Long-line fishing.

In Scotland, whence the name comes, a cran is a definite measure of volume, but here, as has been said, it is largely a matter of agreement as to what basket shall be used as a unit. By way of rough indication, it may be said that in this neighbourhood eight hundreds of good average herring are generally accepted as the equivalent of a cran. That is to say, the fish being of a good size, two hundreds are counted into a maun; it is noted how nearly the basket is filled, and subsequent baskets of the same size are filled by ocular judgment to the same level, every fourth maun to pass ashore being counted by the tally-keepers as completing one cran.

Mackerel are sold by the hundred in the same way as herrings; but pilchards are counted in casts of six, with twenty-one casts to the hundred, and sold only by the thousand of ten such hundreds. Ten thousands of any of these fish make one 'last,' and, with good-sized fish, about eight or nine such lasts represent the utmost capacity of the local boats.

Bolter fish are sold, ray by the dozen, and conger, ling, &c., singly, by the dozen, or by weight; but as the whole catch is in these cases laid out on the pavement for inspection, the circumstances are different from those surrounding the purchase of smaller fish by the boat-load or basketful.

It may not be out of place here to notice the fact that when fish of a big catch are shovelled into baskets, the fishermen are invariably generous to their buyer, and will let a thousand fish go for nothing rather than risk being found to have unintentionally given short measure.

Crabs and lobsters do not come into the public market in this district, but are boxed and sent away by their captors. This has arisen out of the fact that when a crabber sold to a dealer in the old days, that dealer claimed an absolute monopoly of the man's catch, and forbade him to sell even one of his crustacea to any other person.

IV.

Now let us take another glance at the market as a whole.

Here is a boat ingeniously fitted with a long, makeshift derrick, by which her people are hoisting their mauns of fish up, across the deck of an intervening lugger, on to the quay, where they are seized by two scaly, oil-skinned figures and carried to a row of barrels, into which they are tipped. As the receptacles become full, the contents are sprinkled with broken ice, and fastened up for transport.

Yonder a dealer, who has bought a thousand of mackerel, is superintending the washing and packing of his purchase into flat boxes. These fish require more care in handling than others, for everyone knows how delicate is the mackerel's flesh; how easily bruised, how ready to decay.

Elsewhere, we find the purchaser of the dogfish, with quite a staff around him, busy with the preparation of these little sharks for the inland market. It is quite a ritual. The first man, armed with a huge butcher's knife, strikes off the sharp fins and their needle-pointed spines; the second man opens the fish and removes the guts; the third stands before an upright post in which is a great sharp hook. He strikes off the tail and cuts the skin across the back behind the eyes; then, jamming the head onto the hook, he grasps the cut edge of the skin and draws off the whole like a glove. The head is then struck off, and the dressed carcass passed to a fourth man to be rinsed and packed. The flesh is regarded as quite a delicacy, though it is not sold as 'dogfish.' (This, however, is one of the little secrets of the fish trade—and, having regard to the unattractive exterior of the fish when alive, it would not, perhaps, be quite fair to disclose here the euphemism under which it reaches the public.)

A little farther on, a man is packing a conger that is longer than himself. He opens and guts the fish (though this is not always done), but leaves the head in place, and the great body is then rinsed in brine. Next comes the problem of the receptacle for such a giant. A stout barrel is produced, and the monster introduced tail first and coiled down, for all the world like a length of some tremendous cable. When he is all in there remains very little room under the lid.

Here is a man dressing ray. He cuts off the 'wings' on either side of the centre line with two dexterous sweeps of his big knife, and casts the whole body of the fish aside as refuse; for from the ray one eats only the flesh of the monstrously-enlarged pectoral fins.

Each of these proceedings is duplicated and multiplied many times. And everywhere is a crowd of idlers who have nothing to do but get in the way (and receive the lusty elbows of hurrying fishermen in consequence), wander aimlessly to and fro, staring at the different sights, slip on the fish-slime and sit down in heaps of offal, trip over mooring-ropes and fall on their undignified noses—behaving, in fact, much as idle crowds do the world over.

In a big seaport, at such a time, the noise on the fish-quay is tremendous, and the continual uproar rises crescendo to fortissimo as each lot is sold; the ululation of the competing buyers being comparable to nothing less than the music of five or six full-sized foghorns as heard when collected in one small room. But this is no more than a small town, and the buyers are inclined to be modest about their bidding—in more ways than one.

v.

This brings one to consideration of the position of these 'Fish-buyers.' It is no secret that

several of the richest of these men began in actual poverty, and have amassed real fortunes from their dealings. The method is simple: having bought or borrowed ten or twenty fish-boxes, the beginner fills them on the fish-quay at very little cost, and has them despatched to what he considers the best market. Salesmen at all the big markets up-country are always ready to deal with any consignment that comes to hand, and the speculator receives in due course a cheque representing the price of his fish at their second sale—a very much better price than he paid the fisherman. This is not invariably the case, of course, for the business, like others, has its risks; but it is a fact that in a very short time this beginner in small things extends his buying and becomes a recognised dealer at the quay-side. Nor is it long before real estate begins to attract his attention, and he commences to lend money to needy members of the fishing community—either to replace lost gear, or to keep their poor homes together in times of ill-fortune.

To amass a fortune from small beginnings is far from being a misdemeanour, but when that fortune is put together with very remarkable rapidity in a business that ought to render only commonplace trading profits, one may be forgiven for looking with some curiosity at the methods of the person concerned.

It is not a pleasing sight to regard the buyers on the fish-quays of these small towns. They have an irritatingly insouciant air, as of men who have no interest whatever in the fish offered to them, and are inclined to protest in injured tones against being dragged from their warm beds so early. And this at 9.30 A.M., before men who have been at work all through the winter night and have had hardly any sleep for a week—men, moreover, who know that some at least of these lordly beings came into the town a few short years past as penniless wagoners or disgraced farm-hands; who have watched them grow sleek and wealthy upon the labour of their betters!

When fish is scarce, matters are more satisfactory, though even then there is frequently cause for comment. It is remarkable how often, when the fleet does well and a number of boats are heavily fished, the luggersmen have to be told that their catches either cannot be expected to make much, or cannot be sold at all, in consequence of a 'glut.'

At such times there are three possible courses open to the fisherman: one is to sell the fish for whatever the compassionate buyers will condescend to give; the second is to set out for another port in the hope of selling to better advantage there—but this is never welcome, in view of the additional strain, distance, time, and possible disappointment; the third is to run the vessel out of the harbour and shovel the tens of thousands of dead fish back into the sea.

Now the townsman who lives miles from the nearest seaport has a right to ask why, when herrings are worth only one-fortieth part of a penny apiece at the quay-side, the poor of his city are still invited to consider themselves lucky in obtaining the same fish at twopence each.

Assuming, even, that he sends the fish 250 miles by rail, the dealer pays four shillings or less per hundredweight carriage.

Is the rest of the 7900 per cent. difference between quay-price and retail price divided in the fish trade?

Why do buyers at the quayside refuse to make a single bid for boat-loads of fish, while in the papers of the day are to be seen references to the failure of the herring season in other parts of the country? Is this done in order to enrich themselves more easily by selling only a limited number of fish at a high price, or is it merely that they are too lazy to pack a large quantity?

An extreme case has here been quoted; a state of things which existed in 1923 and has not recurred in the same town during the past year—possibly because of an angry outburst of public opinion which was provoked by that latest shame. But such things happen almost regularly, at short intervals, and will happen again. Meanwhile, mere talking can do no good, and the remedy is yet to seek.

The whole of the fish trade is redolent of unfair profits. The fishermen get nothing; they remain in poverty from generation to generation, and have no chance to rise, unless they forsake the calling of their forefathers. It is open to anyone who is free of conscience and shame to set up as a fish-buyer and grow fat by the sweat of these hardy harvesters of the sea.

Such is Britain's reward to those who risk their lives to seek her food in the relentless sea!

Those who deal in the nation's food have—and ought to be made to realise that they have—a definite responsibility to the poor of the city slums whom they thus deprive of cheap nourishment; they should be made to realise, too, that ours is a country that does not countenance farcical auction sales which result in one dealer buying in at absurd prices masses of fish which many others share in forwarding to the cities.

VI.

In some places, where patience has been exhausted, and rage at the injustice has conquered fear of boycott, the fishermen have rid themselves of these buyers, and made such arrangements that the fisherman coming in from sea has only to weigh-in his fish and take the weight-ticket, before going to his home, and at the week-end he receives a remittance repre-

senting the sale, less expenses, of his catch, not at the quay-side, but at the inland market.

In some places these arrangements work admirably; in others, such efforts have failed through corruption, incompetence, or the vigorous opposition of the buyers.

Such a step as this, however, only removes one of the screens which are keeping the fisherman's catch from the public and the value thereof from the fisherman.

To effect a total cure of the evil, it would be necessary to reorganise the fish trade entirely; and it is here that the stoutest of Tories might be forgiven for desiring a little mild Communism—not the kind of horror that abolishes the Deity and marriage, but the doctrine that teaches national rights in such things as natural food supplies, and denies the right of one group of men needlessly to starve the poor of their nation in order to enrich themselves.

The facts have been often stated, and the only defences offered by the culprits have been references to the speculative nature of the trade, its expenses in the way of boxes, ice, employees' wages, transport charges, and the like, and, at the other end, a statement that (in effect) the retail fishmonger never dare buy much fish for fear of having it left on his hands.

The value of this last argument is microscopic; but it might be worth while, for the sake of demolishing the excuse, to ask the public to buy more fish, on condition that the fishmonger cut his prices.

Because the supplies of fish fluctuate, and the demand is said to be unstable, John Bull is gulled into paying, very often, many times more than he really need; and while poor mothers pinch and scrape in the slums to keep themselves and their families alive, tons of fresh fish must be thrown into the sea, because, forsooth, 'it is too much for me to handle,' says the buyer, as he stands on the quay with his pipe in his mouth and his hands in his ulster pockets!

SEA-GULLS.

WHITE gulls all heading for the distant sea;
And as I watch their swift unerring flight
Until they vanish from my straining sight,
A sudden craving rises up in me,
A keen insistent longing to be free;
To watch the waves roll in with crests of white,
And hear huge billows break with thund'rous
 might,
Or listen to the sea's low lullaby;
Desire surges like a rising tide
To see those towering cliffs where sea-birds nest,
To stand ere night beside the heaving deep;
Though storm-clouds gather fast on every side,
Would I could follow on the white birds' quest
And feel the salt sea-breeze before I sleep.

FRANCES ALICE MANKS.

THE WINNING OF OO-LAI-YOU.

A TALE OF THE ESKIMO.

By Capt. H. T. MUNN.

I.

NAN-NOOK, nineteen years old, the adopted son of Ak-shadu, stood motionless at a seal breathing-hole awaiting its return. He had stood thus these three hours or more, but his thoughts were far from the business on hand. That morning Ak-shadu had told Kang-oh, In-noto's boy, he would give him slim, pretty Oo-lai-you for his wife after they returned from the bear hunt, and Nan-nook's vague dreams concerning her future had been rudely shattered. Oo-lai-you, quick with her needle, good-tempered, good to look at, slender, straight as a lance, and sixteen years old, had been the boy's playfellow and constant companion; he had looked on her as his future wife, albeit he had flirted and dallied with half-a-dozen others with similar possibilities in view. Nan-nook knew the motive at the back of old Ak-shadu's promise: Kang-oh and his young wife would come to them and build their igloo near by, and hunt and trap for the old man for a year or two, for In-noto his father had other sons and married daughters. To Ak-shadu, Oo-lai-you's attractions were just their value in the marriage market, and he naturally reasoned he had Nan-nook anyway, and that another active worker would be so much to the good for him. Of Nan-nook's or Oo-lai-you's feelings in the matter he gave not a thought, and the girl would not dream of disobeying his wish; parents nearly always arrange their children's matrimonial affairs for them in the Far North—at least amongst the Baffin Land folk.

It surprised Nan-nook to find how much the morning's news had disturbed him. It had never occurred to him before that Oo-lai-you was more important to him than other girls, and his preoccupation was so deep he failed to notice the faint gurgle of water in the hole as the seal approached, and consequently struck too late when it blew, thereby missing it, an altogether unpardonable piece of carelessness for anyone priding himself, as Nan-nook did, on being a good seal-hunter.

As he walked back to the igloo he thought it all over. After all, there were plenty of other girls besides Oo-lai-you; there were Koo-lee-tay and Killo-bar, old Ayou's girls, and Eva-lou, Pannelou's daughter; if he got one of them he would have to work for her father for a year certainly, but this would be no worse than working for Ak-shadu. Nan-nook did not think that Oo-lai-you cared; when they had all lived in the Young People's House last spring, she had pressed noses and dallied with Kang-oh and Panig-pah and the others, just as he had with

Eva-lou and Killo-bar and Koo-lee-tay. When he arrived at the igloo, however, he at once saw Oo-lai-you had been weeping, and asked her, in the old woman's absence, what it was about. She looked curiously at him, and the tears came afresh. 'I don't want Kang-oh for my man; I want you,' she sobbed. Eskimo maidens are quite frank about such matters, but the entry of the old woman put a stop to any further confidences. It was the nearest Oo-lai-you dared go to rebellion. Then all Nan-nook's sensible reflections melted away, and he suddenly felt he had never wanted anything so badly in his whole life as he wanted Oo-lai-you now, and a vague sense of some great injustice swept over him. Had he been a civilised man, Nan-nook would have confessed himself in love; as it was, he found himself amazed at this profound disturbance, and speculated vaguely as to the reason why such a matter should spoil his appetite, a very disquieting event for a healthy Eskimo lad. He puzzled over the problem, thinking of the other girls, and wondering why he did not seem to want one of them at all, till he fell asleep.

II.

So Kang-oh joined Ak-shadu's party, bringing a small sled and four dogs, and they all went off together for the bear hunt, it being understood he was to have Oo-lai-you for his wife when they returned. Ak-shadu carefully stipulated that Kang-oh must stay a year with him, and turn in all his catch of fur during that time. 'That's all he cares about you,' confided Nan-nook to Oo-lai-you bitterly—'just a few fox skins and a bear or so.'

What happened to the party for two or three weeks may be passed over, till we come to the day they followed three bear-tracks far out on the ice as they were shifting camp, and finally came upon them and got them within sight of the moving pack in Davis Straits. They built an igloo, skinned their kill, fed the dogs, and after a prodigious gorge of succulent young bear meat, turned in and slept heavily.

Next morning they found the ice on which they were camped had parted from the land-fast ice during the night and joined the moving pack, a lane of water half a mile wide being between them and safety. Many bold hunters are lost in this way in the Far North.

For the time they were safe enough, the pack of heavy northern ice being all held together in one compact mass many miles wide; but they knew that sooner or later winds and tides might drive it apart, making room for a sea to get up, which would speedily compass their destruction.

Kang-oh did not come out particularly well in the perilous straits in which the party now found themselves, for he sulked in the igloo most of the time. Nan-nook, on the other hand, was indefatigable, travelling far over the terribly rough ice of the pack for seals, and getting a bear on one occasion. On his efforts the party lived for three weeks, moving camp and building fresh igloos as the ice began to threaten to go abroad. Though younger than Kang-oh, Nan-nook took the lead in all the work, consulting with old Ak-shadu as with an equal. The old man took a gloomy view of their chances, and believed they would never see the land again. He began, too, to form a very poor opinion of his future son-in-law, telling his old wife so in private. However, his word was given, and probably they would all die now anyway.

Nan-nook and Oo-lai-you were thus much thrown together, for the two would go away on the dog-sled for long days after seal, and many love passages with much pressing together of noses occurred when the igloo was out of sight. 'You shall be my wife,' Nan-nook would declare; 'in a year or two I will have my own dog team, and then I will steal you from Kang-oh, and we will go to the Ig-lu-luit country together far away.' And she, now despising and hating Kang-oh, would agree to this desperate measure.

III.

A day came when the ice pack started to go abroad, and the party sought refuge on the largest piece of ice likely to hold together, but old Ak-shadu knew only too well that whenever there was room for a sea to get up the end would not be far off.

Wider and wider apart became the ice floes, till the party found themselves huddled on a heavy pan of ice and driving south in a snow-storm, the sea increasing every hour in violence till they were awash. In the few dark hours of the following night, just as the old man had said, 'It is the end; good-bye, wife,' Nan-nook shouted, and there loomed ahead the outline of a gigantic berg with a low spit, against which their pan of ice brought up with a violent jerk that threw them all off their feet. A wild rush was made for the berg, and the sleds—to which the dogs had been kept harnessed for such a contingency—and the whole party were hastily transferred without loss. As Nan-nook, the last to leave, scrambled into safety the floe slowly up-ended, and the next second broke into pieces with the combined pressure of wind, wave, and tide.

At daybreak they saw the berg they had found refuge on was the outer one of a line of stately giants which reached in towards the low land of Kater Head, some twenty-five miles to the westward, where they knew some of their tribe were wintering. The berg was aground—as were the rest—on the Isabella

Bank, a well-known whaling bank for the ships late in the season. Their refuge was a very high berg, except for the low spit on to which they had scrambled, and dangerous as soon as the high spring-tides should come, for it might then turn over and drown or crush them amongst the broken fragments, unless they could leave before the catastrophe happened. They saw, too, that had they been fifty feet more to the seaward they would have missed the spit, and in another three hundred feet have brought up against the 'fast' land-ice—and safety; but now between them and it was the black water, with the swirling tide or current running most of the time from the berg to the land-ice. To the north, about half a mile away, were two huge bergs aground which they had passed unseen in the night, and, as if to shut off all hope of escape, a large field of ice, some miles in extent, had driven against them and brought up, thereby hindering any stray pans of ice from coming down on which they might raft to safety.

Nor was this the worst; with the rise of the tide they felt distinct tremors in the berg on which they were lodged, and the full moon and high March spring-tides were only a few days off. Old Ak-shadu shook his head and said it looked bad.

A small igloo was built, into which they crowded, and the footwear was dried over the blubber lamps.

IV.

By the second morning Nan-nook had made up his mind what he would do. Calling Ak-shadu to one side, he unfolded his plan. He would reach the fast ice by rafting on the two sleds, which he thought would float him if he sat astride. Once there he would get a pan of ice under the two sleds, lash them in place, and in this way the party could raft, one by one, to safety, for with the aid of the seal-lines, sled lash-lines, dog-traces, and whip-lashes—all of strong bearded-seal-line—the raft could be hauled back and forth. Fortunately they had four spare lash-lines of very strong bearded-seal.

Old Ak-shadu nodded. 'It might be done,' he agreed, 'if the sleds will float you and you do not freeze; but you will be in the water to your armpits, and it is very cold.'

'If I try,' said Nan-nook suddenly, 'will you give me Oo-lai-you for my wife? Let the first offer be made to Kang-oh; if he will not go, I will. I do not want Oo-lai-you,' he added thoughtfully, 'if I freeze my feet and cannot hunt any more.'

Kang-oh was called and the proposal made to him, but he would have none of it, promptly agreeing to give up his claim to Oo-lai-you if Nan-nook would attempt the perilous voyage. 'There are other girls,' said Kang-oh philosophically. He was not of the stuff heroes are made of.

The sleds were lashed side by side, the seal-

lines made into two long lines, and a rude paddle contrived. Taking a pair of dry deerskin trousers and a deerskin shirt, and tying them, with a change of footwear and mitts, to his head, and with two of the seal-lines coiled round his neck, Nan-nook essayed the journey. The raft was slipped into the water, Nan-nook sitting on it, with his legs hanging down between the outer runners. The raft sank under Nan-nook's weight till Oo-lai-you cried out; but when his shoulders were just out of the water he found it carried him, and he was pushed off. To keep the submerged raft from turning over took all the boy's care and skill, and it was evident that it would be impossible to raft the women over thus, for only with infinite caution could Nan-nook keep his seat. It was perhaps twenty degrees below zero. Allowing the tide to take him down, Nan-nook used his paddle as a balancing pole, and by the time he reached the fast ice he was all but frozen.

His first act was to strip naked, hastily dry himself with an old shirt he had brought for the purpose, and don his dry deerskin clothes. Two toes, he saw, were frozen, but he left these to luck, and raced up and down for a few minutes till his blood once more began to move. Even then the most painful work had to be done, the getting of the largest pan of ice he could work along the floe edge, and lashing the sleds securely on it. Again and again he froze his fingers working in the icy water, but he stuck manfully to his task, and at last announced to the anxious watchers all was finished. Having secured the spare line to the raft, he gave the signal to haul in, and paid out his line as they did so.

v.

First came the old woman and one child, the woman sitting on the sled with her blanket tied to her shoulders and their few kettles and the child on her knees; it was the utmost the frail raft would carry.

Safely landed, Nan-nook bade her hurry towards the shore, and shouted for Ak-shadu and the other child to come next, which they did. The old man would have stayed to help, but Nan-nook said 'No.' It would be a race for them at the end, he urged, for the great berg was visibly shaking, pieces now and then dropping into the water and causing much commotion. It would certainly shift or turn over on this flood tide—not quite, by the marks on the berg, yet at its height.

As the raft was hauled back for the third time, Nan-nook noticed that the ice-field to the north had broken, and a vast mass of ice was coming swiftly down towards the berg, on which still remained Oo-lai-you and Kang-oh. Self-preservation is the first law of life, and Kang-oh—as has been said—was no hero. The raft would hold only one of them, and to Nan-nook's helpless rage Kang-oh sprang on to

it and pushed it off, leaving the girl standing alone. Nan-nook could do nothing but pull it as swiftly to him as possible. Had he had his rifle he would have shot Kang-oh and told the girl to throw him into the water.

The raft reached the ice and the coward stepped off. Nan-nook, without paying the least attention to him, shouted to Oo-lai-you to haul back quickly. She had placed her own and Nan-nook's blanket and rifle at her feet. The great ice sheet was near now, and it was plain the huge weight and momentum of the impact against the iceberg would convert its unstable equilibrium into a cataclysmal overturn. 'Jump for the raft—jump,' shouted Nan-nook; 'never mind the blankets.' But as the raft approached Oo-lai-you seized a blanket in one hand and the rifle and ammunition bag in the other and sprang lightly on to it, followed by two of the dogs.

Nan-nook hauled the raft towards him as rapidly as he dared, the water washing over the sleds and wetting the kneeling girl in his haste. The tide had been increasing in speed, yet the raft seemed to come more slowly than on any previous journey. If the great berg toppled on the first impact of the ice so swiftly approaching it, and now but a few yards away, Nan-nook knew both he and the girl would meet that most dreaded of all deaths to an Eskimo, drowning, broken-limbed and crushed by the masses of heaving ice amongst which they must inevitably be thrown. Yet it never occurred to him to save himself and let the girl take her chance.

As the raft touched the firm ice, slim Oo-lai-you, pale, but cool and active as a fox, stepped quickly off, and the after end, dipping from the loss of her weight and unchecked by any line from the berg, up-ended and disappeared under the ice on which they stood.

'Run, run,' cried Nan-nook, seizing the precious rifle and ammunition and clasping Oo-lai-you's little hand. At the same instant the ice sheet ground with a crash against the berg as the two sped like deer from the coming cataclysm. The ice sheet instantly overran the low spit with a loud grinding noise, covering it with fantastic masses of moving ice cakes; the next moment, with a roar like a salvo of heavy guns, the great berg toppled, leant, and fell with a deafening crash, churning the water into seething foam and throwing the heavy land-ice along its edge into the air in huge fragments as the wave reached it.

The youngsters raced on, hand in hand, and through both their minds flashed the thought they were yet too close, and doomed to a cruel death. Then they were flung on their faces by the upheaval as the wave passed, the thick ice breaking and surging beneath them like an earthquake. For about one hundred yards from the water the ice was shattered and crashing together in wild confusion—but the two were beyond the zone which would have meant swift

death. Where they were the ice was only broken into large pans, over the rocking surfaces of which they sped lightly to safety.

'I left my blanket behind,' said Oo-lai-you tearfully, now the danger was over. 'You shouted to me to jump, and I hadn't time to pick it up; it is yours I saved.'

'Never mind,' said Nan-nook masterfully, 'it

doesn't matter now. I made a bargain with Ak-shadu and Kang-oh before I tried the raft. From now you and I will only want one blanket between us, and mine was the larger one anyway.' And as they reached the old people, who had been anxiously watching them, they paused and gravely pressed noses together several times as a token of happiness.

THE BEGINNINGS OF 'THE NEW COMMUNICATIONS.'

By J. and S. HARRISON.

Bone and Skin, two millers thin,
Would starve the town or near it;
But be it known to Skin and Bone
That Flesh and Blood can't bear it.

THUS the celebrated Dr Byrom in 1737.

The popularity of this now-forgotten epigram received a fresh lease of life twenty years later, when a great scarcity of food, which people attributed to the avarice of corn-dealers, occurred in Manchester. The injustice of their blame was proved when James Brindley, in the employ of the Duke of Bridgewater, built canals from Worsley to Manchester and from Manchester to Liverpool. These waterways, originally intended to make the transport of the duke's coal easy and expeditious, solved Manchester's transport problems, and caused a reduction in the prices of all kinds of commodities.

The duke was one of the most amazing men who ever sat in the House of Lords. His early life gave no promise whatever of his later achievements. The youngest of a family of consumptives, all of whom died young, he succeeded to the title at the age of twelve after a neglected childhood. At seventeen he went abroad and exhibited a passing interest in the Grand Canal of Languedoc. In Italy he 'did the correct thing' by purchasing several works of art, which remained unpacked until after his death. Returned to England, he led a gay, expensive life, and became engaged to the young widow of the Duke of Hamilton. According to Walpole, this lady had married her late husband 'with a ring of the bed-curtain, half-an-hour after twelve at night.' Her eldest sister, Countess of Coventry, was likewise more fair than prudent, and Bridgewater quarrelled with his intended because she refused his request to desist from further intimacy with her sister, who was the subject of many scandals. The match was broken off, and the duke is said never to have addressed another woman in the language of gallantry.

He retired to his country seat near Worsley, and suddenly exhibited an energy in practical affairs which remained characteristic of him to the end of his life. He conceived a violent antipathy to women, and, indeed, to anything which he considered remotely connected with them. No flowers were grown on his estate, and he planted Turkey oaks in their place. He

neglected his appearance, always ate brown meat in preference to white, smoked heavily, and, in spite of his large patrimony and the immensity of the fortune which eventually came to him through his canals, he refused to countenance the smallest extravagance.

His first thoughts were concerned with the easier transport of coals from his mines. He obtained an Act of Parliament which authorised him to build a canal from Worsley to the river Mersey. In it he bound himself not to exceed the freight of 2s. 6d. per ton on all coals brought from Worsley to Manchester, and not to sell such coal in the latter town at more than 4d. per hundredweight!

On consulting his steward about his project he was advised to call to his aid James Brindley, an unlettered millwright, whose amazing fertility of invention was the theme of general admiration in his own district. The duke was a good judge of character and a man of decision, and he entrusted the young genius with the conduct of the proposed work. Brindley accordingly made what he termed an 'ochilor (ocular) survey or a ricconitring,' and suggested that, rather than carry the canal down to the river Irwell by locks and up again on the other side, as had been proposed, an aqueduct should be built across the river. He was either unaware of, or unperturbed by, the effect of such a proposal on his contemporaries, and it is fortunate that his noble patron was a man of vision and courage. A further Act of Parliament was obtained, and the work was proceeded with in spite of the opinion of an engineer who reported thus: 'I have often heard of castles in the air, but never before saw where any of them were to be erected.'

It is interesting to note that this Barton aqueduct of Brindley's, the first in England, was superseded one hundred and thirty-six years later by the first swing aqueduct in the world. In 1891, during the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal, the Irwell was canalised; and Sir E. Leeder Williams, realising that the Bridgewater aqueduct would interfere with the passage of boats on the new waterway, designed a swing aqueduct, the movable portion of which, without water, weighs 1600 tons. This great

structure now carries the Bridgewater canal over the Ship Canal, and is one of the engineering wonders of the world.

Brindley pushed on with his work, and without the aid of any tradition overcame all difficulties. He cut his canal through Trafford Moss, making his channel watertight by lining it with clay that had been 'puddled,' that is, worked in a manner which rendered it impervious to water.

The canal when opened in 1761 was regarded as a wonder. Strangers 'of the first fashion' flocked from a distance to view the 'river hung in the air.' It cheapened coal in Manchester by half, and contributed to the growth and prosperity of that city.

The Duke of Bridgewater was already making plans for the extension of his canal to Liverpool, which was in those days a comparatively unimportant port, owing to the execrable communications with the rest of England. A new bill was drawn up, but this, unlike the former bills, met with vested opposition. The proprietors of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation tried to save their monopoly by promising all kinds of concessions to His Grace. But His Grace was as unaffected by this as by the political opposition of the Tories against his 'Whiggish proposals.'

Brindley had to come to London to give evidence; and it is recorded that he went to see Garrick in *Richard III*. The performance so upset him that he could do no work for a week, and never again repeated his single experience of a play.

Before the House of Lords he gave his evidence in an unconventional but convincing manner. On being asked to produce a drawing of an intended bridge he said that he would prefer to show a model. He thereupon bought a large cheese and constructed his model from it. He explained the process of 'puddling' clay by practical demonstration, and drew his diagrams in chalk on the floor.

The bill was passed and the new canal proceeded with. In spite of the duke's immense resources he was soon in financial difficulties. He cut down his establishment to a total expenditure of £400 per annum. So far was he in debt that the rector had to waylay him in order to get him to pay tithes, and the duke's agent had to borrow from his tenants so that the weekly wage bill might be met. Brindley's salary at this time was one guinea per week, and the duke never increased this, even when in later years the canals were producing £80,000 per year. Fortunately Messrs Child, the Fleet Street bankers, lent the duke some money on the first canal, which was beginning to bring in a good income, and the new canal was opened to Liverpool in 1767.

Brindley in later years laid out 360 miles of canal for various employers, and died in 1772 in moderately affluent circumstances.

The duke, who by the time he was thirty-six was the owner of the completed canal from Worsley to Liverpool, grew richer, more corpulent, and more eccentric with the advancing years. His industrial undertakings became his hobby. He made an income of £1600 per annum on his own barge service, after an agent had refused to pay £60 per year for the privilege of running it. He constructed a clock which struck thirteen at one o'clock, in order that his workmen should not be able to say that they had failed to hear the single chime when they were late for work. He opened Sunday schools, started a general sick club, and died worth £600,000. A tradition survived at Worsley for many years after his death that the duke rode through the village once a year at midnight, drawn by six coal-black horses.

And yet it is almost impossible to find in the works of his literary contemporaries any reference to the man who was laying the foundations of what Mr H. G. Wells calls 'The Advent of the New Communications.'

A COUNTER-ATTRACTION.

CHAPTER II.—continued.

III.

THEY strolled off along winding paths between high yew hedges to a secluded part of the grounds.

'You know, Rene, I'm very fond of you, and all that, but I don't want to marry you. I would, like a shot, if it wasn't for——'

'And I'd jump at you—if it wasn't for——'

'That's all right, then. We understand one another.'

'Agreed. Who is she?'

'Must I tell you?'

'If you don't, I'll kiss you in front of your mother, and tell her we're engaged!'

'That's hitting below the belt! Very well, then. You remember Rose Maddison—Colonel Maddison's daughter—whom I used to meet at your house, three years ago?'

'Of course I do. Her father died, and we lost sight of her.'

'Well, I've found her. She's behind the counter in father's shop, of all places in the world. But she won't be there long. I don't know how she got there, but I'm going to find out.'

'What does Sir William say about it?'

'Doesn't know. Fact is, there's nothing to tell him. Every time I try to speak to her, she shoves cigar-cases under my nose—I've bought

six—and a slimy shop-walker comes wriggling along. There was nothing settled between us in the old days.'

'Poor boy! I'll see if I can't help.'

'Thanks awfully. Now it's your turn. Who's yours?'

'My what?'

'Your "if it wasn't for——"'

'Impertinence! I sha'n't tell you!'

'If you don't, I'll kiss——'

'Pax, Pax! I'll 'fess up. His name is Leonard Varden, and he's an artist who is bound to be hung soon—I mean his pictures—and meanwhile he gets a living by illustrating advertisements. You've seen that one of the cow jumping over the moon, with a milkmaid hanging on to her tail, waving a condensed milk tin? "Try Luna Brand. It's Heavenly!" Well, that's one of his.'

'Poor girl. I'll see if I can't——'

'Don't chaff. I'm serious.'

'Sorry. We're both in the same boat, it seems, so let's play another set. I want to get the hang of that service of yours.'

IV.

While the last game was in progress, Sir William and his wife sat and watched the ignominious defeat of their son; he was certainly not up to Irene's form.

'Don't you think, dear, that Harry and Irene—it would be most suitable—a most charming girl——' began Lady Rotherton.

'Humph! Let 'em alone, Julia. The boy's only twenty-four. Plenty of time. I was forty when we were married, remember, and you were——'

'I know, dear, I know, rather hastily; 'but the cases are different.'

'Can't say I admire the type. Spindle-shanked ball-chasers. Remember what a little tom-boy she was as a child? She's just the same now, all wire and whip-cord. Now you, my dear, when I first met you at that Charity Bazaar——'

Lady Rotherton smiled, evidently gratified by her husband's admiration of her rather opulent charms, which did not tend to decrease with the passage of years. 'Yes, dear; but it is not ourselves we are talking about. I should feel so much happier if Harry were engaged to some really nice girl—one we could thoroughly approve of. It makes things so *safe*. I thought you might just speak to him——'

'H'm. I'm a money-maker, not a match-maker. However, I have a crow to pluck with the young man myself, so I'll tackle him after dinner. One of our girls——'

'Oh William! Not a shop girl? It's just the sort of thing I was afraid of.'

'It's all right, Ju. Nothing serious. She took a most sensible line. I'll sound him about Irene; don't know that he could do better.'

It was over the post-prandial cigar, after Lady

Rotherton had retired, that Sir William broached the subject.

'Nothing doing, dad,' replied his son. 'Rene and I had it out to-day, and cleared the air.'

'You did, eh? Well, I'm not going to press the matter. Afraid your mother will be disappointed, though.'

For a time there was silence between them, though it was evident to Harry that his father had more to say.

Presently Sir William continued. 'Well, that's that. You are full young yet, and I don't want to interfere with your choice—within limits. But you understand there *are* limits.'

'What do you mean, exactly, father?'

'No good beating about the bush. There's one of our girls—Miss Maddison; you are acquainted, it seems. What do you know about her?'

Harry's face darkened, and set in firm lines that brought out a resemblance to his father that none had seen before. 'I know this much. I'm going to ask her to marry me the first opportunity she gives me.'

'Are you indeed, young man? The opportunity is not likely to occur, as she left for London this morning by her own wish. Very sensible girl.'

'Rose Maddison left? Why? What made her go off in such a hurry?'

'You, apparently. Now, don't be a young fool, Harry. There's nothing to get hot about. I'm not suggesting that there's any low intrigue between you. She's as straight as I hope you are, and I admire the girl. She realised, as you must, that in the circumstances it was an impossible position, and she took the direct way out.'

'Monstrous! Just because a girl is left stranded, and has to earn her living——'

'Steady, my boy, steady! Think of your mother. You are doing well in the service, and with the right wife, and a bit of backing, you will do better. It would ruin your social position if you picked up a wife from behind my counter. Neither your mother nor I could permit it.'

'Social position be hanged! What is it now? Rose is the daughter of Colonel Maddison, and I have yet to find out if the son of a retail shopkeeper is good enough for her. I suppose if she'd sponged on her relations when her father died, she'd still be a "lady" by your wretched code. What awful rot! I'm going to find her, and try my luck, and I'm not going to ask anyone's permission. You are welcome to throw me overboard—and your money too—if you like.' He flung out of the room in a towering rage.

Sir William leaned back in his chair, by no means perturbed by the undutiful behaviour of his son. His faced relaxed, and he chuckled quietly. 'Old "Fire-eater Maddison's" girl, eh? Wonder I didn't spot it when she flared up and told me I was "no gentleman." But who'd have thought—and now Harry reminds me that I'm a "retail shopkeeper"! Well, well.'

(Continued on page 312.)



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

SOME OLD COINS AND THEIR STORY.

By DAVID MACRITCHIE.

IT is wonderful how much history lies latent in an ordinary piece of money that has been in existence for a considerable period. In the immense majority of cases this special value is due to time and circumstance. Sometimes, however, the coin is intended at the outset to be historical; for example, this Portsmouth halfpenny selected from the drawer of a collector. The practical use of the coin is indicated by the legend printed round its edge: 'Portsmouth Halfpenny. Payable at Thos. Sharp's.' But the inscription, which wholly occupies its reverse or under side, records how 'St John Jervis with 15 sail persued & defeated the Spanish Fleet of 27 sail of the line February 14th 1797.' And on the obverse is displayed the figure of Neptune holding his trident in his left hand and, with his right, placing a laurel wreath upon the head of Jervis, who is seated on a rock by the seashore, with Cape St Vincent in the background. The decisive naval victory thus commemorated raised Jervis to the peerage as Earl St Vincent and brought him a pension of £3000 a year.

Beside this witness to the skill and valour of one of our great sea-captains may be placed a small copper-gilt badge, having an anchor depending from a hook, and bearing the inscription 'Howe and the Navy.' This emblem was, of course, made in honour of Jervis's contemporary and brother-admiral, Earl Howe, and of the action off Ushant on 'the glorious first of June'—1794—when he inflicted a crushing defeat upon the French. London was in high jubilation on hearing the news, and celebrated the victory by a brilliant aquatic pageant on the Thames. Probably these badges were sold in great numbers on that occasion; or they may have been distributed among the officers of Howe's fleet.

One of the most striking episodes in the course of the long and stubborn struggle between the British and the allied forces of France and Spain, during the latter part of the eighteenth century, was General George Elliott's determined and successful defence of Gibraltar against the continuous Spanish attack that lasted from June 1779 to February 1783. A reminder of those days, although not actually a memorial, is a little copper coin struck in 1810.

The obverse shows the badge of Gibraltar, a lion holding a large key—the Key of the Straits—in its right paw; the whole surrounded by the words: 'Payable at Robert Keeling & Sons, Gibraltar.' On the reverse side is a strong fortress, having beneath it the date (1810), with the superscription 'Value one quarto.'

The three coins next to be considered represent a great period in British history, for they come from the mint of the East India Company. They are all stamped with the company's armorial bearings: a shield, having St George's Cross on a white ground, with the British Royal Arms placed in the upper corner on the spectator's left, and, as a crest above the shield, a rampant lion holding a crown. (This description makes no attempt at heraldic niceties, but it will be intelligible to all.) The shield is supported on either side by a rampant lion grasping the staff of a St George's Cross flag, and the words on the scroll below the shield are '*Auspicio Regis et Senatus Angliæ*'; these words being given in a contracted form on the coins. Their values are respectively a quarter anna (1835), one pie (1825), and ten cash (1808); with bi-lingual inscriptions, English and Hindu, and English and Arabic. It is curious that the value expressed in 'cash,' a term specially associated with China, has an Arabic and not a Chinese equivalent. The company's sway was so extensive that Chinese and Arabic were both required, not to speak of other languages; for it had 'factories' all over the Orient, from Firando in south-western Japan and Amboyna in the Moluccas westward through China, Farther India, the Eastern Archipelago, India, and Persia, to the Arabian port of Mocha on the Red Sea. The outlying island of St Helena, off the west coast of Africa, was also a possession of the company.

It is astonishing how the East India Company is ignored or minimised by the writers of general British history. Innumerable petty squabbles and intrigues between politicians find chapters, where scarcely a page is devoted to the achievements of this great Asiatic power. Specialists have, of course, given it its due, and one of these (Mr Beckles Willson) rightly describes it at its zenith as 'an Oriental sovereign with absolute dominion over 200,000,000 of

people, having attained an opulence unmatched in the history of Europe, and exerting a rule unequalled since the days of the Cæsars.'

The company possessed a splendid army, with which it waged successful war again and again. A case in point is the Burmese campaign of 1824, when the invading army of 9000 men consisted mainly of the company's troops, but with the valued co-operation of three of the king's regiments. And although the declaration of war was made by Lord Amherst, in name of the king, and although the commander-in-chief, Sir Archibald Campbell (a cadet of the Glenlyon family), was a king's officer, yet the fruit of the campaign was the cession of Western Burmah to the company (not to Britain), and it was the company who financed the whole undertaking, and paid the well-earned pension of £1000 a year to the victorious general. The maritime service was no less important. 'The shipping in the service of the East India Company is such as to constitute a magnificent property and a great naval force,' observed Lord Castlereagh in the course of a speech made in 1803; and he went on to say: 'it is of a nature to be at any time converted into a great addition to the naval forces of the empire; it is composed of upwards of 100 ships, 90,000 tons burthen, and manned by 7000 seamen.' With such an army and marine, the latter containing a large number of effective fighting-ships, and with many other evidences of sovereignty (but always recognising British supremacy), the company might well have a coinage of its own. For what length of time the company's mint exercised its functions is unknown to the present writer. Presumably it ceased to operate on 1st September 1858, when India became for the first time a possession of the British Crown.

The gold pistole and half-pistole minted in Scotland in 1701 seem to be the only numismatic relics of 'The Company of Scotland trading to Africa and the Indies.' It is stated by J. D. Robertson in his *Coinage of Scotland* that 'these coins were struck from gold sent over by the Scottish African Company from the colony of Darien, in a ship called the *Rising Sun*. The Pistole is rare, and its Half very rare.' The obverse bears the laureated head of William II. of Scotland (William of Orange), underneath which is the sun rising from the sea. On the reverse are the British Royal Arms, quartered in the Scottish fashion, according to the practice since the Union of the Crowns in 1603; but with the arms of Nassau superimposed on a small escutcheon. The sea is omitted from the half-pistole, doubtless owing to want of room. It will be seen that these coins were not minted by the Scottish company. The gloomy history of that company is fairly well known. It was created under a charter by William of Orange, acting as King of Scotland, and by an Act of Incorporation passed by

the Parliament of Scotland on 26th June 1695. It was thus constituted *Auspicio Regis et Senatus Scotiæ*. In his history of the English East India Company Mr Beckles Willson says: 'The fear of a new rival in this Scottish company and of its interference in the East India trade was ostensibly strengthened by the ample privileges with which the Parliament of Scotland had vested it, in all respects greater than the London company had acquired in the successive letters patent which they had enjoyed for nearly a century.' To enter into the causes of the decay of the Scottish company would be out of place here. It is enough to note that one result of its demise (about the year 1706) was that the enterprising youth of Scotland were thenceforth obliged to avail themselves of the opportunities offered by the English company; and this they steadily did throughout the eighteenth century; as officers in the company's army and marine, as factors and writers in its civil service, and as 'free merchants' and planters in its dominions. To such an extent was this the case that Mr Willson relates how, in a discussion in the British Parliament in 1813, on the question of the appointment of missionaries in India, one member 'pointed out that the majority of British residents in Hindustan were Scotchmen and Presbyterians.'

Turning from these more historical matters to domestic affairs, we find much that is interesting in the study of the numerous pennies and halfpennies issued in the British Isles by towns and by business firms. They are generally spoken of as 'tradesman's tokens,' and they had presumably a limited circulation, as the firm issuing them might, in at least some cases, be unknown to fame. One very enterprising bookseller in London, James Lackington by name, certainly did his best to avert this calamity, for the reverse side of his halfpenny shows an angel blowing the trumpet of fame and holding in his left hand a laurel wreath, destined, no doubt, for the head of the bookseller himself. Encircling the angel is the prominent legend: 'Halfpenny of Lackington, Allen & Co., Cheapest Bookseller in the World.' On the obverse is the bookseller's portrait, with the date, 1795, and the words, 'J. Lackington, Finsbury Square.' That the portrait is a good one may be seen by comparing it with the contemporary engraving by Ridley, after Keenan, prefixed to Lackington's *Memoirs*, 1795. This book reveals the eccentric character of the man on every page, but that he understood how to succeed may be inferred from the statement beneath his engraved portrait: 'J. Lackington; Who a few years since began business with five Pounds now sells one hundred Thousand Volumes Yearly.' A casual customer, perhaps a little too ready to take Lackington at his own valuation, has left on record this description

of the shop as it appeared to him in 1795: 'Direct our course to Finsbury Square and Lackington's Temple of the Muses. This the largest stationery shop in the world. A rotundo with five stories of books, rising one above another by five flights of stairs, the cupola lighted from the top. From this rotundo rooms extend on each side, with different assortments of books, and different offices for different purposes. The building itself is like a palace. The cheapest books here in Europe.' It is clear that Master Lackington understood the art of advertising as well as anybody in the twentieth century.

A touch of poetry is afforded by the Coventry halfpenny, with its picture of the Lady Godiva riding through the town, 'clothed on with chastity,' to free her people from a tax too heavy to be borne. There is scarcely one of these tokens that has not some interesting feature. The token of the Burntisland Vitriol Company of 1797 invites inquiry. It makes no profession of being of any money value, although in size and weight it is exactly like other tokens that are avowedly halfpennies. Its obverse shows a chemist's flask or still, flanked by a rose and a thistle, above these being the cypher B.V.C^o. From the fact that

the company's home was in Fife, and also because the reverse bears the motto 'Nemo Me Impune Lacessit,' one would suppose that it was exclusively Scottish in its relations; but the presence of the rose seems to hint at a large body of English shareholders.

To the local historian these coins or tokens are of real value, and serve to recall and throw light upon some half-forgotten fact. And they cover a wide field. The harp on some of them denotes Ireland, and the three legs of the Isle of Man are conspicuous on others. Anglesea pennies and halfpennies were apparently much in vogue in the latter part of the eighteenth century, adaptable to different companies as to the reverse side, but always with the Druid's head emblem on the obverse. Then there is the North Wales halfpenny, showing Britannia seated very much in the same attitude as on our modern halfpennies, but holding a plant (*not* a leek) in her right hand. To be compared with it is a Dublin halfpenny with a seated female holding a harp, the penny of this mint having the addition of a spade and pickaxe below. The edge of this coin proclaims that it is 'payable in Dublin or Ballymurtagh'—the latter a small town at the meeting of the waters in the beautiful Vale of Avoca.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER X.—IN WHICH CRIME IS ADDED TO CRIME.

BY the mercy of Providence Dr Kello fulfilled Archie's definition of a 'good chap.' He was a sandy-haired young man from Dundee, who had been in the Air Force, and on his native dialect had grafted the intricate slang of that service. Archie had found him half-choked with coal-dust and wrath, and abject apologies had scarcely mollified him. But a hot bath and his host's insistence that he should spend the night at Crask—Dr Kello knew very well that at the inn he would get no more than a sofa—had worked a miracle, and Dr Kello appeared at the supper-table prepared to forgive and forget. He was a little awed by the company in which he found himself, and nervously murmured, 'Pleased to meet ye,' in response to the various introductions. A good meal and Archie's *Veuve Clicquot* put him into humour with himself, and at ease with his surroundings. He exchanged War reminiscences, and told stories of his professional life—'You wouldn't believe, I tell ye, what queer folk the Highlanders are'—and when later in the evening Archie, speaking as to a brother airman, made a clean breast of the John Macnab affair, he received the confession with obstreperous hilarity. 'It's the best stunt I ever heard tell of,' he roared, slapping his knee. 'You may depend on me to back you up, too. Is it

the journalists that's worrying ye? You leave the merchants to me. I'll shut their mouths for them. Ten o'clock to-morrow, is it? Well, I'll be there with a face as long as my arm, and I'll guarantee to send them down the hill like a kirk emptying.'

All night it rained in buckets, and the Friday morning broke with the same pitiless deluge. Lamancha came down to breakfast in a suit of clothes which would have been refused by a self-respecting tramp, but which, as a matter of fact, had been his stalking outfit for a dozen years. The Merklands were not a dressy family. He studied the barograph, where the needle was moving ominously downward, and considered the dissolving skies and the mist which rose like a wall beyond the terrace. 'It's no good,' he told his host. 'You might as well try to stalk Haripol in a snow blizzard. To-day must be washed out, and that leaves us only to-morrow. We'll have to roost indoors, and we're terribly at the mercy of that hive of correspondents.'

The hive came at ten, a waterproofed army defying the weather in the cause of duty. But in front of the door they were met by Dr Kello, with a portentous face. 'Good morning, boys,' he said. 'Sir Archibald Roylance asked me to see you on his behalf. My name's Kello—I'm Medical Officer of Health for this part of the

world. I'm very sorry, but ye can't see Sir Archibald this morning. In fact, I want ye to go away, and not come near the place at all.'

He was promptly asked for his reason.

'The fact is that a suspected case of smallpox has been reported from Crask. That's why I'm here. I say "suspected," for in my own opinion it's nothing of the kind. But I'm bound to take every precaution, and for your own sakes I can't let a man Jack of ye a step nearer.'

The news was received in silence, and added to the depression of the dripping weather. A question was asked.

'No, it's not Sir Archibald. He's as disappointed as you are at not being able to welcome ye. He says if ye come back in forty-eight hours—that's the time when I hope to give the place a clean bill of health—he would like to stand ye drinks and have a crack with ye.'

Five minutes later the doctor returned to the smoking-room. 'They're off like good laddies, and I don't think they'll trouble ye for the next two days. Gosh! They're as feared of infectious diseases as a Highlander. I'll give them a wee while to go down the hill, and then I'll start off home on my motor-bike. I'm very much obliged to you gentlemen for your good entertainment. . . . Ye may be sure I'll hold my tongue about the confidence ye've honoured me with. Not a cheep from me! But I can tell ye I'll be keeping my ears open for word of John Macnab. Good luck to ye, gentlemen!'

The departure of Dr Kello was followed by the appearance of Wattie Lithgow, accompanied by Benjie, whose waterproof cape of ceremony had now its uses.

'I've got bad news from this laddie,' said the former, lugging Benjie forward by the ear. 'He was at Haripol early this morning, and a' the folk there was speakin' about it. Macnicol tell't him—'

'No, he didna,' put in Benjie. 'Macnicol's ower proud to speak to me. I heard it frae the men in the bothy, and frae ane o' the lassies up at the big hoose.'

'Weel, what a'body kens is maistly true. Ye'll no' guess what yon auld Claybody is daein'. Ye ken he's a contractor, forbye ither things, and he's got the contrack for makkin' the big dam at Kinlochbuie. There's maybe a thousand navvies workin' there, and he's bringin' ower a squad o' them—Benjie says mair nor a hundred—to guaird the forest.'

'Ass!' exclaimed Palliser-Yeates. 'He'll drive every beast into Caithness.'

'Na, na. Macnicol is no entirely wantin' in sense. The navvies will no' be allowed inside the forest. They'll be a guaird outside. What's that they ca' it?—an outer barrage. Macnicol will see that a' the deer are in the Sanctuary, and in this kind o' weather it will no' be that deeficult. But it will be verra deeficult for his

lordship to get inside the forest, and it will be verra near an imposseibility to get a beast out.'

Archie looked round the room. 'Dashed unsportin' I call it. I bet it's the young un's idea.'

'Look here, Charles,' said Leithen, 'isn't it about time to consider whether you shouldn't cry off this Haripol affair? It was different at the start. John and I had a fair sporting chance. Our jobs were steep enough, but yours is absolutely perpendicular. . . . The Claybodys are not taking any chances, and a hundred able-bodied navvies is a different-sized proposition to a few gillies. The confounded Press has blazoned the thing so wide that if you're caught you'll be a laughing-stock to the whole civilised world. Don't you see that you simply can't afford to lose, any more than the Claybodys? Then to put the lid on it, our base is under a perpetual threat from these newspaper fellows. I'd rather have all Scotland Yard after me than the Press.—You agree, Crossby? I'm inclined to think that John Macnab has done enough *pour chauffer la gloire*. It's insanity to go on.'

Lamancha shook his head. 'It's all very well for you—you won. I tell you frankly that nothing on earth will prevent me from having a try at Haripol. All you say is perfectly true, but I don't choose to listen to it. This news of Wattie's only makes me more determined.'

Leithen subsided into his book, observing, 'I suppose that is because you're a great man. You're a sober enough fellow at most times, but you're able now and then to fling your hat over the moon. You can damn the consequences, which I suppose is one of the tests of greatness. John and I can't, but we admire you, and we'll bail you out.'

It was Sir Archie, oddly enough, who now abetted Lamancha's obstinacy. 'I grant you the odds are stiff,' he declared, 'but that only means that we must find some way to shorten them. Nothing's impossible after yesterday. There was I gibbering with terror, and not a notion in my head, and yet I got on fairly well. Didn't I, Wattie?'

'Ye made a grand speech, Sir Erchie. There was some said it was the best speech they ever heard in a' their days. There was one man said ye was haverin', but,' fiercely, 'he didna say it twice.'

'We've the whole day to make a plan,' Archie went on. 'Hang it all, there must be some way to dish the Claybodys. We've got a pretty good notion of the lie of the land, and Wattie's a perfect Red Indian at getting up to deer. We muster four and a half able-bodied men, counting me as half. And there's Benjie.—Benjie, you're a demon at strategy. Have you anything to say?'

'Ay,' said Benjie, 'I've a plan. But ye're ower particular here, and maybe ye wadna like

it.' This with a dark glance at Palliser-Yeates, who was leaving the room to get more tobacco.

'We'll have it all the same. Let's sit down to business. Stick the ordnance map on that table, Charles; and you, Ned, shut that book and give us the benefit of your powerful mind.'

Leithen rose, yawning. 'I've left my pipe in the dining-room. Wait a moment till I fetch it.'

Now Dr Kello on his departure had left the front door of the house open, and the steady downpour of rain blanketed all sounds from outside. So it came to pass that when Archie's quick ear caught the noise of footsteps on the gravel and he bounded into the hall he was confronted with the spectacle of Colonel Raden and his daughters already across the doorstep. Moreover, as luck would have it, at the same moment Leithen from the dining-room and Palliser-Yeates from his bedroom converged on the same point.

'Hullo, Roylance,' the colonel cried. 'This is a heathenish hour for a visit, but we had to have some exercise, and my daughters wanted to come up and congratulate you on your performance yesterday. A magnificent speech, sir! Uncommon good sense! What I——'

But the colonel stopped short in mystification at the behaviour of his daughters, who were staring with wide eyes at two unknown figures who stood shamefacedly behind Sir Archie. This last, having no alternative, was trying to carry off things with a high hand.

'Let me introduce,' he was proclaiming. 'Sir Edward Leithen, Mr Palliser-Yeates—Miss Raden, Miss Janet Raden, Colonel——'

But he was unheeded. Agatha was looking at Leithen, and Janet at Palliser-Yeates, and simultaneously the two ejaculated, 'John Macnab!'

Archie saw that all was up. Shouting for Mrs Lithgow, he helped his visitors to get out of their mackintoshes, and ordered his house-keeper to have these garments dried. Then he ushered them into the smoking-room, where were Lamancha and Crossby and Benjie and a good peat fire. Wattie, at the first sound of voices, had discreetly retired.

'Come along, colonel, I'll explain. Very glad to see you—have that arm-chair. . . . What about dry stockings . . . ?'

But his hospitable bustle was unheeded. The colonel, hopelessly at sea, was bowing to a tall man who in profound embarrassment was clearing books and papers out of chairs.

'Yes, that's Lord Lamancha. You heard him yesterday. Charles, this is Colonel Raden, and Miss Agatha and Miss Janet. That is Mr Crossby, the eminent journalist. That child is Fish Benjie, whom I believe you know. . . . Sit down, please, all of you. We're caught out, and are goin' to confess. Behold the lair of John Macnab.'

Colonel Raden was recovering himself. 'I read in the papers,' he said, 'that John Macnab is the reincarnation of Harald Blacktooth, in which case we are related. With which of these gentlemen have I the honour to claim kin?'

The words, the tone, convinced Sir Archie that the danger was past, and his nervousness fled. 'Properly speakin', you've found three new relatives. There they are. Not bad fellows; though they've been givin' me a rotten time. Now I retire—shoes off, feet fired, and turned out to grass. Ned, you've a professional gift of exposition. Fire away, and tell the whole story.'

Sir Edward Leithen obeyed, and it may be said that the tale lost nothing in his telling. He described the case of three gentlemen, not wholly useless to their country, who had suddenly fallen into *ennui*. He told of a cure, now perfected, but of a challenge not yet complete. 'I've been trying to persuade Lord Lamancha to drop the thing,' he said, 'but the Claybodys have put his back up, and I'm not sure that I blame him. It didn't matter about you or Bandicott, for you took it like sportsmen, and we should have felt no disgrace in being beaten by you. But Claybody is different.'

'By Gad, sir, you are right!' the colonel shouted, rising to his feet and striding about the room. 'He and his damned navvies are an insult to every gentleman in the Highlands. They're enough to make Harald Blacktooth rise from the dead. I should never think anything of Lord Lamancha again—and I've thought a devilish lot of him up to now—if he took this lying down. Do you know, sir,' turning to Lamancha, 'that I served in the Scots Guards with your father—we called them the Scots Fusiliers Guards in those days—and I am not going to fail his son.'

Sir Edward Leithen was a philosopher, with an acute sense of the ironies of life, and as he reflected that here was a laird, a Tory, and a strict preserver of game working himself into a passion over the moral rights of the poacher, he suddenly relapsed into helpless mirth. Colonel Raden regarded him sternly and uncomprehendingly, but Janet smiled, for she, too, had an eye for comedy.

'I'm tremendously grateful to you,' Lamancha said. 'You know more about stalking than all of us put together, and we want your advice.'

'Janet,' commanded her parent, 'you have the best brain in the family. I'll be obliged if you'll apply it to this problem.'

For an hour an anxious conclave surrounded the spread-out ordnance map. Wattie was summoned, and with a horny forefinger expounded the probable tactics of Macnicol and the presumable disposition of the navy guard.

At the end of the consultation Lamancha straightened his back. 'The odds are terribly

steep. I can see myself dodging the navvies, and with Wattie's help getting up to a stag; but if Macnicol and the gillies are perched round the Sanctuary they are morally certain to spot us, and, if we have to bolt, there's no chance of getting the beast over the march. That's a hole I see no way out of.'

'Janet,' said the colonel, 'do you?'

Janet was looking abstractedly out of the window. 'I think it is going to clear up,' she observed, disregarding her father's question. 'It will be a fine afternoon, and then, if I am any judge of the weather, it will rain cats and dogs in the evening.'

'We had better scatter after luncheon,' said Lamancha, 'and each of us go for a long stride. We want to be in training for to-morrow.'

After the colonel had suggested half-a-dozen schemes, the boldness of which was only matched by their futility, the Radens rose to go.

Janet signalled to Benjie, who slipped out after her, and the two spoke in whispers in the hall while Archie was collecting the mackintoshes from the kitchen. 'I want you to be at Haripol this afternoon. Wait for me a

little on this side of the lodge about half-past three.'

Benjie grinned and nodded. 'Ay, lady, I'll be there.' He, too, had a plan for shortening the odds, and he had so great a respect for Janet's sagacity that he thought it probable that she might have reached his own conclusion.

As Janet had foretold, it was a hot afternoon. The land steamed in the sun, but every hill-top was ominously clouded. While the inhabitants of Crask were engaged in taking stealthy but violent exercise among the sinuosities of Sir Archie's estate, Janet Raden mounted her yellow pony and rode thoughtfully towards Haripol by way of Inverlarrig and the high road. There were various short-cuts, suitable for a wild cat like Benjie, but after the morning's torrential rains she had no fancy for swollen bogs and streams. She saw Benjie lurking behind a boulder near the lodge gates, and in the shelter of a clump of birches engaged him in earnest conversation. Then she rode decorously through the gates and presented herself at the Castle door.

(Continued on page 325.)

A. QUEENSLAND HIGHWAYMAN: 'ALPIN MACPHERSON.'

By F. W. ALLEN.

LIKE any other new country, with its huge vacant spaces and favoured with a nice, healthy climate, outlaws found that Australia lent itself to the fresh-air life of the bandit during spring, summer, and autumn. As a rule, these men came from the class of undesirables who had been sent from the United Kingdom for the benefit of their country, and, after serving a term in their new abode, had been liberated under 'ticket of leave.' As a consequence, their influence among the rising generations of white natives was not always for the good. In this way gangs were formed, who were all fine, daring horsemen, who shifted about continually and preyed on the mail-coaches and horse mails; also upon squatters and travellers carrying money, and upon country storekeepers. This was long before the new country had telegraph wires; so, after a robbery, the bushrangers, as they were called, had ample time to get away to their unknown fastnesses, from which the gang would next make a raid in another direction. They always had the best horses to be secured in Australia, because they stole any good horse they came across and discarded their tired animals. Naturally, the limited Press of the day always gave full particulars of these 'sticking-ups,' as they were called, indicating the names of the outlaws when known, or describing their personal appearances when unknown.

In this way the notorious gang led by Frank Gardner, in New South Wales, was advertised

all over Queensland, and many young Queenslanders of that period, in the exuberance of youth and ambition wrongly directed, became fascinated with the exploits of the daring 'Dick Turpins,' who were looked upon by some as heroes. When Gardner found that the police and squatters were tightening up their grip of the situation, he was persuaded by an admirer (the wife of a squatter) to resign the leadership of the gang, and trek with her overland, by a covered-in spring cart, to the Clermont goldfield, just discovered in Queensland, without being recognised by the police or anyone else. At a wild bush spot here, known as Apis Creek, this plausible ex-highwayman opened a bush public-house under the name of Christie. This brings me up to the point of my narrative.

Living on the estate of a large squatter, of the Brisbane River, was the family of a Highlander named Macpherson, who was employed among the stock there. They were humble Highland folk, fresh from the glens and braes of their native land, and as honest as the sun. Among the family was a handsome boy, splendidly built, as active and lithe as the deer of his native braes. He was a pure Gael, with the impulsive temperament of his race, and was very anxious to go to school, as the squatter's family did. This was quickly noticed by the squatter and his wife, who saw that Alpin had this opportunity with their children.

All went well for some time. Alpin made

rapid strides, because he was clever, and was able to read the occasional newspapers which came to the squatter's home, where the exploits of Gardner's gang were set out in bold print. Being a splendid rider, and a perfect fiend in devouring any 'Wild West American' shallow literature which happened to blow into the settlement, Alpin had a passion for the wild romantic life of the bush. By this time his parents wished to give him a trade, and expressed their wish to the squatter, who was able to promise to have him apprenticed to a Mr Petrie, of Brisbane, a fine Scotsman, who had the leading stone and brick business in Queensland. In due course, Alpin joined the staff of Mr Petrie, and persevered with his educational progress there by attending the Mechanics' Night School.

Now occurred one of those events in the life of a young colony which was to alter Alpin's future career—a general election. Alpin's leanings were towards Liberalism, as opposed to the policy of the Conservatives—these were the only political distinctions of those days. A prominent, aggressive Liberal then was a legal gentleman named Charles Lilley, afterwards Sir Charles Lilley, the father of Queensland's National, Free, Non-Sectarian, Primary Educational System of the present time—one of the best in the world. Lilley was speaking at a public meeting one night, in Fortitude Valley, now the most thickly settled portion of the city of Brisbane. The bone of contention was a Militia Bill, which he was advocating, as the Crimean War had just finished, and he thought the young state should have the foundation of a defence force, in case it was required. This was opposed by the Conservatives, and, while addressing the meeting, the young bloods of this party pelted Lilley with stale eggs. This worked Alpin and his mates up to boiling-point, which was further aggravated when the opposition attempted personal violence towards Lilley. Then Alpin waded into them, in quite the Highland style, and, instead of using the claymore, introduced jolts, right and left crosses, upper-cuts with the lightning left, finding a billet every time. In a few minutes several youths were down and out before the police gained control.

After this the germ of democracy, which had hitherto been in the embryo stage, burst out, and unfortunately was not properly directed. Alpin became soured with town life, and silently disappeared, to turn up at his old home. Seeing the course events had taken, the squatter at once employed him as a stockman, and he was to assist in overlanding cattle to a large area of country, which his master had just secured, not far from the new Clermont goldfield. Here he met the silver-tongued, plausible ex-bushranger, Gardner, who always held up the exploits of his old gang to the impressionable young men who called at his inn.

This was the match to Alpin's explosive

nature, and he at once became a highwayman by robbing Wills's Public House, not far away. After this he worked his way south by the back tracks, and joined Gardner's old gang, which was then led by Gilbert. The officer in charge of the police in New South Wales, who was running down the gang, was a clever amateur horseman named Pottinger, whom the professional racing riders detested, as did Alpin's new comrades. In a fight between Pottinger's police and the gang, where firearms were freely used, Macpherson was wounded and captured. On his way to Sydney to prosecute Macpherson for firing at him Pottinger suddenly expired, so, as a result, the case collapsed, and instead Macpherson was sent under escort to Queensland by steamer to stand his trial for robbing Wills's Public House. When the steamer was at Mackay, Macpherson suddenly vanished. A clansman had provided him with a file, by which he had removed the leg-irons and handcuffs. A horse was waiting for him, and he was once more a free man, to roam the bush for a year or so, at the age of twenty-four.

From that moment Alpin became the bush-ranger known as the 'Wild Scotchman.' He was not of a cruel nature, and never afterwards fired at anyone, but, working alone, robbed mails and squatters, but never interfered with working men. He was never known to use violence or to rob a woman, so, for these traits in his character, he had many friends and sympathisers in the bush, particularly among women of all classes. Being an expert horseman, he got over long distances quickly, and avoided arrest for a year or two, after which the net of the law began to tighten around him. Eventually, tired out from hardships and exposure, he surrendered to some citizens.

Under present-day conditions his first offence would have come under the 'First Offenders' Code.' He expiated his crimes at Queensland's St Helena, which was his home for some years.

The two following episodes out of many will be interesting. On one occasion, near the town of Roma, he was being sheltered by a publican and his wife, with the police all around him, when he actually assisted in the kitchen, dressed as a female, and had a good look at his would-be capturers as they dined at this bush public-house, after which he was able to leave at his leisure. On another occasion, when seven miles from Taroom, he came across an elderly scragman alone, and in great distress, because he had just been robbed by the 'Wild Scotchman,' Alpin Macpherson, of his savings for the first year. Alpin quickly asked the old man what his robber was like, which way he had gone, and quickly galloped after him and overtook him, hailed him up, and at the revolver point ordered him to disgorge his loot or die where he was, as the speaker was the 'Wild Scotchman.' The impostor quickly obeyed, and Macpherson very

soon returned to the scragman, holding out the wallet, and asked if that was what he had lost. 'Yes,' was the reply, and its owner gleefully accepted it, Macpherson remarking, 'That fellow was a low-down thief and impostor; I am the "Wild Scotchman."' A short time before Macpherson died, which was only a few years

ago, I saw him in Northern Queensland, where he had a 'Wild West show of rough riders.' He was an old weather-beaten, wiry man, who walked as erect as a guardsman, and, as my companion and I left, we both felt his was a life wasted; he had come on the scene fifty years too soon.

A COUNTER-ATTRACTION.

CHAPTER III.

I.

AT Margrave and Wilson's Rose Maddison found herself in an entirely different atmosphere from that of Rotherton's.

The stately, silken ladies who moved quietly about on the rich carpets of the show-rooms, exhibiting fabrics and garments of fabulous cost to exigent customers, *never* scribbled hurried bills, or yelled 'Sign'; nor did the customers carry away light articles of millinery in thin paper bags printed with a blatant advertisement.

Such goods as were on show—there was no great display—bore no flaunting price-cards, proclaiming 'the latest style,' or 'very cheap'—they were not—but were discreetly marked in cabalistic characters, and the cost was revealed as a confidential secret, when asked for, or perhaps mentioned casually, as a matter of quite secondary importance.

Men—except the few immaculate beings who would have been shop-walkers upon a lower plane—were seldom seen within the dread portals. Occasionally a dejected male captive appeared in the train of some fair lady, exhibiting all the boredom, but not the patience, of the dogs tethered outside.

Rose owed more than she knew to Sir William's private letter to John Margrave. It was due solely to the personal friendship between the two men, who had attained commercial success by entirely different business methods, that one with so little training had found a place among the Olympians.

Rotherton's was emphatically *not* the type of house from which they drew recruits.

'Yes, my dear, we live in a world of our own,' observed the stately lady of the 'mantles' one evening, when Rose commented on the curious social isolation of the shop-assistant. 'We are neither flesh nor fowl. It's not such a bad world either. You will find there are as many grades and classes in it as there are in the world of customers outside. That's all they are, really, just customers. When you've got that thoroughly into your head, you'll find that their insolence and bad manners won't worry you. They're an amusing lot, and need humouring—just like a cow when you're milking her.'

Rose fully realised the soundness of her friend's philosophy, and strove, with indifferent success, to identify herself with the world she now lived in.

Many times during the month she had been there, women she had once known entered the show-room, but the chance resemblance of a shop-girl to a half-forgotten friend had no interest for them, and she had ceased to fear recognition. Therefore, when one morning Irene Seagrove came in, she continued her work unperturbed; it was not yet her privilege to wait on customers.

Irene, however, had different views. As soon as the 'sales-lady' had departed to find what was required, she walked over to the stand that Rose was arranging. The girl turned in surprise. 'Now, Rose, it's no use pretending to look through me. You don't intend to cut an old friend, do you?'

Rose smiled. 'Of course not, Rene. But you really must not talk to me here. Rule 14 says—'

'All right, I won't shout. I suppose I may admire these sables, and ask the price without compromising you?'

'Certainly, madam. The price is—'

'Now, no nonsense, Rose. I came early because I heard you were here—never mind how—and wanted a word with you. Will it imperil your immortal soul if you come to a *matinée* with me on Saturday, and have tea somewhere? I want to talk over our murky past.'

'Just you?'

'Just me. We'll go to the upper circle, if you like.'

'I should love it, then. But I'm not going to be patronised by your mother, Rene, so don't give me away.'

'I won't. We'll share the guilty secret. Where shall I find you?'

'19 North Melton Street. They keep us girls there, unspotted from the world, in charge of a dragon. Doors locked at ten, eleven on Saturdays.'

'Right. Here comes a noble duke, with "Rule 14" written all over him.' She raised her voice, and drawled, 'Thank you so much. Far beyond my means. I only asked out of curiosity. —Thanks, yes, I am being waited on.'

The return of the 'sales-lady' with sports coats closed the incident, and with a graceful bow the superintendent continued his morning round of inspection.

II.

'Certainly not, Rose!' Irene emphatically negatived her companion's choice of a refreshment house as they came out of the theatre on Saturday. 'Music with my tea always irritates me, and I refuse to squeeze my way into a glittering marble palace, and fight for seats with a crowd. Let's go to Rumpelmayers. You used to like their cakes and things.'

'That's all very well, Rene, but I shall be getting "above myself." This afternoon is going to my head, rather, and I don't want to be turned into a pillar of salt.'

'Then don't look back. Take what the gods send, and go straight ahead. I am playing Providence to-day, and I decree tea and ices at Rumpelmayers.'

'I bow to the decree of Providence, of course,' returned Rose, laughing. 'Do we go on foot, or have you a glass coach with six horses handy, my fairy godmother?'

'I have not, my Cinderella, but here's a taxi, with fifteen horses bottled up under the hood. Far more comfortable, and just as likely to carry us to the prince. Who knows what lies below the horizon?'

Certainly Rose did not, nor did she care very greatly. The gaiety of her companion was infectious, and the evident pleasure that Irene showed in the renewal of their acquaintance swept away all reserve. She abandoned herself to the pleasure of the moment, content to follow whithersoever she was led.

Her composure received a severe shock, however, when she entered the confectioners'. Seated at a corner table at the back of the tea-room were Sir William and Lady Rotherton.

It was too late to withdraw. Sir William had seen them, and risen to his feet, as Irene hurried across the room and greeted him effusively.

'Why, Sir William, what are you and auntie doing in town? Shopping excursion? The world's a small place, isn't it?—but I think some one's said that before. Auntie, this is Rose Maddison; you remember her father, don't you?—Colonel Maddison. We've been doing a *matinée* together, and we're both dying for some tea.'

She paused for breath. Rose had taken her courage in both hands, and recovered her self-possession. Sir William was looking at her with a quizzical smile, and she fancied, somehow, that Irene's surprise had been just a trifle overdone; was the meeting purely chance? And if not, what then?

She was intensely puzzled, but determined to play up to any lead that was given her. It was Sir William who gave her the cue.

'I am delighted to meet the daughter of my old friend,' he said, with the slightest emphasis on the last five words. 'You must have tea with Lady Rotherton and myself. I notice that madcap has forgotten to mention my name to you, but I think you have met my son.'

'Why yes, my dear,' Lady Rotherton broke in. 'Don't you remember Harry speaking of a Miss Maddison that he played tennis with at Seagrove Court, just before he sailed?'

Rose acknowledged the informal introduction gracefully, and paused, with wrinkled forehead, before seating herself, as though trying to recall some elusive memory. 'Of course,' she said, smiling graciously. 'How stupid of me! There *was* a Lieutenant Rotherton—such a nice boy—I remember him quite well now. Rene and he were cousins, were they not?'

'Sort of,' Irene cut in. 'Lady Rotherton is my distant aunt. It's a family puzzle. "If that man's father was my father's son, what relation is Dick to Tom?" I think it goes. I never could understand it.'

'My dear Irene!' exclaimed her 'distant aunt,' 'drink your tea, and do not talk nonsense. You must excuse her, Miss Maddison. Are you living in town now?'

'At present, yes, Lady Rotherton. I am sharing rooms with some other girls, near Bond Street. We are none of us rich, you know.'

'How delightful! You must enjoy the freedom of it. And so convenient for shopping. Have you solved the servant problem? I tell my husband that there *are* no servants nowadays. The young girls all drift into the shops and factories. I can't think why. *Such* a mistake to educate young people above their station, don't you think, dear?'

'Indeed, Lady Rotherton, I can sympathise with you. I remember very well the difficulties my dear mother had to contend with. We are mercifully spared; we have a most efficient and economical housekeeper.'

'A pearl beyond price, my dear. I wish you could find me one. We have taken a house in Bruton Street for the season, you know. *Do* come and see us on Wednesday—my "at home" day. My husband will be away, he has so many calls upon his time; but I think Harry will be at home.'

'Thank you so much. I'm so sorry; I shall be—er—shopping until quite late on that day—a long-standing engagement that I cannot evade, or I should have been delighted.'

'How very unfortunate.—William, you must take something for that cough' (he had given vent to a stifled croak, that *might* have been a cough). 'Some other day, then. Come and dine with us next Saturday, if you are free. My husband will be in town; Harry, I am afraid, will be away. He usually goes into the country for week-ends, so they seldom meet at home now.'

Rose was driven into a corner. Lady Rotherton evidently believed her free from guile—indeed, she had adhered strictly to the literal truth so far—but Sir William, was he merely making the best of an awkward situation?

'I think——' she hesitated, as though considering her social engagements, and glanced at him; he gave an almost imperceptible nod; 'Yes, I am sure I am free on Saturday. It is so kind of you.'

'So that's that,' said Irene. 'Come along, Rose. You shall dine with me to-night, in Soho, and I'll introduce you to an artist friend of mine, "such a nice boy," although his hair doesn't curl, like Harry's.'

III.

Lady Rotherton seemed preoccupied on the drive home, but that evening after dinner, having by then marshalled her forces, she opened fire upon her husband. 'I'm so worried about Harry, William.'

'Are you? I'm not.'

'You see so little of him now. In fact, he seems to avoid you. Couldn't you get him to stay at home next Saturday? Business, or something.'

'Now look here, Julia. Don't go throwing any more girls at his head. He ducks every time.'

'I know. I shall not say anything to him. But he's so changed lately, and so restless. I'm afraid there's some entanglement—wasn't there one of your girls——?'

'I've attended to that.'

'Yes, dear. But I'm sure he's not happy. I believe he's been trying to find her. Now, if he were to meet that nice girl, Rose Maddison, here—unexpectedly—she's so charming, and so sympathetic—who knows? She *might* prove a counter-attraction——'

Sir William sat up in his chair, and stared at his wife for a minute before speaking. Then he growled, 'Well, I suppose you must have your own way in the matter. You generally get it in the end, don't you? But don't say anything to the boy.'

Left alone, the frown vanished. He sat back and laughed. 'Counter-attraction, eh? Well, the responsibility is off my shoulders, anyhow. Irene's a trump, though. Artful as a wagon-load of monkeys. Must see what I can do for that artist man of hers.'

CHAPTER IV.

I.

HARRY ROTHERTON was having a rotten time. Rose had vanished into thin air, his father was unapproachable, and his mother inclined to be vaguely reproachful and lachrymose over the affair of Irene. Irene herself had

apparently deserted him and gone over to the enemy, and altogether—well, what was a fellow to do?

He bolted up to town—his father had said that Rose had gone to London—and established himself at his club, until his parents followed and took that beastly house in Bruton Street. Hang it all, why couldn't they leave him alone? He wasn't a child, to be tied to his mother's apron strings!

In desperation, he set himself the impossible task of combing through all the establishments that resembled Rotherton's in the Metropolitan area, and soon found that his six month's leave would require to be extended to six years, if he was to work through the alphabet.

He wandered past countless miles of counter, and acquired an uncanny knowledge of the prices of ladies' underwear. He reached the B's of Brixton, narrowly escaping arrest on suspicion of shop-lifting, and discovered that his description was in the hands of the police before he came to his senses, and realised the utter absurdity of his quest.

His mother was for ever manœuvring to throw him into the company of 'charming girls,' until he became as wary as an ancient trout, and fled to cover whenever a dainty confection of fur and feather floated into his field of vision.

Between his father and himself there was a state of armed neutrality. He rehearsed, while lying awake at night, many speeches; defiant, pathetic, or argumentative; sound common-sense, sweetly reasonable, and quite convincing. Somehow, he never could fire them off. Whenever he tried to make an opening, his father, by some apparently casual question or remark, would gain his unthinking assent to a viewpoint or proposition that utterly stultified the whole of his carefully-prepared arguments.

After twice being decoyed into a morass of words, he gave it up, and took to spending week-ends in the country, when his father was in town.

The week following his meeting with Rose and Irene, Sir William, by chance or design, delayed his departure from London, and met his son at breakfast on Tuesday. After a curt greeting, he continued the study of a legal document he was reading when Harry entered the room, making pencil notes on the margin. Harry caught a glimpse of his own name inscribed on the back of it, as his father folded it and slipped it into its envelope, continuing his meal in silence. Sir William perfectly understood the demoralising effect of silence on such occasions.

At length he spoke sharply. 'Harry, I want you to be here on Saturday when I return to town. I shall be up in time for dinner.'

'Why, sir?'

'To oblige me.'

This seemed to Harry a favourable opportunity

to assert his independence. Quietly, of course, and without heat, but firmly. With all the dignity and assurance of the twenty-four-year-old man of the world, he replied, 'Of course, sir, if you make a point of it, I will keep that evening free. But you must realise, father, that I am no longer a boy, to be told what I must, or must not do. I have my own life to live, my own—'

'Certainly, certainly,' interrupted his father, cutting short the oration. 'That is exactly the point. I quite agree with you. We don't see eye to eye in all things, but I'm glad you realise the responsibilities you are shouldering. It's the right spirit. As you remark, a man, if he is a man and not a parasite, should live his own life, and make his own way in the world. Living on an allowance from parents only pauperises him, and makes him dependent on their whims. We'll cut the painter on Saturday, my boy, and after you have signed some papers I shall have for you, you will be free to shape your life as you please. I shall put no obstacles in your way.'

Harry's eloquence was dried up at the source. He felt that he had been outwitted, yet he could not dispute the truth of his father's platitudes. The personal application of moral maxims is seldom pleasing.

Seeing the boy at a loss for words, his father proceeded to rub it in. 'I don't know if you will find it practicable to remain in the navy, especially as I believe you are thinking of getting married. It's your affair, of course, and I don't want to interfere with your plans; but if you should need a little assistance in starting some more lucrative profession—or trade—be sure and let me know. I hope you will not entirely drop us when you leave here. We shall always be pleased to see you.'

Harry muttered something under his breath, which might have been thanks for his father's kind offer—or might not!

He followed him to the front door, trying to formulate some protest, but the words would not come. It was not precisely this form of independence he had meant to claim, but after listening to the wisdom of the serpent, he could not say so without appearing, even in his own eyes, as a miserable weakling.

On the door-step Sir William fired his Parthian shot. 'By the way, if you have any bills that the final instalment of your allowance will not cover, bring 'em to me on Saturday, and I'll take them over. Best to start clear, and you'll not find me a pressing creditor. Good-bye.'

(Continued on page 329.)

THE HOOKWORM AND ITS RAVAGES.

ONE by one the diseases which have done so much to shorten human life are being effectually combated, if not actually eradicated. Among these are malaria, yellow-fever, typhoid, bubonic plague, small-pox, scurvy, and cholera, none of which is now the great scourge it was in former times. The degeneration and consequent downfall of Greece and Rome have even been attributed to the insidious effects of malaria in countries where it had previously been unknown. Those who have studied the hookworm disease (the very existence of which was unknown while it was committing fearful havoc) will, at least, admit the possibility of such a cause.

As an indication of the comparatively recent nature of the discovery of the hookworm, it may be noted that even the name is not to be found in any but the most up-to-date dictionaries and encyclopædias. Yet the hookworm has existed for thousands of years, perhaps as long as the human race. A papyrus written about 3640 years ago contains a description of a disease in Egypt which modern physicians declare can only be diagnosed as that produced by the hookworm. It is only, however, during the last few years that this parasite has been studied and shown to be the cause of certain ailments and physical

conditions which were formerly attributed simply to the debilitating effect of a warm climate; just as the presence of malaria (as its name indicates) was attributed to the pestilential atmosphere supposed to hang over the swampy regions where it was endemic. We now know that these swampy regions are simply breeding-places for the mosquito, which is the real carrier of the scourge.

Generally speaking, the hookworm is confined to tropical and semi-tropical regions, for its range is approximately between thirty-six degrees of north and thirty of south latitude. It will thus be seen that practically the whole of Europe is outside the hookworm area. Yet Europe is not wholly exempt, for although in that continent the hookworm does not propagate freely above ground, it is found even there in mines and underground workings. It has been observed in mines in Wales, Germany, Switzerland, and France. It also made its appearance amongst the workers in the St Gothard tunnel during its construction, whence it was carried into the mines of Austria, Germany, and Belgium. Possibly the conditions of heat, moisture, and darkness which are generally found in subterranean depths are favourable to its development; so also are the insanitary conditions present in some underground workings.

Is there any danger of the hookworm disease assuming an epidemic form in Great Britain? Apparently not, if ordinary precautions are taken; but it need not be taken for granted that, simply because it is now confined to warm climates, it may not invade colder regions.

It has always been noticed that the inhabitants of tropical climates are usually subject to anæmia, languor, and a generally lethargic habit of body. It was supposed that this was simply due to climatic conditions. Yet to a great extent the climate is only indirectly to blame. It is not so much the heat which kills or invalids Europeans as the noxious parasites which are bred by the heat, as already shown in the case of malaria and yellow-fever. It is now known that severe anæmia and lethargy are often produced by the presence in the intestines of the hookworm, sometimes in considerable quantities. It literally saps the life-blood of the sufferer.

It was the Americans who first took radical and sweeping steps to eradicate yellow-fever and malaria, though it was British scientists who showed them the way. To them also we owe that thorough and effective campaign which has worked such wonders in the suppression of the hookworm in Porto Rico, the Southern States, and elsewhere. It is believed that more than 2,000,000 persons in the Southern States of the Union are more or less infected with the worm. This means a tremendous loss of efficiency. The effect produced by the hookworm is not a disease in the ordinary sense of the term, unless the infection is very severe. The person affected is seldom laid up or unable to attend to his ordinary duties, and would resent any imputation of being ill; but he performs his work in a listless and inefficient manner, an effect generally attributed to natural laziness and want of interest. It is, however, an abnormal condition which can quite easily be cured, with the most astonishing results. The formerly pale, anæmic, and apathetic person, who seems to take little interest in life, becomes suddenly rosy-cheeked and active; he works with zeal and energy, and his general intelligence is greatly improved—for the effects are mental as well as physical. On one estate in British Guiana, the manager reported that the productive value of the men was increased a hundred per cent. by treatment for hookworm disease.

The traveller in the United States is impressed by the comparative backwardness of the Southerners as compared with their Northern brethren. This refers, of course, to the white population, though it is descended from a virile stock more purely British than that of the North. When we find that the hookworm is common in the South, but very scarce in the North, one of the reasons may be shown. The hookworm is an even greater enemy to the South than the boll weevil, which has of recent

years wrought such havoc in the cotton fields. It is now suggested that the terrible mortality which prevailed in Andersonville and other prison camps in the South during the Civil War was largely caused by the hookworm. It is true, insufficient nourishment (the South was short of food supplies even for its own troops) and medical deficiencies contributed their quota; but the sanitary conditions in some of the camps were appalling, and such conditions favour the propagation of the hookworm.

The terrible effects of this parasite may be shown by the following account of a certain district in Virginia. The people had been set apart by marked peculiarities from those surrounding them. A nickname of reproach was given them; they were even regarded by some neighbouring communities as a distinct race. They lived in abject poverty; their mental power and morality were low. Of forty children in one school, thirty-eight had the hookworm—the other two came from outside this region. The case of one family treated by the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission is typical of many others. The mother had been anæmic from infancy; of six children one had died of 'dropsy' (really of hookworm disease); her husband only did half the normal amount of work, the oldest boy even less; their home had always been a one-room hut. One year after treatment for hookworm all who were old enough were at work; a new house was nearly built; sanitary conditions, formerly shocking, had been brought up to date; the whole family were on their feet, and the mother's first thought was for the better life of her children.

The Rockefeller Sanitary Commission and similar organisations have done wonders in eradicating the hookworm in some Southern districts. Travelling dispensaries, with competent doctors and well supplied with medicines, visit periodically the infected districts, giving advice, treatment, and medicines free. When the dispensary comes to a district, the people travel great distances to be examined; men, women, and children; rich and poor; white and black. A great part of the South is infected, and there are communities in which three-fourths of the people are victims of the hookworm. Every state was divided into sanitary districts, each under the charge of a local physician, who worked under the direction of a state administrator. Every person examined, if found infected, was handed a sealed envelope containing thymol prepared in doses, and a printed card with directions for taking the medicine, for preventing re-infection, and for treatment at home. In the tents of the travelling dispensaries sometimes more than four hundred cases were treated in one day.

One boy treated in a tent dispensary was sixteen years old and weighed only fifty pounds; he had been too ill to work for eight years;

his mother brought him nearly three miles in a buggy in her lap, telling the doctor she scarcely thought she could get him there alive. He was as pale as a corpse, thin beyond belief, and so weak that the doctor would not risk more than a child's dose. After treatment he completely recovered.

In one year, in nine states, 140,378 persons were treated, at an average cost of \$1.27 per patient; nor could the money have been better spent. Countless human beings were not only benefited in health, but helped to a better and higher scale of living.

A hint of the part played by intestinal parasites in tropical countries is given by the following record of the Bilibid prison in the Philippines. The death-rate under lay management was 238 per 1000; under the Bureau of Health after American occupation it fell to 70 per 1000, at which figure it stood until the prisoners were examined and treated for intestinal parasites (52 per cent. of them had hookworm); after that the death-rate fell to 13 per 1000. An inspector for the California Board of Health tells of a mine where 300 labourers were employed, of whom half were infected. The loss of efficiency was calculated by the owners at \$20,000 a year. In Porto Rico it was reported 'the disease has reduced

the average efficiency of the labour on the coffee plantations to 52 per cent. of normal; in some cases to 35 per cent.'

The hookworm is found in many tropical dependencies of the British Empire, perhaps more or less in all of them. It is common in the West Indies, and has been observed and studied in Queensland, Fiji, Samoa, and elsewhere. Yet it is easily cured by medical treatment and by strict attention to sanitation, which is the best preventative. It is supposed that the eggs of the worm are laid in the ground, especially where contaminated by the vicinity of cesspools, &c. The worm itself is about one-third of an inch long when full-grown. When of microscopic size it enters the body, generally through the skin. Those who go barefoot are especially liable to its attacks, but even the well shod are not immune. The female worms produce an incredible number of eggs, which hatch when deposited in the soil, and while yet invisible to the eye enter the feet. Thence they make a long journey through the body till they reach the intestines, to which they cling, and give forth a poison which produces the disease. As many as 4500 worms have been expelled from a single person; a sufficient indication of the effect they produce in sapping the vitality of their victims.

AT PILL'S AUCTION.

By AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON, Author of *Deborah, The Summit, Patience Dean, &c.*

PART I.

I.

'DUKE VERNER read through a page of dry manuscript and whistled; then he read it through again and sighed. He let it drop on the desk, and a shaft of sunshine fell upon it. What a day upon which to be wrestling with dull accounts of people's squabbles! Summer had come back again—not the fickle, capitious summer just past, but a glorious summer of long ago. He looked longingly at the window, and it seemed to him that the chimneys he saw were fairy chimneys washed in gold.

Gilchrist, his clerk, was at the other desk. He said, his pen continuing to scratch its way across a sheet, 'I saw a bureau in Pill's auction-rooms yesterday, sir, that seemed to be the kind of thing you said you were looking out for: a nice broad writing-flap, and shelves above.'

'What's that?' asked 'Duke eagerly.

'A bureau, sir—in Pill's auction-rooms. Seemed to be what you want. Auction to-day—must just have started. I've got a catalogue here. The bureau's pretty far on—No. 159, I think. I've marked it.'

Gilchrist stopped scratching to open a drawer.

'Duke took the catalogue, read the description of the article. 'Don't think much of Pill's auctions,' he said.

'You never know,' said Gilchrist cryptically.

'No,' said 'Duke, 'you don't.' And Pill's auction-rooms were at a distance; that was in their favour. What a morning to be mewed up!

As he changed his coat, 'Needn't mention to anyone where I've gone. I shall be back in no time,' he said.

Gilchrist was scratching again. 'Right, sir,' he said.

The clock on the wall struck, and he glanced across at it. Rather early for Mr Verner to start. He would have a little time to wait.

II.

'Duke certainly dawdled. He went by side-streets, too, to avoid acquaintances. But he reached Pill's rooms long before Lot 159 was due.

The room was pretty full. 'Duke looked round. 'Wonder where those folk come from?' he thought. 'You never see 'em anywhere else. A weird crowd!'

They were, and rather depressing; also, the

room was dark and frowsty. What about taking himself elsewhere for a bit, and telling Gilchrist the bureau had been no good? But just then his eye fell on it, and after his eye went his heart. Why, the thing was just IT. 'Twas exactly what he wanted and had been looking for for ages to make that stodgy sitting-room of his a place to live in. Where had it come from? His fairy godmother must have placed it there, and guided old Gilchrist's eye to the spot.

But if he stared at it like this half the motley crew about him would tumble to the fact that he wanted it badly—must have it; and that wouldn't do at all. 'Duke withdrew his eyes from the object of his adoration, and looked about. No seats to be had anywhere; half the women were standing; but he must find standing-room where he could catch the eye of the auctioneer. Lord, what a pretty girl sitting there by the central table, and an even prettier one standing behind her!

'Duke had to look at them. The girl who was sitting looked delicate, but the other girl was healthy, radiant, arresting. Her hair, of a live warm brown, was simply arranged round her small head; her chin was rounded and firm; her eyes, of a deep and laughing blue, were darkly lashed and provocative. About the poise of her slight figure was a gallantry that was boyish, and a kind of mischievous daring.

'What a darling!' thought 'Duke. 'Wonder who she is?'

He secreted his catalogue in his pocket, and manœuvred till he was close to the girls. They were talking, and he heard the girl who was sitting call the other 'Bob.'

'Duke didn't really approve of girls being called by men's names—they had lots of *pretty* names of their own—but this time he chuckled. 'Suits her, suits her like a diamond!' he thought. 'Dear little name, sweet little name, fascinatin' little name!' Then he thought of Bob Walters, and scowled. Bob Walters was not dear, nor sweet, nor fascinating.

He said to the girl, with a winning smile, 'I wonder if you would mind lending me your catalogue for a minute.'

She gave it to him at once, and at the same time a square, honest glance that ended in a demure smile.

'Duke ruffled its pages, found page 4, and that the number of the bureau was 159; but then he had known that before. There was no mark against any item, except that a little oak stool which had been sold had its price written against it.

'Thank you very much,' said 'Duke, and gave the catalogue back to its owner.

'Your own is sticking out of your pocket,' said she calmly.

'Last week's,' said 'Duke, with a calm as great.

'Oh!' she gasped, and blushed.

III.

'Look at this, Bob,' said the other girl hastily.

'Duke did wish she hadn't; he had wanted to see what would happen next. What happened now was that both girls gave themselves to a close scrutiny of a disreputable red carpet.

'Lord, they can't want to buy *that*!' thought 'Duke.

Evidently they didn't. The girl on the chair said, 'Isn't it hideous?' And the other said scornfully, 'If anyone gave it to me, I should throw it away.'

'Duke wanted to say, 'So should I,' but knew his manners too well. What a nuisance manners were, and a lot of other things.

How delightfully she swung that little curved chin round when she looked at things. Her nose had just the slightest inclination to gaze up at the ceiling; exactly the kind of nose he admired. But really he must not stare at her like this, especially as he was standing almost at her side.

Absent-mindedly he brought from his pocket his catalogue, and studied it with great care. It was rather nice to look up suddenly and find Bob—as in his thoughts he called her—looking out of the corner of an eye at him. But his satisfaction died as the eye travelled on to the catalogue in his hands, and grew amused, then disdainful. 'Bob' stared maliciously at the catalogue till he reddened, then she looked away. He knew well that she had recognised it as one of this week's.

And what then? He didn't care. For all she knew, he was an absent-minded genius haunting the auction-room in search of copy. People of that kind always mislaid their catalogues and their spectacles, and all that kind of thing.

But somehow 'Duke, who was alive and rather alert, was not long comforted by that reflection, and grew sulky. 'Should like to take her down a peg, I should!' thought he.

Then his attention was distracted. A library chair was put up for auction.

'Quite nice,' thought 'Duke, 'and seems familiar somehow.' In a flash he realised why. In some way the chair suggested the bureau he thought of buying. They would go rather well together. 'I'll have a shot for it, and chance getting the bureau,' thought 'Duke.

Some folk opposite were bidding in a half-hearted fashion; he chimed in; right on his heels came the girl on the chair. The bidding bucked up confoundedly—such was 'Duke's reflection—the folk opposite decided really to want the chair; Bob's sister fought them; 'Duke threw himself into the fray. Then at one and the same time contrition and common-sense seized him. If that girl wanted the chair she'd better have it; besides, he—'Duke—was not

disposed to pay a fancy price for it. As he decided to back out, the hammer fell. 'Duke looked and felt dazed. In reply to his glance the auctioneer's clerk said, 'Yes, it's yours.'

With his other ear, as it were, he heard Bob say to her friend with a suppressed giggle, 'You nearly got in for that, Madge. I thought you had got it.'

Little devils! Were they bidding just for the fun of it? 'Duke cast them a wrathful glance. But they seemed so eminently pleased with life, so roguish, so full of chuckles, 'Duke found it impossible to do anything but chuckle himself. After all, one must have an occasional joke to keep one going, and he had not offered more for the chair than its worth.

IV.

'Duke saw Bob write the price of the chair in her catalogue, then pass the catalogue to her sister. They seemed to be doing a little sum on the side of it; perhaps adding up their available resources. 'Wonder what they'll bid for next?' thought 'Duke. If they weren't careful they'd get caught. He felt quite anxious on their behalf.

But Madge seemed scared, and Bob absorbed in calculations; and a number of dusty carpets, a procession of beds, passed by. Then came the bureau, Lot 159.

For a moment it hung fire, and 'Duke found himself making the first bid. A lady in a hat belonging to a bygone age made the second; a dealer followed; a man near 'Duke threw out an offer in a hesitating fashion; another outbid him firmly; 'Duke went one better; then a clear voice chimed in—it was the voice of Bob. 'And she doesn't want it, the little wretch!' 'Duke thought wrathfully. He cast her an angry glance, but she was bending to whisper to Madge. He was now quite at her side.

The auctioneer said, 'You together, you two? If so, you're bidding against each other.'

'Duke shook his head. Bob said clearly, 'No, we're not together,' and bid again. 'Duke waved his catalogue crossly at the auctioneer. Bob outbid him. The hesitant man, thinking there must be something in it, again entered the fray.

'I'll stop and leave them to it,' thought 'Duke with rage. He did, and watched. Really, he hoped she would get the bureau, and that it would land her in a fix. He hoped that it would upset all her calculations. Then suddenly she stopped, cheeks pink, turning a shoulder to the auctioneer. That silly idiot in the corner was to have the bureau—not much! 'Duke ground his teeth, bid again, and secured it.

He saw Bob bend over her sister; her shoulder shook a little. 'Lord, I'd like to tell you what I think of you!' thought 'Duke. 'You wouldn't laugh when I'd finished with you!'

His sleeve was brushing hers. When she

straightened herself again, he turned on her. Bidding for the next lot was going on. Under cover of it, he said furiously: 'You did that very well, didn't you? And you didn't want it; *you know* you didn't.'

She was taken aback, and for a moment looked ashamed. Then a dimple caught her cheek. She met his angry eye with coolness. 'Well, I did and I didn't,' she said.

'Duke could have shaken her. 'You'd have been pleased if you'd got it, wouldn't you?'

She shook her head without a blush. Then she said defiantly, 'It's a lovely thing, anyway, and well worth what you offered for it.'

'I'd have got it for a lot less but for you,' said 'Duke. 'Didn't you carry the joke a bit far? I'd go home, if I were you, before I got into any trouble.'

To this she refused to reply.

'You can play that trick once too often,' said 'Duke.

'Let me see,' said Bob, slowly, 'have we been introduced?'

'Duke decided to pay for his purchases and go.

As he was arranging for the removal of them he saw the two girls leave their place, and began to struggle toward the door.

'Oh, you're taking my advice, are you?' he muttered.

But somehow as they passed him, smiling, pink-cheeked, triumphant, he couldn't be sure that they had. It seemed more likely that they had chosen to leave the joke when at its best.

V.

Gilchrist looked up interrogatively.

'Yes, I got it,' said 'Duke laconically.

'I thought you'd be taken with it,' said Gilchrist. He paused.

'I got it for a fair price,' said 'Duke, answering the unspoken question. He mentioned the sum.

'Imm, yes—quite fair,' said Gilchrist. 'I should have thought you'd have got it for less, though; there's a slump in furniture just now.'

'Duke said in a pugnacious tone, defying his own reflections, 'Well, anyhow, I haven't been done over it.'

'Oh, no,' said Gilchrist equably, 'you haven't been done.'

VI.

The bureau certainly looked well in the place 'Duke had prepared for it, and the chair fitted it like a glove.

'You bought them together, I suppose,' said Bob Walters, who had blown in.

'Well, no, I didn't,' 'Duke said in a pleased tone.

'They seem to mate,' said Bob.

'I thought they would,' said 'Duke.

'There's an attraction about 'em,' said Bob. 'If you ever feel inclined to part with 'em——'

'Oh, I sha'n't,' said 'Duke with decision.

There was something rather specially jolly about that old bureau. For one thing it reminded him of another Bob; and although she deserved to have her neck wrung, she was quite a nice thing of which to be reminded.

His cousin Celia saw the bureau a day later. She said, patting it lovingly, 'I like those little squiggles. The thing has character, too; it's the kind of thing a child would love and would remember when it was older.'

That idea pleased 'Duke vastly. He said, 'You're right; it is.'

A school-boy nephew, come with a message from his mother, also looked at the bureau with interest. 'Golly, I like it. It ought to have a secret drawer,' said he.

'Duke agreed that it ought.

VII.

And on the following evening, having removed all the obvious drawers, and taken the thing to pieces generally to give it yet another dust and polish, he came upon that secret drawer. His finger scrubbed upon a tiny knob at the back of another drawer.

He sucked the finger, then he felt for the knob again, and, a queer feeling coming over him, pushed it. Something slid noiselessly aside; 'Duke explored with his fingers the vacancy revealed. But no, the secret drawer was not vacant; he drew out a crinkling mass of papers—notes, treasury and bank notes, more of them, and more.

'Golly!' said 'Duke, and blessed the school-boy nephew for the expression. He cleared the drawer of notes, fluttered them all to the floor, sat there with his pipe going out, and began to count.

Five hundred pounds exactly!

'Duke sat looking at them in a fascinated way. He said at last aloud, 'Orrid temptation for a poor lawyer. Good thing I'm an honest man.'

Having replaced the notes in their hiding-place, he examined the bureau still further, but there were no more secret drawers. Then he actually had a look at the chair. But there was nothing doing in that quarter.

He wrote then to Pill's offices; must find out whence the bureau had come.

VIII.

Meantime he ran into the aggravating but irresistible Bob; or rather, she ran into him; for in coming out of a shop she faced him. Recognition flashed to her eyes; in a puzzled way she bowed. Before she could have time to place him 'Duke acknowledged the bow, and got a smile. Then he said cheerfully, 'Been to any auctions lately? They're such fun.'

A pity he had yielded to that temptation! He could see remembrance flash into her face, then dismay, then annoyance. With the coldest of glances, Bob brushed past him, and went on her way.

For a moment 'Duke stood pondering. 'Bit of a boulder I've been,' he said aloud, and a shopper turned to look at him and half smile. 'Duke didn't notice; he went chasing after Bob.

When he caught up with her—'I say, forgive me,' he said penitently. 'I've been calling myself everything you'd like to call me, and a lot more.'

In spite of herself, a little smile crept round Bob's mouth.

'Usually I'm better behaved. I know better; really I do,' pleaded 'Duke.

'Then prove it,' said Bob—'by going away.'

He did. There was nothing else he could do.

'But I hope my poor, sad face haunts her!' thought 'Duke.

(Continued on page 335.)

ULTIMA THULE.

IN my dreams a beach lies blazing

By a rainbow'd tropic sea,

And a green-girt isle of coral

Seems to hold my fate's decree.

There for mazy miles the sea-beach

With its whiteness blinds the eye;

And the sea-fowl stun the silence

With their weirdly human cry.

And a vine-bower built for dreaming

Has for ages blushed and bloomed;

Has for ages viewed the sunset,

Viewed the skies with stars illumed.

And for ages o'er its threshold

Not a human foot has trod;

From its hearth no wreath of wood-smoke

Has been wafted up to God!

But it stands there, time-unaltered,

On the sand-drifts by the sea;

Waiting, watching, hoping, dreaming,

Waiting Fate's own time—and me!

By the far-flung reef of coral,

Where the wild seas plunge and pour,

O'er the red-gold path of moonlight

Like a night bird seems to soar,

Skimming light-winged through the silence,

With its curved prow poised in air,

Silken-sailed a barque enchanted,

Where the sea-maids comb their hair.

Then the night air fills with music;

Silver harp notes float and flow;

While a love-song thrills the darkness

Where the orchids dimly glow.

In the scent-dew'd tropic twilight,

Heart to throbbing heart we twain

Stand and look out o'er the waters,

Where the cold stars wax and wane.

But the sea-wood groves grow chiller,

And the day-dawn wakes in fire;

Fare thee well, my isle of sunset!

Fare thee well, my Dreams' Desire!

MATT MARSHALL.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday*.

THE new and revised valuation of King Edward the Seventh now being made, upon the lead of Mr Henry Wickham Steed and Sir Sidney Lee, is remarkable for the early application of the historical perspective, and the reversal of a former judgment. It does not appear to be merely a result of the Great War and the disturbance of men's standards and opinions, although, like all else, it has been affected by the great upheaval, and the wall of the war built between King Edward's time and now makes the historical perspective of fifteen years as sharp as was that of half-a-century, if not so steady. A part of mankind is peculiarly zealous when making the *amende honorable* and repairing an intellectual justice, assuming that no payment in cash or kind is incurred in such retribution. The confessor of a fault seems to perceive a bright reflection of honesty and nobility from his erstwhile victim back to his pathetic and humbled self, glowing, as he feels, with this fine sincerity. You will find, therefore, that within the next few months this new movement for the justification of King Edward, only germinating as I write, will make great progress. It will become a kind of cult, an affair of the intellect and conscience; duty and pride will be involved. Americans will hurry to the equestrian statue of the king in Waterloo Place before even they make their flying peregrination to Stratford-on-Avon, and on the 8th of November it will be our own patriotic business to lay wreaths upon the pedestal, the anniversary of the day when was born one who is now described with authority as one of the greatest kings with whom our country has ever been blessed. Lately the House of Lords has been worried by a question of the proposed removal of a piece of sculpture in its own private tabernacle, to make room for a memorial of the war. In this a symptom of the age is again indicated. In some foreign countries they are not sentimental concerning removal or even elimination of old memorials of homage and respect; one may be carted off for rubbish or set up again in a shabby quarter of a city to make room for the new hero who stands for all that the newly despised and rejected abominated, but our conservative people are

more loyal and generous to their old idols. At the time of the Diamond Jubilee, as I remember, there was a question of the statue of Queen Anne in front of St Paul's Cathedral being removed in order to facilitate certain ceremonies on Queen Victoria's calling there on the great day, but strong public sentiment being uttered against the proposal, the statue stood undisturbed. Now the great queen who was living then becomes herself a subject in like dispute, but we hold by the old respect. Her superb virtues can never be discounted; her glorious example in important ways of life stands at high value for all time; but while there is in some quarters a healthy reaction towards an appreciation of some points of goodness in the commonly condemned Victorianism, the historical valuation of the late queen does not rise. It may be suspected that, with our sensitiveness still so keen upon many matters relating to our late enemy, one reason is the Germanophilism that she entertained, even to the intrusion of her private fancies and affections into matters of state affecting the welfare of her people. We have been told frequently that the Kaiser sometimes caused her pain by his imperial and anti-British antics, and that she had occasion to reprove him; but a suspicion lingers that she was proud of William, and we are sure that there were interludes of association on important occasions upon the details of which we are not to be informed. The public remembers vividly the final scene of that association, the Kaiser in his most dramatic form and manner riding on a white horse through the streets and parks of London, while the bands wailed the mourning music of Beethoven, Chopin, and Mendelssohn on that cold winter's day when the queen was taken to her tomb. One has sometimes been astonished, even alarmed, at the temerity of modern criticism of the queen so soon.

* * *

Suddenly comes this complement in the discovery of the greatness and quality of King Edward. His value is being raised above that of statesmen, his sense and sagacity linked with a finely human conscience to make a fair approach to perfection in a constitutional ruler moving amidst the nefarious intrigues of a Machiavellian set of continental diplomats. And

specially, in distinction from what is imagined to be the attitude of Queen Victoria, he stood up against the Kaiser, treated some of his pretensions with studied contempt, and opposed him as a dangerous man with something of the mountebank in his disposition. It was said of the king that he spoke with a German accent, but that, anyhow, was all that was German about him. He was British first and last; afterwards, as France can never forget, he was her friend. What the public has not understood is the weight and value of his knowledge, prestige, and influence in these political affairs. We espied him ambling among the politicians; but did one Briton in a hundred imagine he was playing a leading part, that of first statesman, in the gravest political manœuvres, and displaying sagacity that others could not equal? Perhaps the work was better done in such secrecy from the people; it might have been impossible in any other way. However, the impression formed clearly on the loyal and patriotic British mind was that King Edward was just a simple human man, with human weaknesses well developed, a great lover of pleasure. He was devoted to various kinds of sport, which was well in a British king. He was devoted to racing, yachting, and shooting, and when Prince of Wales he was even elected captain of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, but was either fearful, or thought less of the game—we have heard that he disdained it—than he should, and never played, a deputy performing the necessary ceremonies for him at St Andrews. He liked good food better than good art and literature. It has been said that he never read a book completely through in the whole of his life. On the other hand, we knew he was very fond of Paris; that Biarritz and Homburg and Marienbad in their various seasons gave him pleasure; that he disliked brown boots, and that, especially in Paris and New York, his taste in ties was assiduously pursued. Believing the solid evidence now dispassionately and disinterestedly adduced, we know that in this we did the king far less than justice.

* * *

Sir Sidney Lee, in a short biography written a dozen years ago, reflected what was probably the average well-informed impression of the king, then only two years dead. In some quarters it was felt that it gave too little praise. Since then he has had all manner of official papers, letters, the evidence of the best-informed witnesses laid before him for the purposes of the official biography, and he told us frankly, before the appearance of the book, that he was insufficiently appreciative on the first occasion of his treatment of the subject, and that he now regards King Edward as having been one of the greatest, wisest, and most beneficent of monarchs, a king among many. The statement is remarkable. We are away

in history now, and the obligation of loyal and conventional homage is small. After fifteen years we may now speak without hindrance the whole truth about a king. Now Sir Sidney Lee tells impressively of the king's lifelong shrewdness and his foresight; he realises the immense range of his interests, and the influence he exerted on affairs of serious import, not alone as sovereign but as heir-apparent. 'His versatility of interest,' we are told, 'is convincingly evidenced by the social intimacies which he sought and maintained with men of note in well-nigh every kind of human effort—sportsmen, explorers, medical men, actors, artists, as well as with soldiers, sailors, diplomatists, and politicians.' It seems that before he was thirty years of age he exhibited the acutest interest in all movements, especially in foreign policy. He was educated to hold himself aloof from the coteries of political party. But, so far as his political views were concerned, he seems to Sir Sidney Lee to have identified himself most closely with Lord Beaconsfield. Yet his correspondence with Mr Gladstone places the two men in the most attractive light, in spite of the fact that the king differed widely from the whole of the Liberal statesman's policy. Political differences, it is said, never interfered with the tender feelings which the Liberal minister and the heir-apparent cherished for one another always. His strong social instincts made him a firm believer in the value of personal intercourse in diplomatic negotiation. He became a very considerable influence in politics at home and abroad. Sometimes he boldly challenged public opinion by his private championship of men whom he believed to have been punished with undue severity for breaches of the moral code. He believed in peace, and, so far as his power went, endeavoured to make it prevail, but not if war were the only means for the protection of his country's interests. In pursuit of peace he and his ministers were impeded by the conduct and temperament of the Kaiser. Queen Victoria tried to repress him, but he was not to be repressed. Sir Sidney Lee's general impression now, from the fulness of the knowledge he has acquired, is that of 'a signally humane, human, and many-sided personality, hardly to be matched anywhere in biographic records. Among princes of any age or country,' he says, 'I think history will accord him a unique place.' Not displeased, but still astonished, will many readers be upon considering such an estimate.

* * *

But Mr Henry Wickham Steed has credit for having well anticipated Sir Sidney Lee in this appraisal, and having done it not merely from records stored in the Windsor archives and elsewhere, but from personal knowledge and intimacy developed upon the scene of grand international politics. Mr Wickham Steed shows us how King Edward acted for

part of a generation when, by dark and almost universal diplomatic intrigue of the most sinister kind, Machiavellian diplomats and statesmen, disdainful and contemptuous of the welfare of humanity, lived and worked, dreamt and slept in terms of possible war, seemed seeking always for an excuse for it, threatened it upon every move their rivals made. Europe was a nest of insincere, dishonest, diplomatic villains. Fraud and the deliberate lie, done for the meanest ends, received a kind of diplomatic sanctification by Bismarck's Ems despatch, and during the years between the war that resulted therefrom to the next big war, the science of the lie was exploited to its depths, and thereafter, as we sadly know, by means of the lie and monstrous intrigues, when cunning conspirators like Count Aehrenthal, the Austrian Foreign Minister, by birth a German-Bohemian, with at least a strain of Jewish blood in his veins, threatening war as if it were an affair of their own personal combat and nothing more, the fires were laid for our four years of bloody horror. Mr Wickham Steed describes to us an amazing scene at a banquet in Vienna in 1908. Aehrenthal said something about certain responsibilities to Sir Edward Goschen, the Balkans, as often, being the preoccupation of the moment. 'As to responsibility, let me say, my dear Minister, that the responsibility lies with you,' said Sir Edward Goschen; and Aehrenthal retorted angrily, 'Responsibility for what? Our responsibility is far less heavy than that of England, who committed all sorts of abominations against the Boers.' Then Goschen rejoined calmly, 'In the first place, England committed no abominations against the Boers. Secondly, if she had committed abominations, they would have no bearing on this matter. Thirdly, she did not violate an international treaty, as you have done. That is the truth; but you, my dear Minister, do not love the truth.' Then Aehrenthal loudly, 'Ah! I knew that England was standing by Russia. Well, if Russia wants war, she can have it.' The King of Greece heard Aehrenthal's angry voice, and came forward to put an end to the scene. That was how, at dinner-tables, they toyed with the chance of war, while our people worked and prayed, and little knew what good cause they had to appeal to God to bless their king. For we see Edward the Peacemaker, an honest man, loving his country and humanity, keenly wise in his generation, exercising a force of sense and prestige that was feared by his enemies as devils fear the light, moving carefully in a perfect discretion through this tangled crowd of Iagos and Ananiases. I have been quoting all along from Mr Wickham Steed, and here likewise: 'Against England, whose influence in the world Aehrenthal was incapable of understanding, so vicious an agitation had been carried on in the Austro-Hungarian semi-official press that, when I saw King Edward at Marien-

bad in August 1909, he still spoke indignantly of it. "'They lied about me; they lied about me!'" he exclaimed repeatedly, in so loud a voice that bystanders were startled.' I am reading again, and shall read yet again, this book by Mr Wickham Steed, recently published in two volumes with the title *Through Thirty Years*, which is the most interesting and important historical document, the most remarkable and illuminating set of connected revelations, of all that have been published concerning the diplomatic intrigues that led up to the Great War and what followed to the end. There is no other comparable to it. Mr Wickham Steed, later editor of the *Times*, is one of a few, to be reckoned upon the fingers, who are of the blood-royal of foreign correspondents, like statesmen, and consorting with kings and statesmen, with the advantage of the free-lance over them. In this remarkable work he shows us how he learned his business, equipped himself for his work, by living in foreign capitals, especially Berlin, Vienna, and Paris, studying men and movements on and below the surface, becoming familiar with the unseen forces of Europe that were leading her to her destiny.

* * *

At the time when the strain of the political situation in Europe was tightening, and the intrigues were deep and menacing, Mr Wickham Steed had many political conversations of an intimate character with King Edward. They made an abiding impression upon him, and this is his remarkable judgment: 'His grasp of the fundamentals of European politics was greater than that of any contemporary statesman whom I had met. His care for Europe was almost paternal. It sprang from knowledge acquired chiefly by personal experience and observation, and from an ever-present sense that, though England was the heart and head of the British empire, she was, and must increasingly be, an essential part of Europe. Had anyone called King Edward a philosopher he would have smiled; but no public man, certainly no monarch of recent times, has surpassed him in the practical philosophy of statecraft. Many ministers and monarchs were "cleverer" than he. He was not "clever," but able. In point of shrewdness King Leopold of Belgium was doubtless his superior, and Ferdinand of Bulgaria might have been more than a match for him in a mere contest of wits. But neither of them had King Edward's essential quality, the sympathetic insight that is born of good will. . . . He was not despondent, for despondency was alien to his temperament; and though his health was obviously precarious—there were anxious moments even during his stay at Marienbad—his doubts came rather from a premonition that the task of preserving peace, to which he had utterly devoted himself, would grow harder and harder as time went on.'

Later the author, remarking that the death of King Edward hastened the catastrophe of 1914, since Europe lost her leader, says: 'Those who are not known cannot be loved; and in the later decades of Queen Victoria's reign England was not known abroad. King Edward translated her to the Continent, and gained for her respect and, in some quarters, affection. He was a concrete and likeable embodiment of England. Whether he talked in English, French, or German, he always spoke "European," whereas most British statesmen speak an island tongue.' One time at Marienbad the king asked Mr Steed to keep him informed upon certain matters during their stay there, and, opening a conversation upon political affairs, remarked that he was told that Count Goluchowski was a dangerous fellow who ought to be got rid of. But Mr Steed showed how this man was trying to create a counterpoise in the Triple Alliance itself against German intrigues, and the king then exclaimed, 'Ah! I see why the German Emperor told me at Friedrichshof that Goluchowski was a false Pole and a danger to Europe.' Mr Steed said, 'The German Emperor may have his own reasons for wishing to get Goluchowski out of the way, but it does not follow that what are good reasons for him should be good reasons for us.' The king, 'Quite right. Never mind contradicting me if you think I am wrong.' Mr Steed, when alone, naturally fell to reflection upon the value of this force in international affairs to which he had been introduced. He writes: 'He was the recognised leader of Europe. Whither was he leading her? To some, the turn he had given to European affairs since his accession seemed statesmanship of the first order. To others, including not a few public men in England, he appeared to be an amateur diplomatist, the more dangerous because he wore the British crown. Which was the truer view? As I reflected upon my first talk with him, and analysed my impressions rather than his actual words, the reasons for his leadership and for the disquietude it had aroused became clearer. He was strongly magnetic—an essential quality in a leader; but his mind moved with a swiftness that could hardly fail to disconcert the slow-thinking among his advisers, who would also be likely to find his frankness startling and his directness of purpose uncomfortable. Moreover, he accepted, and even appeared to welcome, contradiction—a rare trait in a sovereign. In any case, an uncommon man and a big man, I thought.' Later experience convinced the author that the chief secret of King Edward's power really lay in his 'goodness of heart and honesty of intention.' In the near future we shall hear these points debated and argued with increasing detail of information and revelation upon historical happening. Here is the proposition, the resolution, 'That it is agreed that

King Edward the Seventh was one of the very best and most valuable of kings,' laid before us in an arresting form, with the opening statement of an advocate who is at the same time a very valuable and authoritative witness.

* * *

Were it possible, I would offer to accompany readers through more than eight hundred pages of what is largely secret and living history, written by a distinguished member of my craft, perfectly equipped in knowledge of affairs and how they were being turned and managed in the chancelleries, a witness of good and safe judgment; and, like his king, working for the honour and safety of Britain, which were being constantly threatened. He appears opportunely and ubiquitously among rulers and counsellors upon many a fateful scene, not only to listen and note, but often to be an intermediary, and even adviser. Representing the chief journal of the world, and being in a measure politically neutral concerning governments, possessing great knowledge and extensive acquaintance, Mr Wickham Steed held a position quite unique. Thus the story of his experiences *Through Thirty Years* could not be anything but intensely fascinating. I have suggested that the intrigues and the lying, the machinations of Aehrenthal and the rest, were repulsive to people of simple, honest mind, wanting good for the world, and, despite all war and peace disillusion, still clinging to a belief in human leaders, and so they were; but yet, like other wickedness, they are enormously fascinating. The volume dealing with the period of the war, and the making of the peace, when Mr Steed was editor of the *Times*, contains pure history that all may understand, and a surprising store of revelation. In the third week of July 1914 Mr Steed had gathered clearly from Count Mensdorff, the Austrian Ambassador, that Austria was bent on war, and that Germany was behind her. He drove to the Foreign Office, where his information was received with much scepticism. 'You are off your head,' observed an official. 'We have no proof whatever that Germany is not pacific; rather the contrary. And a public agitation now would spoil the whole diplomatic atmosphere.' A few sentences later the official again expressed his anxiety lest the precious 'diplomatic atmosphere' should be interfered with. Mr Steed said, 'The welfare of the country is more important than atmosphere. I have given you fair warning; and if your people will not let the country know what is afoot, we must. Otherwise, when war comes, nobody will know what it is about.' 'We' was, of course, the *Times*, and it did. Lord Northcliffe was then the chief proprietor. Mr Steed, who had a unique political and journalistic intimacy with him during most fateful years, portrays him in a manner that does nothing but confirm the clear and permanent impressions of others, in-

cluding myself, who at various times came close to him. Tremendous in energy, self-willed, limited in certain ways both as man and journalist, he was right through patriotic to the uttermost, and we see him here, with such a powerful weapon as the *Times* in his possession, exerting himself utterly and well. His test question concerning everyone who worked with him was, 'Does he understand the war?' the sign of 'understanding' being the conviction and personal determination that we must go right through to the end, with no compromises, and no leaving of the enemy unbeaten. Through these volumes bright anecdote runs. Listen to this. Just after the Armistice Mr Wickham Steed is at Farnborough in conversation with

the Empress Eugénie, and he is telling her what Paris was like on the Armistice day. 'Ah! that Clemenceau!' exclaims the Empress. 'Were he my worst enemy, I would love him, I could even kiss him, for the good he has done to France.' Wickham Steed: 'May I give M. Clemenceau that message, Madame?' The Empress (sharply): 'No, no message. I died in 1870.' Wickham Steed: 'But, Madame, 1870 is now dead. Your Majesty can live again.' The Empress: 'No, no; I am quite dead. But Clemenceau blundered. He should have attended the *Te Deum* in Notre Dame. He would have united France. He would have taught a great lesson of moderation and unity. He might have become *Consul*!'

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER X.—*continued.*

HARIPOL was immense, new, and, since it had been built by a good architect out of good stone, not without its raw dignity. Janet found Lady Claybody in a Tudor hall, which had as much connection with a Scots castle as with a Kaffir kraal. There was a wonderful jumble of possessions—tapestries which included priceless sixteenth-century Flemish pieces, and French fakes of last year; Ming treasures, and Munich atrocities; armour of which about a third was genuine; furniture indiscriminately Queen Anne, Sheraton, Jacobean, and Tottenham Court Road; and pictures which ranged from a Sir Joshua (an indifferent specimen) to a recent Royal Academy portrait of Lord Claybody. A feature was the number of electric lamps to illumine the hours of darkness, the supports of which varied from Spanish altar-candlesticks to two stuffed polar bears and a turbaned Ethiopian in coloured porcelain.

Lady Claybody was a heavily handsome woman still in her early fifties. The purchase of Haripol had been her doing, for romance lurked in her ample breast, and she dreamed of a new life in which she should be an unquestioned great lady, far from the compromising environment where the Claybody millions had been won. Her manner corresponded to her ambition, for it was stately and aloof, her speech was careful English seasoned with a few laboriously acquired Scots words, and in her household her wish was law. A merciful tyrant, she rarely resorted to ultimatums, but when she issued a decree it was obeyed.

She was unaffectedly glad to see Janet, for the Radens were the sort of people she desired as friends. Two days before she had been at her most urbane to Agatha and the colonel, and now she welcomed the younger daughter as an ambassador from that older world which she

sought to make her own. A small terrier drowned her greetings with epileptic yelps.

'Silence, Roguie,' she enjoined. 'You must not bark at a fellow-countrywoman.—Roguie, you know, is so high strung that any new face stimulates him. You find me quite alone, my dear. My daughters do not join us till next week, when we shall have a houseful for the stalking. Now I am having a very quiet delicious time drinking in the peace of this enchanted glen.'

She said no word of John Macnab, who was doubtless the primary cause of this solitude. Lord Claybody and Johnson, it appeared, were out on the hill. Janet chattered about the kind of topics which she felt suitable—hunting in the shires, the coming Muirtown Gathering, the political meeting of yesterday. 'Claybody thought Sir Archibald Roylance rather extravagant,' said the lady, 'but he was greatly impressed with Lord Lamancha's speech. Surely it is absurd that this part of the Highlands, which your sister says was so loyal to Prince Charlie, should be a hot-bed of radicalism. Claybody thinks that that can all be changed, but not with a candidate who truckles to socialist nonsense.'

Janet was demure and acquiescent, sighing when her hostess sighed, condemning when she condemned. Presently the hot sun shining through the windows suggested the open air to Lady Claybody, who was dressed for walking.

'Shall we stroll a little before tea?' she asked. 'Wee Roguie has been cooped indoors all morning, and he loves a run, for he is a wonderful little sportsman.'

They set forth accordingly, into gardens bathed in sunshine, and thence to the coolness of beech woods. The Reascuill, after leaving

its precipitous glen, flows, like the Raden, for a mile or two in haughlands, which are split by the entry of a tributary, the Doran, which in its upper course is the boundary between Haripol and Crask. Between the two streams stands a wooded knoll, which is a chief pleasure of the estate. It is a tangle of dwarf birches, bracken, and blueberry, with ancient Scots firs on the summit, and from its winding walks there is a prospect of the high peaks of the forest rising black and jagged above the purple ridges.

At its foot they crossed the road which followed the river into the forest, and Janet caught sight of a group of men lounging by the bridge. 'Have you workmen on the place just now?' she asked.

'Only wood-cutters, I think,' said Lady Claybody.

Wee Roguie plunged madly into the undergrowth, and presently could be heard giving tongue, as if in pursuit of a rabbit. 'Dear little fellow,' said his mistress; 'how he loves freedom!'

The ladies walked slowly to the crest of the knoll, where they halted to admire the view. Janet named the different summits, which looked ominously near, and then turned to gaze on the demesne of Haripol lying green and secure in its cincture of wood and water. 'I think you have the most beautiful place in the Highlands,' she told her hostess. 'It beats Glenraden, for you have the sea.'

'It is very lovely,' was the answer. 'I always think of it as a fortress, where we are defended against the troubles of the world. At Ronham one might as well be living in London, but here there are miles of battlements between us and dull everyday things. . . . Listen to Roguie; how happy he is!'

Roguie's yelps sounded now close at hand, and now far off, as the scent led him. Presently, as the ladies moved back to the house, the sound grew fainter. 'He will probably come out on the main avenue,' his mistress said. 'I like him to feel really free, but he always returns in good time for his little supper.'

They had tea in the tapestried hall, and then Janet took her leave. 'I want to miss the storm,' she explained, 'for it is certain to rain hard again before night.' As it chanced she did not miss it, but, after a wayside colloquy with a small boy, arrived at Glenraden as wet as if she had swum the Larrig. She had sent by Benjie a message to Crask, concerning her share in the plans of the morrow.

That night after dinner, while the rain beat on the windows, John Macnab was hard at work. The map was spread out on the table, and Lamancha prepared the orders for the coming action. If we would understand his plan, it is necessary to consider the nature of

the terrain. The hill behind Crask rises to a line of small cliffs not unlike a South African *kranz*, and through a gap in the line runs a moorland track which descends by the valley of the Doran till it joins the main road from Inverlarrig almost at Haripol gates. The Doran glen—the Crask march is the stream—is a wide hollow of which the north side is the glacis of the great Haripol peaks. These are, in order from west to east, Stob Ban, Stob Coire Easain, Sgurr Mór, and the superb tower of Sgurr Dearg. Seen from the Crask ridge, the summits rise in cones of rock from a glacis, which at the foot is heather and scrub, and farther up steep slopes of scree and boulders. Between every two peaks there is a pass leading over to the deep-cut glen of the Reascuill, which glen is contained on the north by the hills of Machray forest.

It was certain that the navy cordon would be an outer line of defence, outside the wilder ground of the forest. Wattie expounded it with an insight which the facts were to justify. 'The men will be posted along the north side o' the Doran, maybe half-way up the hill—syne round the west side o' Stob Ban, and across the Reascuill at the new fir plantin'—syne up the Machray march along the taps o' Clonlet and Bheinn Fhada. They can leave out Sgurr Dearg, for ye'd hae to be a craw to get ower that side o't. By my way o' thinkin', they'll want maybe three hundred to mak a proper ring, and they'll want them thickest on the Machray side where the ground is roughest. North o' the Doran it's that bare that two-three men could see the whole hillside, and Macnicol's no the ane to waste his folk. The easy road intil the Sanctuary is frae Machray up the Reascuill, and the easy way to get a beast out wad be ower the Beallach o' the Red Burn. But the navvies will be as thick as starlin's there, so it's no place for you and me, my lord.'

The Haripol Sanctuary lay at the headwaters of the Reascuill, between what was called the Pinnacle Ridge of Sgurr Dearg and the cliffs of Sgurr Mór. As luck would have it, a fairly easy pass—known as the Beallach—led from it to the glen of the Doran. It was clear that Lamancha must enter from the south, and if he got a stag, remove it by the same road.

'I'll get ye into the Sanctuary, never fear,' said Wattie grimly. 'There's no' a navy ever whelpit wad keep you and me out. But when we're there, God help us, for we'll hae Macnicol to face. And if Providence is mercifu' and we get a beast, we've the navvies to get it through, and that's about the end o' it. Ye canna mak yoursel' inconspicuous when ye're pu'in' at a muckle stag.'

'True,' said Lamancha, 'and that's just where Mr Palliser-Yeates comes in.—John, my lad, your job is to be waiting on the Doran side of the Beallach, and, if you see Wattie and me

with a beast, to draw off the navvies in that quarter. You had better move west towards Haripol, for there's better cover on that side. D'you think you can do it? You used to have a pretty turn of speed, and you've always had an uncommon good eye for ground.'

Palliser-Yeates said modestly that he thought he was up to the job, provided Lamancha did not attract the prior notice of the watchers. Once the pack got on his trail, he fancied he could occupy their attention for an hour or two. The difficulty lay in keeping Lamancha in view, and for that purpose it would be necessary to ensconce himself at the very top of the Beallach, where he could have a sight of the upper Sanctuary.

To Leithen fell the onerous task of creating a diversion on the other side of the forest. He must start in the small hours, and be somewhere on the Machray boundary when Lamancha was beginning operations. There lay the most obvious danger-point, and there the navvies would probably be thickest on the ground. At all costs their attention—and that of any Haripol gillies in that quarter—must be diverted from what might be happening in the Sanctuary. This was admittedly a hard duty, but Leithen was willing to undertake it. He was not greatly afraid of the navvies, who are a stiff-jointed race, but the Haripol gillies were another matter. 'You simply must not get caught,' Lamancha told him. 'Make a bee-line north to Machray and Glenaicill—the gillies won't be keen to be drawn too far away from Haripol. You won the school mile in your youth, and you're always in training. Hang it all, you ought to be able to keep Claybody's fellows on the run. I never yet knew a gillie quick on his feet.'

'That's a pre-war notion,' said Palliser-Yeates. 'Some of the young fellows are uncommon spry. Ned may win all right, but it won't be by much of a margin.'

The last point for decision was the transport of the stag. The moor-road from Crask was possible for a light car with a high clearance, and it was arranged that Archie should take the Ford by that route and wait in cover on the Crask side of the Doran. It was a long pull from the Beallach to the stream, but there were tributary ravines where the cover was good—always presuming that Palliser-Yeates had decoyed away the navy guard.

'Here's the lay-out, then,' said Lamancha at last. 'Wattie and I get into the Sanctuary as best we can and try for a stag. If we get him, we bring him through the Beallach; John views us, and shows himself, and draws off the navvies, whom we assume to be few at that point. Then we drag the beast down to the Doran, and sling it into Archie's car. Meanwhile Ned is on the other side of the forest, doing his damndest to keep Macnicol busy. . . . That's about the best we can do, but I

needn't point out to you that every minute we're taking the most almighty chances. We may never get a shot. Macnicol may be in full cry after us long before we reach the Beallach. The navvies may refuse to be diverted by John, or may come back before we get near Archie's car. Ned may pipe to heedless ears, or, worse still, he may be nobbled and lugged off to the Haripol dungeons. It's no good looking for trouble before it comes, but I can see that there's a big bank of it waiting for us. What really frightens me is Macnicol and the gillies at the Sanctuary itself. This weather is in our favour, but even then I don't see how they can miss hearing our shot, and that, of course, puts the lid on it.'

A time-table was drawn up after much discussion. Leithen was to start for Machray at 3 A.M., and be in position about eight. Lamancha and Wattie about the latter hour would be attempting to enter the Sanctuary by the Beallach. Palliser-Yeates should be at his post not later than nine, and Archie with the car should reach the Doran by ten. The hour of subsequent happenings depended upon fate; the thing might be over for good or ill by noon, or it might drag on till midnight.

When the last arrangements had been settled, Lamancha squared his back against the mantelpiece and looked round on the company. 'Of course we're all blazing idiots. The whole thing is insanity—but we've done the best we can in the way of preparation. The great thing is for each of us to keep his wits about him and use them, for everything may go the opposite way to what we think. There's no "according to Cocker" in this game.'

Archie was wrinkling his brows. 'It's all dashed ingenious, Charles, but do you think you have any chance?'

'Frankly, I don't,' was the answer. 'The best we can hope for is to fail without being detected. I think there would be a far away sporting chance, if Macnicol could be tied up. That's what sticks in my gizzard. I don't see how it's possible to get a shot in the Sanctuary without Macnicol spotting it.'

Wattie Lithgow had returned, and caught the last words. He was grinning broadly. 'I'm no' positeeve but that Macnicol will be tied up,' he observed. 'Benjie's here, and he's brought something wi' him.'

He paused for effect.

'It's a dog—a wee, yelpin' dog.'

'Whose dog?'

'Leddy Claybody's. It seems that at Haripol her leddyship wears the breeks—that the gray mare is the better horse there; and it seems that she's fair besottit on that dog. Benjie was sayin' that if it was lost, Macnicol and a'body about the place wad be set lookin' for't, and naething wad be thought of at Haripol till it was fund.'

Archie rose in consternation. 'D'ye mean to say— How on earth did the beast come here?'

'It cam here wi' Benjie. It's fine and comfortable in a box in the stable. . . . I'm no' just clear about what happened afore that, but I think Miss Janet Raden and Benjie gae'd ower to Haripol this afternoon and fund the puir wee beast lost in the wuds.'

Archie did not join in the laughter. His mind held no other emotion than a vast and delighted amazement. The lady, who two days before had striven to lift his life to a higher plane, who had been the sole inspiration of his successful speech of yesterday, was now discovered conspiring with Fish Benjie to steal a pup.

(Continued on page 344.)

THE WIRELESS LINK WITH AUSTRALIA.

By NORMAN WELLS, M.Sc.

IT may be recalled that as far back as September 1918 the Marconi Station at Carnarvon succeeded in establishing telegraphic communication with Australia, employing for the purpose a 270 horse-power transmitter. At the time this ranked as a great achievement; but while it brought wireless telegraphic communication with the Antipodes to a practical issue, the possibility of speaking over such distances was still considered remote. As often occurs, however, a wholly unexpected means has been opened out through recent researches on the properties of short-waves and the wireless beam.

Following upon preliminary trials of short-wave telegraphy, when morse code messages were sent to Australia with only a fraction of the power previously used, wireless speech experiments were conducted towards the close of May last, from Poldhu in Cornwall. The object was to co-relate information for further work on the wireless beam, more particularly as a transmitter of the human voice. In order to collect the information from as many and as widely separated sources as possible, the beam itself was not employed, broadcast transmission being adopted. This only lends more interest to the present details, and throws light on the amount of work associated with an undertaking of such a nature, where scientific men are carefully building up a new and reliable system of wireless communication.

One peculiar and hitherto unexplored feature that became apparent during this and previous tests was the indication that for short waves the sun's rays affect the energy transferred across the earth's surface in a perfectly definite manner,¹ and it was found that the strength of signals increased as the sun's height decreased, height being of course measured as between transmitting and receiving stations.

Little was expected in May as regards reaching Australia, and the engineers out there were simply asked to stand by on the chance of hearing something, yet during the period of maximum receptive intensity speech was heard

at Sydney with almost uncanny clearness. Owing to the haste with which the Australian engineers had to adapt their apparatus, the aerial employed was 28 metres out of tune, while the receiver was a simple one-valve affair connected to a single stage voice amplifier. In other words the wireless ear was a little dull of hearing, and the receiver voice rather weak and inarticulate. Notwithstanding these drawbacks a sixty-word paragraph from the *Times* read in Cornwall was clearly heard in Sydney, with the trifling exception of four words missing. The importance of this result, under such conditions, may readily be grasped by picturing the effort to telephone a sixty-word message from one room to another in a large building, without any repetition of the first attempt.

On the last day of these tests, when a more sensitive and more powerful receiver was employed, the voice could be heard at several feet distance from the telephones.

Thus was the human voice first transmitted to Australia. Since then much useful work has been accomplished in perfecting the wireless beam and investigating the properties of various wave-lengths.

Another fact of interest is that Australian engineers, not content to remain quietly listening while this work progresses, recently undertook a series of experimental transmissions intended to reach this country. The wave-length employed was 87 metres, and the power less than 1 per cent. of that used at Carnarvon in 1918 when communication was first established. The attempt was confined to transmitting telegraphic messages in the morse alphabet.

During the first few days single morse letters were sent and picked up both by wireless engineers and by amateurs in this country. On Friday, 14th November, at 6.30 p.m., the first complete message was attempted. This message, addressed to the writer, was recorded by the staff at the Marconi Research Station, Hendon, and elsewhere. It was received on the first transmission without difficulty; subsequent transmissions varied from weak audible strength to good audible signals.

These results are highly interesting from an

¹ This was illustrated during the eclipse of the sun on 24th January of the present year.

experimental point of view, though for commercial work the beam system, both in transmission and reception, is imperative. With this system there will be reliability of reception over a given number of hours, unique freedom from interference, low maintenance costs, and high speed transmission of words, all factors which tend to lower the rates charged to the public.

A word on the valve transmitter employed at Poldhu. For the main oscillator two oil-cooled valves were used in a circuit of special design. A total of about 38 horse-power was supplied, of which 24 horse-power created wireless

waves, 11 horse-power impressed speech on these waves, and 3 horse-power were employed in keeping them steady. Probably little more than 19 horse-power were actually radiated from the aerial. That transmission was steady is obvious from the results now described; that it should be so when the number of ether vibrations was over three millions per second is an achievement. Science moves rapidly, and to-morrow we are apt to treat as commonplace results which to-day are so painfully claimed from the unknown—all honour to Senator Marconi and those who labour with him.

A COUNTER-ATTRACTION.

CHAPTER IV.—*continued.*

II.

HARRY jammed on his hat and left the house, walking furiously—he didn't care where. He was dazed and angry, and violent exercise might clear his brain.

So he was to be stripped naked, and thrown to the wolves, was he? Why? How had it come about?

It wasn't as if he had married—or was even sure that . . . Hang it all, where was Rose hiding? He'd find her—he must—and marry her out of hand; then his father could do just what he pleased. He wouldn't care then. He'd march in upon his father, bold as brass, head erect, chest thrown out—yes, just like this!—with Rose on his arm, trembling a little, perhaps, but brave—she'd draw courage from him—with eyes shining like stars. 'Father, this is my wife! Nothing can separate us now! I ask nothing from you; secure in our love—'

No, that wouldn't do. Too melodramatic. Something like this: 'My dear father, allow me to introduce Mrs Harry Rotherton. I am well aware that having taken matters into my own hands, I have no further claim upon your generosity. It may interest you to know that I have already secured an appointment as—what exactly? Well, that could wait—a lucrative post, and we shall always be pleased to welcome you to our humble dwelling'—no—'our modest home, at any—'

'Steady on, guv'nor! That bus was nearly a'top of ye!' He was jerked roughly from the clouds to the kerb-stone by the hand of a passing navvy. 'Taint safe to try an' cross Piccadilly, when ye're all lit up like that.' His preserver eyed him enviously. 'Where d'ye get it, this time o' day? Pubs don't open till eleven. Best go an' sit in the park for a bit. Wish I'd got the price—'

Half-a-crown changed hands, and Harry, deflated, took the advice tendered him. Piccadilly,

at 10.30 A.M., was certainly not the place to rehearse private theatricals.

The exalted mood had passed; he could see no gleam of light through the cloud of gloom that wrapped him about. Even if he could carry out his programme, what would his father do? Probably pat him on the back, tell him he admired his pluck, and ask them to stay to lunch.

Then a horrid doubt crept into his mind. What about Rose? Was he chasing a rainbow? Perhaps, after all, she cared nothing for him. Perhaps, even, she was married to some one else by this time! Well, in that case, nothing mattered. They could marry him to whom they liked. Irene—no, not Irene; he liked her too well—that American girl with a voice like a dinner-gong with a cold in its head; she'd do.

Oh, damn!

III.

The possibility, once admitted, soon became a probability, then a practical certainty, and by Saturday Harry was a misogynist, definitely and finally, practising a cynical sneer before the looking-glass every morning, for use whenever women were mentioned. He'd done with them!

He was in his room, putting the finishing-touches to his toilet, and steeling his soul for the coming interview with his father when Rose arrived.

She had received no further light on the situation, and during the week had been much exercised in her mind as to how to act. Once, indeed, she had written a letter to Lady Rotherton explaining fully her present position, and apologising for the misunderstanding, and torn it up at the last moment, thereby sacrificing a threehalfpenny stamp that had dried on.

She wouldn't apologise! Sir William knew the facts, and could tell his wife if he liked. Perhaps he wanted to see her for some purpose of his own—she hardly dared conjecture what—but if they dared to patronise her . . .!

It was therefore rather on the defensive that she entered the drawing-room, but there was no hint of condescension in Lady Rotherton's attitude.

'My dear, I'm so pleased you could come early. I told you seven o'clock, as I wanted you all to myself for half-an-hour. Sir William has only just come in. You must tell me all about yourself. You used to know Harry quite well, I believe?'

'We used to meet frequently at Seagrove Court, Lady Rotherton. We played tennis together a great deal. I've given up playing lately.'

'So sensible of you, dear. The present-day style—for girls—so very—well—unrestrained, you know. Harry still plays occasionally. I'm so anxious about him; he has changed so much lately. If only he would tell me what is troubling him; but you know we mothers have to take a back seat when our sons grow up, and his father is so stern with him that I'm afraid—'

Her fear remained unspoken; a servant entered the room. 'Sir William would be obliged if you could speak to him for a moment in the library, my lady.'

'What a nuisance! You won't mind being left alone for a minute, dear? Sir William gets so cross if he is kept waiting. I shall not be long.'

Lady Rotherton's 'minute' proved to be one of extreme endurance and tenacity. Rose, after a while, grew tired of sitting upright on the corner of a couch, posing as one to whom time had no meaning. She picked up a magazine, and settled herself in an arm-chair. Was Sir William making eleventh-hour disclosures? It was improbable. The big pot would hardly dare blacken the little kettle at this stage; the *tu quoque* retort would be too obvious. Anyway, she didn't care.

IV.

Harry, blissfully unconscious that an alien member of the hated sex had invaded the sanctuary—his mother, having found him recalcitrant on other occasions, had carefully concealed the fact—descended the stairs shortly before the dinner-hour with his misogyny working overtime. The sneer he had found rather difficult, being clean-shaven. A dark moustache with the ends waxed upward is almost essential to the finished cynic, although, by wrinkling his nostrils slightly, as though he detected something wrong with the drains, and turning his lips up at the corners with his mouth shut, he managed fairly well, for an amateur.

It takes time for the lines to set permanently, however, and when he strolled into the drawing-room, expecting to find his mother there, he was brought up all standing. There was no room on his face for any expression save blank amazement.

Rose, abandoning her magazine detective just as he was being polite to an imbecile policeman, on hearing the door open, had risen to her feet with a sweet smile, prepared to receive her hostess's apologies. She was equally surprised, but showed it less. For a moment she paled, then her colour and courage returned, and the smile altered its character to one of frosty politeness. 'How do you do, Mr Rotherton? I understood you were out of town. I am very pleased to meet you again after all these years.'

'That's right, Rose! Hit a fellow when he's down! Say "How you've grown," and be done with it.'

'Well, you have, haven't you? In worldly wisdom, at any rate, I hope. We were only children.'

'We were nothing of the sort. You were nineteen, and I was twenty-one. And if you think you can stand me off like this, you're mistaken. I've been scouring London to find you. I don't know how you got here, but—'

'Really, Mr Rotherton, I scarcely understand you. Why should you expect to find me among the scourgings of London? I "got here," as you so elegantly express it, by the invitation of Lady Rotherton.'

'That's it! Twist everything I say into something I didn't mean. Well, if you really want to "part brass-rags"—'

He stiffened, bowed ceremoniously, and turned to leave the room. At the door he spun round sharply; in the depths of a concave mirror that hung above the lintel he had caught a glimpse of a very different Rose to the thorny young lady who had given him his *congé*. In a few strides he was across the room, and before she had time again to don her prickly armour, she was in his arms.

They neither saw nor heard Sir William as he opened the door—and quietly closed it again without entering.

V.

Rose soon found her strength again. 'It's all wrong, Harry,' she said, as she struggled free. 'It's no use pretending I don't care; but can't you see—don't you understand—'

'No, I don't. You are going to marry me. I don't understand anything else.'

'Honestly, Harry, neither do I. And I'm not. I haven't said so. There's your father and mother—'

'And "His sisters and his cousins and his aunts,"' he chanted gaily. 'No good, Rose! They're not on in this act. Besides, father has turned me down already. I'm to be cut off with a shilling, and turned out of doors. Can't think why the mater asked you here to-night—unless it's to witness the ceremony.'

'Whatever for? Have you quarrelled with him?'

'Bless you, no! It isn't done. One can't quarrel with the governor, somehow.'

'Then why——?'

'Oh, I don't know. I merely said that a man must live his own life—or did he say that? We agreed, anyhow, and he told me what a fine fellow I was, and he wouldn't pauperise me with an allowance any longer. I could marry whom I liked, and he'd stock a green-grocer's shop for us, or something. "Drop in when you're passing," don't you know, and all that sort of thing.'

'When was this?'

'Tuesday morning. Haven't seen him since.'

The look of distress faded from her face, and she turned to the puzzled young man with shining eyes. 'Your father is a cleverer man than you will ever be, Harry. I begin to see daylight.'

'Better eyes than I have, then. I wonder where—By Jove! I was to meet him in the library before dinner, and you've driven it clean out of my head. He will be furious. Come along.'

'Coward! You would shelter behind a woman's skirt! No, thank you.'

'Rot. If you won't walk, I'll carry you. I'm going to show him the future green-groceress.'

'You are taking a deal for granted, young man,' she returned, laughing.

Nevertheless she did not require carrying to the torture chamber, neither did she appear to fear very greatly the wrath of the Grand Inquisitor.

VI.

Sir William was seated before a table spread with ominous-looking documents.

'I must apologise for intruding upon a business interview, Sir William,' began Rose, anticipating the heroic speech that was trembling on Harry's lips; 'but I think you should know at once that your impulsive son has just honoured me with a proposal of marriage.'

'Huh! Hot-headed fool! And you?'

'I, of course, have refused him—provisionally.'

'Want to know what provision he can make for you, eh?'

Rose flushed, and began to look dangerous.

'Always said you were a sensible girl,' he continued, with twinkling eyes. 'Well, if you

like to stop, you'll hear.' He rose and placed a chair for her, and turned to his son. 'Now, Harry, business. When you've signed this paper, you will be free to go your own way. I shall take no further responsibility. At the same time, we shall always be pleased to see you, and this young lady, if she decides eventually to withdraw her "provisional refusal."'

Harry seized a pen, and was about to scrawl his signature in the space provided, when his father stopped him. 'Bad business, Harry. Never sign a paper you haven't read.'

'I don't need to read it, sir. Nothing you can say or do will alter my—my—what the——'

His voice trailed off as his eye caught a sentence near the end. He turned back to the beginning, and floundered through it, then looked at his father, bewildered.

'But—but—I thought you meant—I thought——'

'Sorry if the lawyers haven't made my meaning clear. You want to marry, and live your own life. Quite right, too. Now you can't live on your pay; nor would any girl of spirit marry a man dependent on his father. You agree with me, Miss Maddison? Thank you. Therefore I propose to discontinue your allowance.' He paused for a dramatic moment, then continued, 'On the other hand, I propose to transfer to you on your marriage half my interest in Rotherton Ltd., provided that your choice is one that I approve. That's the plain English of it. Now, what have you to say?'

'Only that my choice is already made, sir, whether you approve of it or not.'

'Gently, my boy. It takes two to make a bargain. I must deal with Miss Maddison; she is the better business man of the two, and goodness knows you require a business-like wife to keep you straight.—Now, Miss Maddison. Do these conditions dispose of your "provisional" objections? It is true that he still remains the son of a retail tradesman, as he reminded me not long ago, but if you are prepared to waive that point. . . . Steady, my dear! I suppose that means that the objections are removed, or you would not take so great a liberty. . . . Now, if you will kindly remove yourself from the arm of my chair. . . .'

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

VISIBLE AIR-WHISTLES FOR MOTOR-SHIPS.

EVERY steamship and every motor-ship is provided with a whistle or a siren to announce her approach, and to make important signals of her intentions for the benefit of vessels near her. These signals consist of one, two, or

three short blasts or toots, indicating respectively that the vessel is steering to starboard or to port, or that her engines are going full speed astern. For motor-ships the most convenient plan is to blow the whistles or sirens by means of compressed air, of which there is always a store for starting the engines; and so far as

sound is concerned, compressed air is just as effective as steam. But there are occasions when even loud signals can be heard only faintly, or when it is difficult to tell from which of several ships they proceed. In the Thames estuary and other crowded waterways a number of vessels may be passing in both directions in a strong wind, and near enough to each other to demand sound-signals to remove the risk of collisions. The sounds of the blasts will not travel far against the wind; hence the signals from a vessel close at hand may be fainter than those from another farther away. In such cases the steam signals can be read by the puffs of steam, which is a great help; but the compressed air signals are invisible. To overcome this difficulty a simple vapour-forming device has been invented which gives a puff of smoke when an air-signal is sounded. A liquid, tin tetra-chloride, is stored in a cylinder, from which a pipe passes upward through a vaporising nozzle. When the whistle-valve is opened, it admits compressed-air to this pipe as well as to the whistle, with the result that a small quantity of the liquid is drawn up and converted into a dense white vapour, which issues from a pipe close to the whistle. The cylinder holds four quarts of the smoke-forming liquid, which is enough for 900 two-second signals.

AN IDEAL CLIP FOR HOSE CONNECTIONS.

Every chauffeur, and every motorist who keeps his own car in order, has to connect and disconnect rubber hose-joints on the water-piping. These were originally secured with copper wire. More recently clips have been introduced, which have greatly expedited the connecting process. A very ingenious clip that possesses distinct advantages over previous types has lately been placed on the market. It is based on the worm and worm-wheel principle. The clip itself consists of a strip of galvanised steel. This is fitted at one end with a bent steel stamping that houses a tiny worm having a square thread. Teeth to match the thread on the worm are cut in the strip over nearly half its length. These are formed by cutting a series of grooves in the middle of the strip with a revolving cutter of the same shape as the worm. The bottoms of the grooves, therefore, are circular arcs, which come out near each side of the strip. A screw-driver head at one end of the worm and a collar at the other prevent any end movement. When a clip is placed in position, the end is pushed into the stamping, under the worm, which is turned with a screw-driver, the thread of the worm taking hold of the teeth and drawing in the end of the clip with great power. The fitting which carries the worm is stamped out of galvanised steel, and the worm itself is galvanised, so that no part can rust. It will have been noticed that one clip may be made to close down on a

range of sizes of hose. It is simply a question of how far the end of the clip is screwed through the worm. No. 1 size, for instance, will fit hose $\frac{7}{8}$ th to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter, and only four sizes are required up to $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter. This clip has such power that the thickest hose can be closed down on to pipes much smaller than the inside of the hose. Nothing can go wrong with the clip; the worm-fitting is secured in such a way that it cannot pull off, while the worm-thread and the teeth in the strip are square and of great strength. In fact, we have tightened one of these clips up with a screw-driver as far as it would turn, without discovering any signs of weakness. The nick in the worm's head is wide enough to take a coin if a screw-driver is not handy, a sixpence being all that is required. In addition to serving as clips for hose connections, several of these devices can be joined together and used for compressing piston-rings when entering them into a cylinder, and for similar purposes.

ELECTRICITY FROM WIND-POWER.

From time to time reference has been made in these notes to devices for utilising the power of the wind for the electric lighting of houses. The last note dealing with this subject occurred in the Christmas Number for 1921, when a system was described which consisted of a row of combined windmills and dynamos of small power. A new form of wind-dynamo which has been developed in Germany is reminiscent of these small machines in that both windmill and dynamo are mounted together on high masts. But the latest type is very much larger, while two interesting improvements are embodied. One is the fixing of the windmill at the rear of the combination, so that it sets itself facing the wind without requiring a tail; the other is the addition of a brake vane to each sail or blade, which is normally held by a spring in the direction of rotation, and therefore offers no resistance. Should, however, the revolutions per minute approach the danger-point in high winds, these vanes are swung out by centrifugal force, and prevent any further increase of speed. The dynamo is housed in a weatherproof, stream-lined case, and it is driven through multiplying gear, as the windmill, which measures 28 feet across the tips of the blades, turns but slowly. Both windmill and dynamo are mounted on a reinforced-concrete mast, 30 feet high, with a swivel bearing at the top, which allows the combination to move round to suit changes of wind. Four blades have been adopted for the windmill, and their shape, according to Mr A. J. V. Underwood, M.Sc., who recently described this wind-dynamo in the *Electrical Review*, has been arrived at after considerable experimental work on various forms in a wind tunnel. The electrical equipment is similar to that usual in small installations, a

battery being provided of sufficient size to keep up the supply of electricity during calms. This is charged so soon as the voltage of the dynamo exceeds that of the battery, the circuit being made and broken by an automatic device according to the speed of the windmill. Tests of this apparatus made near Berlin show that 12 horsepower is developed in a wind of 11 miles per hour; but when the velocity of the wind increases beyond 18 miles per hour the brake vanes come into action and limit the horsepower to 14. One of these outfits is to be installed by the Oxford Institute of Agricultural Engineering at Harpenden.

A DEEP-DIVING SUIT.

Although diving has been carried on at depths of over 200 feet, 150 feet is considered to be the limit for practical work. Even at that depth a diver can stay down for only short periods. In the ordinary diving suit the diver's body and the air he breathes are subject to the pressure due to the depth of water above him, this amounting to 43 pounds per square inch for every foot, or 65 pounds for 150 feet. A German named Gall has recently invented diving armour in which the diver is entirely protected from the pressure of the water, while he carries means for purifying the air inside, so that a supply from the surface is unnecessary. The usual helmet is extended into quite a big cylindrical compartment with a domed top, in which the head and trunk of the diver can move about with freedom. This compartment is made of steel plate, and the upper half can be removed to give access to the diver. Branching off from it are articulated tubes for the arms and hands and for the legs and feet, thus affording complete protection from the water pressure. Three articulations of the ball and socket type correspond with the three joints in each limb. In the upper part of the compartment are fitted three enormously thick glass ports at the level of the diver's head—a big one in front, and a smaller one at each side. A fourth port admits light well above him. Outside and just below the domed top are fixed two buoyancy tanks in the form of half-rings, which communicate with side-tanks at a lower level. The side-tanks have outlets at the bottom, while the ring-tanks have valves at the top which are normally open, but can be closed by the diver. In the ordinary course these tanks are full of water, but in cases of emergency the diver closes the valves and connects an oxygen cylinder, when the pressure blows out the water through the outlets in the bottom of the side-tanks. The result is that he immediately rises to the surface. Otherwise he is pulled up by a wire rope attached to the dome. Incidentally this rope is so secured that it can be released by the diver should it become entangled in wreckage. Seven oxygen cylinders are mounted on the outside of the body com-

partment under the buoyancy tanks. These are provided with reducing valves and a connection to the inside, where oxygen can be admitted by the diver as required. Outside connections are taken to the buoyancy tanks through valves that can be opened from the inside. A breathing mask is furnished, and connected by a hose to a breathing cartridge, which absorbs the carbon dioxide in the breath. Mounted within reach of the diver are a telephone, a depth-gauge, a compass, a barometer, a thermometer, and the various valves for the control of the oxygen. The tubes for the arms and hands terminate in nippers, which are worked from the inside through water-tight joints. Experiments with this suit have been made in the Walchensee, during which a diver descended to a depth of over 500 feet without suffering any discomfort; but it was quite dark, and the arm-joints were very stiff, owing to the enormous pressure. Another descent was made by an engineer who had never been down before. At a depth of 350 feet he attached a spring hook to a heavy object which had been sunk to provide this test. The diver was down for twenty-nine minutes, and the engineer for twenty-one minutes. At previous tank tests divers remained under a pressure equal to a depth of 279 feet for periods of five hours.

A HAND WIRELESS TRANSMITTER FOR LIFEBOATS.

It is difficult to over-estimate the advantages of wireless outfits for the lifeboats carried by ocean-going ships. A compact transmitting and receiving apparatus for lifeboats formed the subject of one of these notes in our issue for May 1924. It may be remembered that a direction-finding device was included, and that current for transmitting was derived from a small dynamo driven by a petrol motor. Excellent as these outfits are for large lifeboats, especially those fitted with motors for propulsion, the installation of one in every lifeboat could not be contemplated, owing to the high cost, the space occupied, and the need for a trained operator. A small hand-worked transmitter recently originated by a well-known electrical engineer in collaboration with the Wireless Research Department of the Air Ministry is a very much smaller and simpler outfit that might well form a part of each lifeboat's equipment. The distinguishing feature of this wireless transmitting set is that anyone can work it, the mere turning of the handle causing a pre-arranged signal to be sent out. This may, and probably will, consist of a distress signal, followed by the call letters of the ship to which the boat belongs, and the number of the boat. The machine will keep on repeating these signals so long as the handle is turned. Contained in a waterproof teak-box measuring $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 9 inches by 11 inches, the outfit consists of a tiny alternator

with a 'spark-gap' transmitting device, which is driven by the handle at a high speed through the medium of multiplying gear. Slowly rotated by the mechanism is a disc which repeats the signals at each revolution, notches round the periphery operating the dots and dashes. Tuning devices are mounted in the case, and the wave-length chosen is that in general use by ships. With an aerial carried on two masts, and of quite moderate height and length, the range is about 60 miles. A very useful feature of the apparatus is that whereby the current produced by turning the handle is diverted to a lamp (fixed on one of the masts), which lights up the boat and serves as a guide to other boats or to vessels coming to the rescue. It has been found by experiment that by turning the handle an average man can easily light a fifty candle-power lamp, which would be visible for several miles. Not only are these simple wireless transmitters of value for lifeboats, but they have been approved by the Air Ministry for aeroplanes, while the Mines Department has them under consideration.

A NEW LUGGAGE-TRAILER FOR TOURING-CARS.

Every motorist will readily admit the advantages of a luggage-trailer for long tours; this accessory can also be used for carrying all kinds of goods for shorter distances. The ordinary two-wheeled trailer is satisfactory enough when one is going ahead; but it makes manœuvring in the reverse almost impossible without practice. A great improvement on this type is a trailer with a single castor-wheel. It is connected to each side of the car-chassis at the front end by hinges which allow of vertical motion only. When a car with this trailer is reversed, the wheel swivels round like the castors on a piece of furniture. In fact, the driver can safely forget the trailer entirely whether manœuvring ahead or in reverse. Fittings are supplied with each trailer for attachment to any car, and these are of a type that allows of quickly coupling or uncoupling the trailer. The frame of the trailer consists of a steel channel-bar in the form of a U, which passes along the bottom at each side and across the rear end. Extensions of this frame at the front end connect to the fittings on the chassis of the car, being secured by hand-screws. The body of the trailer is built of steel plate, the back being reinforced to take the spring-fittings for the castor-wheel. Four leaf-springs, two at the top and two at the bottom, in the form of a V with the apex to the rear, support the head of the wheel-fork and give ample resiliency, while the front end springs with the chassis. The body is fitted with a black canvas waterproof cover with straps and fittings, or with a fixed metal top and a door at the side. It is narrow and deep rather than wide and flat, and, being narrower than the car, is not liable to foul other traffic. The

wheel is fitted with ball-bearings and a Michelin Comfort tire. Two and a half hundredweight are carried by the smallest trailer, and ten hundredweight by the largest.

A PORTABLE OPEN FIRE.

Pleasant as everyone admits the open fire to be, few will urge high efficiency as one of its advantages. Recent tests give 33 per cent. of the heat from the burning fuel as the maximum that is utilised in heating a room, although some of the remainder passes into other parts of the house from the chimney. One reason why the open fire is so wasteful is that it is tucked away under a mantelpiece, where only the heat radiated to the front can escape into the room; another is that, at least where wide and shallow, it will not burn coke. A good deal can be said in favour of a recently-invented portable open fire which is placed in front of the ordinary fireplace. This device is in the form of a rectangular stove with bars in front, and with the back curved over to an outlet flue, which directs the smoke into the chimney. An opening above the fire gives the open effect so beloved of the inhabitants of these islands, while a cover over this opening draws the fire up when first lit. The fireplace stands in an ash-tray with louvres, and is fitted with a handle at each side, by which it can be carried from one room to another even when alight. With this device much more of the heat from the burning coal is utilised in heating the room than with an ordinary open fire, the sides and the back being especially effective in giving a constant upward flow of warm air. Whether the claim of the makers that double the heat is obtained from half the coal can be substantiated we are not in a position to determine, but there is not the slightest doubt that a big saving in fuel is effected by these portable fireplaces. Moreover, the fire being deep, coke can be burnt without difficulty.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, Chambers's Journal, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

. TO CONTRIBUTORS.

All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, Chambers's Journal, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

For its return in case of ineligibility, a stamped and directed envelope (or postage-stamps) should accompany every manuscript.

To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.

AT PILL'S AUCTION.

PART II.

IX.

PILL'S Auction Rooms informed him that the bureau with the library chair he had bought and an oak stool had been sent to the rooms by a Mr R. Westway of 29, Davenport Crescent; and had been, they believed, a legacy.

'Duke read the letter several times. He said then to Gilchrist, 'There's an affair here I must attend to at once. You can deal with any matters we've arranged; if anyone drops in whom I ought to see, keep things going till I get back. I daresay I sha'n't be long.'

He departed; again the day was sunshiny.

'Duke knew Davenport Crescent through having passed it fairly often on a 'bus. It was a spot that had once been aristocratic and was now shabby-genteel. The folk who lived there were, 'Duke rather imagined, of the same order. He thought, 'Daresay this Westway chap will be pleased to hear about that little matter of five hundred pounds.'

No. 29 proved to be an apartment-house. An assortment of bells met 'Duke's eyes. He looked about, found one marked 'Westway' in neat, small letters, and rang. At the same moment the door opened and a girl appeared bearing a saucer and a number of dusters; she almost fell over 'Duke, and his colour rose. 'Hullo,' he said.

Bob's colour—for Bob it was—had risen too. But she looked at him with calm eyes and asked, 'What do you want?'

'A cold, cruel question,' commented 'Duke; but added hastily—'Not *you*, so don't get worried; I'm after a Mr R. Westway.'

Suddenly she laughed.

'What's funny?' asked 'Duke severely. He added, 'Er—have we been introduced?'

She laughed again. 'Let me introduce myself—I am Mr R. Westway. Anyway, I'm the only R. Westway that lives here.'

'Spose I'll have to make you do,' said 'Duke with seeming reluctance.

'If I let you,' said she pointedly.

'Duke felt in his pocket. 'It's real business. I have a letter from Pill's Auction Rooms. . . .'

She looked just a trifle worried. 'You haven't been making trouble?'

'Good Lord, no!' exclaimed 'Duke, horrified. 'What do you take me for? Besides, what was there to make trouble about?'

She glanced at him roguishly. 'Why, nothing.'

'Nothing at all,' agreed 'Duke.

'Are you in a dreadful hurry?' she asked him.

'A slack morning; absolutely nothing to do,' 'Duke told her. It was a pity the busy Gilchrist could not hear him.

'Because,' Bob said, matter-of-factly, 'I brought these dusters down to clean our bell, and it seems a pity to carry them back again.'

'Without cleaning it? Rather,' said 'Duke. 'Allow me.' He took the dusters from her.

'This is bath-brick in the saucer,' said Bob, smiling at him.

'Splendid stuff,' said 'Duke vaguely. He looked a little helpless.

'You rub the bath-brick on with one duster, and polish it off with the other,' said Bob.

'Oh, I see.'

Bob held the saucer, and he dabbed the duster into it. He began to rub vigorously. 'Splendid exercise; I don't wonder you do the job yourself.'

'As a matter of fact, I don't, usually,' said Bob; 'but the charlady is ill—and there you are.'

X.

The bell shining gorgeously in the sun, they went upstairs. 'Duke found himself in a pretty, simply-furnished room.

'You must wash your hands,' said Bob; and, murmuring something about getting a towel, disappeared.

The pictures on the walls were well-chosen; the furniture, if inexpensive, showed good taste. 'I suppose the two of them live here, and furnished the place themselves,' thought 'Duke.

In a corner was an ordinary clothes-basket filled with a heterogeneous mass of picture-postcards, old letters, empty match-boxes, and ends of sealing-wax. 'Duke gazed at it in a fascinated way; it was singularly out of keeping with the refinement of the room.

When he had washed his hands, and was back in the sitting-room, Bob faced him with a question. 'You said you came on business? I'm simply dying to know what it is.'

'Please sit down,' said 'Duke. He went on, 'That bureau—'

Bob cried with a wail, 'You're not going to say that you don't like it; don't want to keep it!'

'Heavens! no,' said 'Duke. 'Why, I wouldn't give up that bureau, not for anything. But was it really yours?'

Bob nodded. She considered for a moment, laughed, then said, in rather a shamefaced way, 'It was left to us by an aunt; to Madge and me, I mean. Madge is my sister. She was with me last week. You remember . . . ?'

'I do, indeed,' said 'Duke, ruefully. 'She ran the chair up.'

Bob had the grace to blush. She went on quickly, 'That was ours, too. Aunt Susan left us three things—a little oak stool, that library chair, and the bureau and all it contained—'

'Hurrah!' broke in 'Duke, and slapped his knee.

'There wasn't anything in the bureau to hurrah about,' said Bob. 'Only the rubbish in that basket. We've looked through it; there's nothing that matters.'

'Duke leant towards her. 'You didn't know,' he asked impressively, 'that there was a secret drawer?'

Bob was startled. 'A secret drawer—why, no!'

'Well, there is one,' said 'Duke, in the same impressive tone. 'I found it. That is what I have come about. You see, the secret drawer was not empty.'

She gazed at him breathlessly, but could say nothing.

'What was in it?' said 'Duke, as if she had asked the question. 'Why, nothing. A mere matter of five hundred pounds.'

Bob collapsed into her chair. Then she dashed from it, seized 'Duke by the shoulders, shook him frenziedly. 'What was that you said? Say it again!'

'Is your sister anywhere about?' asked 'Duke. 'I should like her to know that I am being ill-used.'

But, almost in tears, she gave him another shake. 'Madge is at the sea. Did you say—?'

'I said there were five hundred pounds in the secret drawer,' said 'Duke, with composure; 'and so there was.' She freed him. 'Thank you,' said 'Duke. 'It was hard to retain one's calm while that was going on; but I flatter myself I managed it. Here is the money.' He brought from his pocket an envelope and handed it to her.

Bob tore the notes from the envelope, pushed them back again. She looked at 'Duke. 'You sweet thing!'

'If you will say that to me again later on,' he suggested modestly, 'when you know me better.'

XI.

A few minutes later, when she had recovered herself, Bob said wistfully, 'I wish we hadn't run you up over the bureau and the chair; but, you see—well, we were so badly off. . . .'

'I think I begin to see a glimmering of light,' 'Duke said, with an attempt at carelessness. 'Don't tell me, if you think you'll wish later on that you hadn't.'

'Oh, I sha'n't,' said Bob. She nodded her pretty head firmly. 'It was all my doing,' she

said. 'I wrote to the auctioneer. I let him think I was a man, because—because—well, people try to cheat girls sometimes.'

'No, no,' said 'Duke.

'Oh yes, but they do,' said she. 'Besides, you mustn't interrupt. I asked him to put the three things up separately; I thought we'd get more for them like that. Then Madge and I went to the sale. It was my idea that we should bid and help to put the price up. I said to Madge 't would be a joke; but I wanted to get enough for her to go to the sea—she hasn't been a bit well—and a bit over. I knew unless there was some money over she wouldn't go.'

'Duke said gently, 'I see. And she has gone.'

'Yes, she has.'

Bob clasped her hands. 'I say, when she hears about this!—what will she say? And you have been so decent . . . some people wouldn't—'

'Oh, anybody would,' said 'Duke.

Bob said shyly, 'I don't see how we are ever to thank you.'

She was upset still, and he ought to be going. 'Duke said, 'Oh, well, ask me to tea some day, and we can talk about—auctions.'

'You're horrid, but a dear,' said Bob.

XII.

Not so *very* long after, they were looking at the bureau together.

Bob insisted on finding, by herself, the secret drawer. It was a long business, but 'Duke did not seem to tire of watching her at it.

When found, the drawer was discovered to contain the catalogue of an auction. Bob blushed, but took it out, and with a demure face ruffled the leaves.

'Please may I borrow your catalogue?' 'Duke asked winningly.

Bob pursed her lips, her blue eyes dancing. 'Er—have we been introduced?'

'A pore young man what loves you,' said 'Duke, introducing himself; 'a honest young man what returns money he finds; your future husband. Is that right?'

As he kissed her over the catalogue, it's to be supposed that it was.

THE END.

THE LILACS.

WHY do the lilacs every Spring
Hold in their honeyed breath a sting?
To-day their plumes of amethyst
Sway in the languid breeze, sun-kissed;
And I, who used to love them so,
Weep, and the why, I scarcely know.

But oh! their haunting perfume seems
To stir the dust of long-dead dreams!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE YELLOW FIELD.

By G. APPLEBY TERRILL.

PART I.

I.

I HAD stopped running; I was walking at slowest pace, dragging my stocking feet through the wet grass and flowers, when I came to the brim of the hollow.

I was panting and labouring to get breath; my eyes were full of tears from my labouring, and, for many minutes past, sight had much left them, owing to my exhaustion. When, at times, I cast my head backward I could see, as through dimness, the blue of the sky; when I drooped my head forward I could see yellowness where my foot trod, as though the grass were very thick with yellow flowers; but of what was around me I discerned nothing—I was conscious only of dimness, with black bars starting athwart it now and again as a sign that I was very near to swooning.

I knew not that I was come to a hollow until I lay, fallen upon my elbow, on its brim. My foot had slid over the brim, and 'twas from my effort to keep from falling—I could not tell whither—that I had fallen thus; and after I had lain for a little space, my eyes cleared, and I saw the hollow below me in the sunshine.

My brain, as yet, did not clear. By which I mean that I was still very light of the head, with no power to reason properly—to such a state had I been brought by fear and desperate running, and by a deep ebb of my strength from the bleeding of the place, a little above my right hip, where the musketoon ball had furrowed me.

Had my senses been in their right condition I now should have laid myself high on the slope of the hollow, with my face scarce above its rim, and watched through the grasses and flowers (sweeping glances all round me at times) for a distant sight of my pursuers, while I sought, by resting my body thus, to gain some little strength to run farther.

But, instead, I acted in the foolish way, which was well-nigh certain to deprive me of any shred of chance of saving myself that might remain. Getting to my feet, I went stumblingly, slippingly, down the slope to the floor of the hollow; then limped an hundred paces across

the floor to where a high, dense mass of green water-spears stood up from a marshy pool, my thought being that I would hide myself in the midst of these. I skirted the water-spears, looking for some thinness or gap through which I might enter without leaving a crushed passage to betray me—and it came not to my mind that when they who were after me caught sight of these spears they would, as a natural course, descend straightway to search them.

I saw a gap—doubtless forced by drinking cattle—the crushed spears which enframed it decayed and gray, vouching that they had been crushed long ere this morning. With that, deeming vaguely that my enemies were not yet drawn close, and seeing no need to go breast-high in water and slime at once—though verily 'twas a small thing to hesitate from—I withdrew some yards to firmer ground—for I had been walking in morass—and turned to face the slope I had come down by.

It was wondrously yellow with little field flowers; it rose like a yellow carpet, specked only here and there with green, against the sky. For this was June month, and I was in rich, south English pasture-land, some eight miles west of Hastings town.

June of the late year 1692; a Saturday morning, the last Saturday of the month; the hour being about seven of the clock—such was the time of my standing in the hollow, still panting hard and shaking hard from my last running, and knowing, though dreamily, because of my bemused brain, that I was not much better than a dead man. The water-spears were still fixed in my mind, but already, without being very conscious of it, I was beginning to doubt them. I knew in my heart that 'twas almost beyond possibility that I could escape my enemies; and if I died not in resisting arrest, I very surely should be hanged later for having endeavoured to rob an Admiralty messenger.

It would help me not a whit that my endeavour had been no common, thieving thing, but done to serve my king. Rather would it make my condemnation the surer, since we were in such strange, traitorous times, which witnessed the Prince and Princess of Orange

sitting on the throne of England, instead of King James, who, driven forth from his kingdom by the traitors who had set up the Oranges in his place, now dwelt in exile at St Germain-en-Laye, in France.

I was one of those who served His Majesty by slipping into England from St Germain bearing letters (sometimes in His Majesty's own writing) to divers persons, and slipping out again bearing letters for St Germain.

This letter-post business, which was little interrupted by the war between England and France, was in itself a no more than pleasantly hazardous occupation for a young man, who, stepping into England—most usually at night, from a fisher-boat or a contrabandist—would be in some danger of arrest and imprisonment till he was out of England again, but rarely in peril of being brought to trial for his life, though, as could be expected, such errands as his, which had the bringing back of His Majesty to England as their chiefest object, were looked on as treason by the Prince and Princess of Orange, now called King and Queen of Britain, and (outwardly, at least) by the Privy Council and all the rest of the traitor authorities.

Indeed, there were times—if the government were in a savage humour—when the letter-bearer must lurk and lie low, and let no whisper of his being in England get forth, or he might pay with his life. Yet there were times—if he were carrying back letters from high-placed traitors (perchance members of the Privy Council itself), who were now turning traitors to the Oranges, and writing in friendship to King James—when he could cock his hat in London streets and ride in boldest manner to the coast, knowing that his presence was being winked at from the Privy Council downward. Yet, among those who winked, were many stubborn, bitter foes to His Majesty, who would be fain indeed to spite him by putting to death one who served him, could they find a pretext which would enable them to do this without raising an outcry from all decent Englishmen.

An hour before I came to the hollow I had given such a pretext in full measure; I had let myself be drawn into greatest folly. *Maddest folly*, I named it now, with some gleam of reason reviving in my brain as I stood breathing heavily, quivering, by the green palisade of waterspears.

This present journey of mine to England—my sixth—would have been the safest I had known but for my ruining it at the end. Sailing from Normandy (where His Majesty then was) some three weeks back, and landing in the dusk near Pevensey, I had learned that the government was easy tempered; and anon I had made myself extremely safe by receiving a letter for His Majesty from a high person I will not name. I had arranged to quit England in broadest daylight; for at this season I should

be surer of getting a sailing-breeze by day than at night; and I was confident that no one would seek to trouble me.

In gay spirits had I been, not much above an hour ago, as I came riding along a little bridle-road, not ten miles from the cliff, just west of Hastings, under which my fisher-boat was waiting for me. Though my journey had so lacked peril, it yet was a pleasant thing to find myself passed out of all shadow of danger—as I deemed. Indeed, 'twas blithe to reflect that, not long hence, I should ride—with a knowledge that I had done my work in England fittingly—to the threshold of the house that now was more my home than any place in England—His Majesty's Château of St Germain, with its great woods about it. On the terrace, or in his writing cabinet, His Majesty would receive me, and give me some kind word of approval. After which I should go along the corridors to my mother (one of Her Majesty's ladies), turning the day glad for her, who was ever gravely afraid of my journeys to England; then should I walk with my father, he eager to hear of every mile of my journey—and then, doubtless, should I feel a wish that His Majesty would bid me ride over to the Court of France on some little mission, that I might make my bow to certain of the young French mademoiselles in attendance there—I being four and twenty years of age, and not unmindful to wed some French lady.

Ay, happy were my spirits until, on that bridle-road, I overtook Eves Culloch, who, two days before, had asked to share my boat. Poor Eves, who had been fatal to us both it did seem! Oh, I should have been on my guard against Eves, a man older than myself, but so marred by a witless daring that not often was he entrusted with letters, lest he should find a means to throw away his life for nothing, and his letters be opened by the wrong hands. He was riding his horse at walking pace when I came to him. Instantly drawing to a stand, he told me of a fellow whom he had seen in an ale-house a little way behind us, who was waiting for a fresh horse to be brought him from a farm. An Admiralty express, this fellow was—Eves said—going through from Portsmouth to Margate, thence over to Holland, with papers for the Prince of Orange (now abroad).

'Twould be the prettiest thing—Eves had quoth, examining my face—if we took his papers to St Germain. . . . We would leave him tied up on the roadside. And who should see aught, or know where to look for us? And Eves had moved his head to bid me note our surroundings.

It had rained heavily in the night and since dawn. But now the sun was full out, and his heat, I suppose, had caused a thick white mist to rise and lie over the flat pastures on either side of our road. During the past minutes a breath of air from the west—fair for our voyage—had

been bringing mist to, and over, the road ; so that, whether we looked forth or back, the road disappeared into mist, which grew denser as we looked. Thus we had the favourable stage for the enterprise, and after a minute (folly ! folly !) I let Eves persuade me to it. Whereupon we wheeled our nags, and sat ready to ride slowly towards the express when we heard him coming.

Eves spoke with hearty confidence of how swiftly the fellow would yield at pistol point ; of how nimbly we would tie him with our cravats and a piece of cord which Eves chanced to have ; and stop his mouth with a kerchief—and be at sea well-nigh before he was found. But, verily, I felt not easy while we waited.

When I had made the Irish campaign with His Majesty, and was sentinel in a gentlemen's troop, I oft had held a man at stand with carbine or pistol, he obeying my every word. But this present affair, though there would be two of us against one, did seem much more difficult to accomplish—I could not decide why, save that, since it was very like common robbery (though a proper act of war against traitors), I should not think to shoot at the express for resisting us ; and I had forced Eves to promise likewise. Moreover, we were two alone in a countryside that must be counted as hostile to us.

It was after we had waited for seven or eight minutes that there reached us, rather of a sudden, some sounds which perchance the mist had deadened hitherto—sounds, from not far behind us, of an approaching farm wain, as we deemed. We could hear the lumbering turn of the wheels in the mud of the narrow road, the tread of heavy horses, and, plainest of all, the whistling of the driver.

To me it seemed that two men were whistling, but Eves, angry with me for saying so, declared no. Almost immediately after, the quick, soft beat of hoofs in mud, from the other direction, betokening the express, reached us, and I, with great misgiving now, quoth to Eves, 'Well?' He answered swiftly that no farm boy was going to stay him from this ; that we should never catch the express if he passed us, he freshly horsed ; and (asked he, sending forward his horse toward the express, now to be seen as a looming patch in the mist) would I follow him or no ?

Whereafter the event had moved quickly to disaster and fatallness.

Eves had pulled a pistol from his saddle ; and I, when I came beside him, took my pistol from under my cloak. The express was in fair sight now, a short-bodied, fat fellow with a very big, red-looking face, having a blue scarf passed over his hat and beneath his chin to keep his hat secure.

I considered that we were showing our weapons too soon ; and yet, with the fellow riding a powerful, white-nosed hunting horse at great pace, 'twas hard to know how we could

pull him up ere he was carried by us, unless we gave him timely warning.

He saw our pistols, and, not waiting for us to level them, ducked forward, with his hat pressed against his horse's neck. And as Eves, raising his pistol, cried to him to stay, he gave us proof that he was a pretty dexterous fellow in his line by letting blaze past his hunter's jowl with a pistol that he must have drawn as he ducked. I felt my nag wilt and half-rear, poor beast, then knew 'twas falling, and knew next that I was lying breast downward in the mud, having pitched heavily, but clear of my shot horse.

I heard Eves fire on the express, and him reply with a second shot, his hunter's hoofs beating wildly the while from its terror at the firing. Then the beating swept close to me, and there came a scuttering and trampling from the hoofs of Eves's horse, then the queer, heavy, windy sound of horses' bodies meeting, and then the furiosest squattering of mud, and trampling. I twisted to my feet, still holding my pistol, which had not discharged in my fall—for I had not set it acock. Eves and the express were at hand fight, each striking with an empty pistol, but neither landing a blow to count, because their scared, kicking beasts would not let them get close. The express had won past Eves now, but, with his big face deepest red from vehemence and anger, puffing, and gabbling smothered words, he was straining back his hunter to keep the fight up—until he saw me rise armed. At that he flung his pistol through the air at me, and missing, gave his hunter his head, and was speeding off. But, alas ! he went not far. Ere the mist could hide him we saw him draw rein ; and then we saw about him the red blurs of soldiers' uniforms, and we knew that the wain we had heard was no farm wain, but an army one, with a guard of soldiers riding on it, three or four of whom had run forward on hearing the first shot.

They had started forward again, at a flying run, out of the mist into clear space.

'Up !' poor Eves had shouted to me, turning his horse full away from them, and holding his hand to aid me mount behind him. Then the soldiers' snaplock musketoons roared out, and a ball smote Eves forward upon his horse's neck, and the animal, as I strove to catch the rein, doubled from me and cantered towards the soldiers, with Eves hanging—held from falling off by some hitch of the harness—killed, I knew.

I saw one of the soldiers stop the horse, with the others reloading, repriming their musketoons, whilst a newcomer of them dropped on his knee and aimed at me with care. I cocked the hammers of my pistol (which had twin barrels), meaning to make these fellows pay for Eves. I felt a tearing blow above my right hip, and knew that the kneeling musketooner had touched me. I fired both barrels of my pistol, getting

one soldier in the leg—nothing more. Then, with two of the musketoons rising to aim at me, I ran from the road into the pasture on the seaward side, seeking the thickest mist, hearing the reports of the musketoons, the hiss of the balls, and discerning, with a backward glance, that the road was lost to sight quicker than I could have hoped. At this I stopped to pull off my riding-boots, and to fling away my cloak and peruke (my hat was already gone) with them. Thus lightened, I sped fast for a while, endeavouring to go toward Hastings, but unable to tell in the mist what direction I was keeping, hearing once or twice the soldiers calling out, somewhat to my left behind me.

My feet were soon in smart pain from thistle pricks and from being bruised by stones which sometimes I struck on, but I scarce noticed this, or cared a jot so long as I was not lamed. I was more concerned by my touch from the musketoon ball; for, though there was no great pain, I felt I was bleeding much, and knew this must weaken me. But my thoughts were chiefly held by sorrow for Eves—very intense, though we had never been warm friends—for the first minutes. After, they were gripped and disordered by my fear of being taken—a fear that quickly began to surpass all natural bounds, becoming a most dreadful apprehension—a terror such as I would not have believed I could ever know. Perchance a great sense of loneliness and death, caused by the manner of my separation from Eves—dead, I was sure—had somewhat to do with this strange cowardice. Perchance the truth is that, being scarce recovered of a fever that had kept me in my bed all March and April, I was not yet staunch enough for true, deadly adventure. I know not, but soon purest terror was driving me forward madly, making me uncaring of whither I was heading.

For half-an-hour I must have run, with few intervals of slackening; and then it came to me that I was no longer in mist but in clear sunshine. Ahead of me, beyond two or three

miles of pasture-flat, was the sea, streaked green and blue. I stopped and looked behind me. I could not see far because of the haziness (to which the mist had thinned) from which I had lately emerged. I had run upward, I discovered, to the top of some rolling ground. Looking next in the direction of Hastings—and finding a good two miles of pasture betwixt me and the wooded hills that Hastings lay some miles beyond—I noted that a stretch of mist still lay over the nearer part of this pasture, where 'twas low ground. I turned to look again at the haze I had run from; but ere my eyes reached it they stopped, and I felt my heart jump horridly, and experienced anew the full grip of my fear, which had eased in the last seconds. I had perceived, about a mile from me, plain in sunlight, the red figures of four soldiers, with half a score darker figures, country persons, helping them in the chase—the whole strung out in a line. I believed that I could distinguish with them the squat form and even the blue scarf of the express—delaying his ride that anon he might take oath of my face.

In the moment that I gazed I could tell that the line was taking a forward curve, from the sudden running of some who had caught sight of me; and straightway, drawing my eyes from it, I ran—ran to the low ground and into the mist—then soon out on the other side of the mist. I ran on for I knew not how many minutes—well nigh for another half-hour, I would say—presently keeping no direction again, but reeling off to right or left as my feet touched marshy ground, of which there were many patches to avoid. Towards the end I was gone almost sightless—running in that dimness whereof I have told. As my head grew light I resolved that I would run, no matter whither, till my heart burst, and thus cheat the chasers. But anon I ceased running—scarce knowing I had ceased—and dragged my feet through the wet grass and flowers, and came to the hollow, on the floor of which I now stood.

(Continued on page 360.)

ART ASTRAY.

By E. D. CUMING.

I.

INASMUCH as authors draw characters from life, it is at least arguable that painters may do the same. Dickens, as we all know, presented his own father in the guise of Wilkins Micawber, and Leigh Hunt as Mr Harold Skimpole, to mention but two prominent examples of caricature. And if eminent writers of the nineteenth century took these liberties with their relations and friends, we cannot take exception to the licence artists permitted them-

selves in their pictures in days when actions for libel were not to be feared; though we may sometimes be surprised by the method adopted. To make a sacred subject the vehicle of personal vengeance is an action which offends.

In this regard, however, we have to bear in mind that in early days portraiture pure and simple was seldom practised. Art was the handmaid of the Church, and painters devoted themselves very largely to sacred subjects; and if an artist wished to convey a compliment he did it through his picture. Thus, if a wealthy

citizen wished to present an altar-piece to his church, the painter would include therein a portrait of him among the figures represented doing homage to the Virgin and Child. The names of the donors of such works are for the most part forgotten—they would interest few after their generation had passed away—but the portrait may generally be identified. If among the kneeling or standing figures in a group you remark one who, at some personal inconvenience, looks over his shoulder to face the spectator, it is safe to assume that that is a portrait of the person who commissioned the work. The face, moreover, has an individuality lacking in the rest. Portraits of members of the great Florentine family of the Medici frequently occur in picture and fresco painted by artists of the fifteenth century, and always in a flattering vein. A curious example occurs in Vasari's picture of the two patron saints of that family, SS. Cosmo and Damian; these are likenesses of Cosimo the Elder, and the first Duke of Tuscany, also a Cosimo. In Botticelli's 'Spring,' familiar to everyone through engraving and photography, the youth who stands on the extreme left is almost certainly a representation of Giuliano de' Medici, brother of Lorenzo the Magnificent, who was assassinated by the Pazzi conspirators. There is no room for question concerning the many unavowed likenesses of Cosimo and his famous grandson, Lorenzo—portrait busts of them exist; and if only by reason of the former's bull neck and the latter's misshapen nose, either can be identified at a glance, whether he appear among the Wise Men of the East or in other biblical character. Lorenzo the Magnificent was a liberal patron of the Arts, and painters acknowledged his support in manner calculated to flatter. Even a Medici might be gratified to see himself represented as one of the Magi!

II.

Art cannot be said to have gone far astray in such works, though modern taste might disapprove of the portrayal of a ruler, however excellent, in the character of a saint. Where Art did go astray was when it made the canvas its vehicle for personal vengeance. There are many such pictures, and in some cases a fragment of their history survives. Several famous painters have left works of this description. One of the best known is by Juan Fernandez Navarete, otherwise called El Mudo. This is a 'Martyrdom of St James the Great'; and in it Santoyo, secretary to King Philip II. of Spain, appears as an executioner. It is known that the painter and the secretary were at enmity, but what particular offending procured for Santoyo this left-handed compliment history does not record. Nor does it inform us whether El Mudo suffered for this libel.

A like example of artistic spleen occurs in a picture of the 'Flagellation of Christ' in the

Uffizi Gallery at Florence: among the Roman soldiers wielding the scourge is one who looks round at the spectator with a peculiarly offensive air of defiant satisfaction. It is an unmistakable portrait, meant to display the original in enjoyment of a revolting task; but who is the person thus portrayed we do not know.

The most venomous piece of portraiture I have seen is in a 'Temptation of St Anthony' which hangs in the church of St Agostino at Siena. Jusepe de Ribera, otherwise known as 'Spagnoletto,' is the man who vented his animosity in this work. He left his native Spain in early manhood to study in Italy, and eventually made his home in that country. But to the picture: Saint Anthony, life size, is seated at a *prie-dieu*, his eyes on the book that lies open thereon. Standing at his shoulder, with the air of one who reasons, is one who at first sight appears to be an elderly gentleman. But the question at once presents itself—why is the elderly gentleman nearly nude, wearing little more than those large round horn-rimmed spectacles to use which was a privilege enjoyed only by the Spanish nobility in old days? The thing puzzles, and one looks more closely. It is obviously a portrait, and impresses you as a faithful one. The elderly gentleman's dark hair recedes a little from his temples and is touched with gray, the beard and moustache are carefully trimmed; the face is the face of a well-bred man comfortably nurtured; by no means the sort of person who would wander in desert places with little on but his spectacles. Look yet more closely and you discover the artist's intention, betrayed by the two conventional horns rising through the elderly gentleman's hair, never obtrusive, and now less so than ever, toned down as they are by time. Also you remark that the ears are unnatural, again very judiciously—so slightly pointed as to be scarcely caricatured. Then you realise Spagnoletto's idea. This is a portrait of some Spanish Don who had incurred the wrath of the painter; and thus the Little Spaniard took his revenge. This is perhaps the only picture in existence which represents the devil wearing spectacles.

Naples, in which city Spagnoletto lived for many years and where he did his best work, was in his time under Spanish rule; his nationality commended him to the authorities of Naples, and he was prominent among the artists of his day. But it seems unlikely that he painted this 'Temptation of St Anthony' while within reach of the arm of any Spanish Don; he would have suffered for his temerity. We have to bear in mind the fact that to represent a man as the Evil One, in the earlier half of the seventeenth century, was an affront far more pointed, far more serious, than it would be now. We should dismiss it as a foolish jest in doubtful taste, but it was a very different matter in the eyes of a generation which believed in

the existence of a personal Satan who walked the earth by night; a devil of hideous countenance with horns, hoofs, and tail, such as so many of the old painters, Spanish and Italian, have left us in their pictures of the Inferno.

III.

To modern thought Art went somewhat astray in delineating with minute attention to details the horrors of eternal punishment; but here again we have to remember that its scope was almost confined to the service of religion, and such works commended themselves to the Church as terrible warnings. And warnings they doubtless were to the unregenerate who accepted as literal those visions of the nether regions in the semblance of foundry or volcano, lurid with flames, peopled with fiends who clubbed, flogged, and pitchforked erring humanity into fiery torment. The artist only obeyed the creed in which he had been reared when he produced such works; merely accepted and set forth the teachings of his Church. We may look upon them as the fruit of a diseased imagination; our progenitors of the Middle Ages saw in them dreadful presentations of reality. The Church encouraged; but it could also threaten, and it approved such aid from Art.

Returning for a moment to that 'Temptation of St Anthony.' Spagnoletto would scarcely have ventured to pillory offending Dons thus in his own country; for in Spain the arts were under strict surveillance—not with an eye to prevention of such pictorial libel, but to guard against the exhibition of works that might offend the grave Spanish temperament. Nothing that could shock propriety or religious feeling might be hung in church or public building or exposed for sale; and from the records it would seem that the Spanish sense of propriety was easily shocked. The person guilty of painting or exposing such pictures was liable to excommunication, imprisonment, exile, or fine at the hands of the Holy Office, which appointed inspectors in the various towns and districts to enforce the law. And these Familiars did their duty with zest and rigour. Nude figures seem to have been the special quarry in this purity campaign; but the inspectors took a wide view of the improper, and did not confine themselves to condemnation of the nude. In the sixteenth century a painter of Cordoba was brought to trial and imprisoned by the Holy Inquisition; his offence, the painting of a Crucifixion, in which the Madonna was portrayed in embroidered petticoat and farthingale, and St John in trunk hose.

It is very unlikely that that painter of Cordoba was guilty of intentional profanity. Such anachronisms in dress were very usual in works of his period and later, artists giving the characters in biblical scenes the attire of their own time. Pictures of the early saints

and martyrs in which the characters are represented in brightly-hued doublet and trunk hose are very common in Italy. I recall a fresco in a ruined village chapel, a Flagellation, in which those who wielded the scourges were all thus arrayed. One of the greatest pictures in the world—Titian's 'Presentation of the Virgin,' in the Academy at Venice—is thus treated. The principal figure, the Madonna, is portrayed as a country girl in a simple blue gown such as the *contadina* of the sixteenth century habitually wore; the ancillary characters, richly dressed with many jewels, serve to set off the beautiful simplicity of the Virgin's attire.

It was no doubt at the instance of the Spanish Holy Office—the influence of Spain being then strong in Italy—that a purity campaign was undertaken against the artistic productions of the latter country. Italy, however, adopted methods less drastic—for which we may be grateful. She did not ordain destruction of such works as were thought to offend; an example of her more lenient system of correction is furnished by Michael Angelo's great fresco, 'The Last Judgment,' in the Sistine Chapel, which included nude figures. Pope Paul IV. commissioned Daniele of Volterra to paint clothing on such as appeared to require it; which task earned for Daniele the nickname of Ill Bragghetone—'the breeches-maker.'

But this is propriety going astray; not art. It was a curious misuse of his talent which led Andrea del Castagno, a fifteenth-century painter, to introduce into one of his sacred pictures a portrait of himself as Judas Iscariot. For long the thing was explained by a story that Castagno had assassinated a fellow artist, Domenico Veneziano, of whom he was jealous, and, subsequently falling a prey to remorse, made atonement by depicting himself in the vilest of characters. Modern research, however, has spoiled the story, bringing to light the fact that Veneziano was never murdered at all; and, further, survived Castagno by some four years, which puts him out of court. There remains, of course, the possibility that Castagno murdered somebody else, and thus did artistic penance. We may leave it at that.

IV.

There was a period when painters were stricken with a craze for realism—rather dangerous when sacred subjects practically monopolised their easels. Realism may be legitimate in allegorical scenes, as when Giotto adorned the Bardi Chapel with, among others, 'Poverty defending herself with a stick from a Dog.' Poverty had not before, and has probably not since, been presented in this posture. And when shown as at a house door begging, to the suspicion of the watch-dog, it ceases to wear the allegorical complexion, trespassing as it does upon the realm of fact.

Realism in sacred subjects rarely produces happy results. It was quite usual to introduce into scenes of 'The Last Supper' a dog crouching under the table, or wandering about in expectation of scraps; and the presence of the dog does not offend. But in two such works a cat is introduced, and the result is curiously different. Pocetti's 'Last Supper' in the Siena Gallery is one, and the novelty at once impresses as a breach of artistic tact; the cat under the table, hunched up at the feet of one of the disciples, imports a note of homeliness discordant with the spirit that should inform the subject. The other work is a fresco by Pietro Lorenzetti on the ceiling of the church of St Francis at Assisi: in this is shown through a doorway a cook cleaning dishes, and near him a cat stealing morsels of meat. Again an artistic offending in the domesticity and irrelevancy of the incident. Another unusual detail of this fresco is the attitude of the servant, who points his thumb in contempt at the guests—manifestly expressing surprised distaste for the presence of Judas.

There is at Perugia a Madonna and Child which must be unique. This is the work of Giovanni Bottati, painted in 1447. The Child sits upright on His Mother's knee, responding to the advances of a small white dog whose forepaws are on the Madonna's lap. It startles but does not repel; there is about the picture a tenderness and simplicity which redeem Raphael's famous 'Madonna of The Goldfinch' in the Uffizi recurs to mind in this connection.

The same homely but rather pleasing note appears in Giotto's picture of the 'Virgin in Adoration' in the chapel of San Silvestro at Florence: in the background is a group of shepherds, one of whom restrains a barking dog from attacking the Mother and Child.

The most unfortunate results of the striving after realism appear in various pictures of saints in the act of restoring the dead to life. Seeking to enforce actuality, the artists represent bystanders handkerchief to nose; sometimes with head averted in disgust; with the inevitable result that attention is drawn to the disagreeable aspect of the Raising. If memory does not play me false, it is in Ridolfo Ghirlandajo's 'St Zenobia' that this feature is given peculiarly repugnant prominence. Conspicuous among those about the open grave is a dwarf in motley, with an immense sugar-loaf hat, who, handkerchief on the way to his nose, turns a grotesquely wry face to the spectator.

This sort of thing may have made the works more convincing to the generation for which they were painted; but restraint in art, as in literature, is a quality we can appreciate.

V.

One of the large frescoes in the Spanish Chapel at Florence is noteworthy for an odd

conceit. The principal groups are a pope with cardinals, bishops, and other high ecclesiastics; and a monarch surrounded by great officers of state. In the foreground is a pack of black and white hounds, with a few somewhat conventional wolves, which appear oddly out of place in such grave and exalted company. Church dignitaries, we know, were addicted to the chase in an elder day, but we do not expect to find them portrayed with their hounds in a church. The explanation is that the fresco is allegorical. This is a Dominican chapel, and the habit of the Dominican order is black and white. The hounds are the hounds of the Lord (*Domini canes*), and the wolves represent the heretics it is their pious duty to hunt and destroy.

One of the earliest Italian painters, Buffalmaco by name, seems to have made a point of importing into his pictures any angry feeling that possessed him at the time. He was also a humorist. He was once commissioned by the Perugian local authorities to paint a picture of Ercolano, the patron saint of the town. He undertook the work, but lingered over it till the city fathers became impatient. They worried him to make haste and complete his picture; and worrying is what no artist will tolerate. Buffalmaco got to work and executed the commission, but he revenged himself by giving St Ercolano a diadem of fishes instead of the orthodox halo. A jest obscure to us and requiring elucidation. In early Christian art the fish symbolised water, therefore baptism, therefore Christianity. Now Ercolano was a militant saint. He was Bishop of Perugia when the city was besieged, took a prominent part in the defence, and lost his life at the hands of the enemy. Buffalmaco, therefore, gave the saint of his picture the symbol of Christianity in an ironical spirit, as Ercolano owed his martyrdom to his prowess as a fighting man.

A story is told of this painter, who lived in the fourteenth century, which suggests that he was reckless of his reputation. He was asked to adorn the wall of a small chapel with a fresco of St Christopher, who, according to tradition, was twelve braccia (or cubits) in height. The wall to be decorated was only nine braccia high, and the patron who wished to commission the work, an unlettered man and stupid, could not be made to see that a figure twelve braccia high cannot be painted on a wall of only nine. He insisted that the St Christopher must be of the altitude stated in sacred tradition, and Buffalmaco was unable to convince him to the contrary. 'Very well,' he may have said; 'have it your own way. I'll do what you want, and I *hope* you'll like it.' He painted the twelve-braccia-high saint sitting on the floor, whereon his legs protruded as far as the chapel door.

If this be a representative example of Buffalmaco's method of satisfying patrons we need feel no surprise that few of his works survive.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

By JOHN BUCHAN, Author of *John Burnet of Barns, Greenmantle, &c.*

CHAPTER XI.—HARIPOL; THE MAIN ATTACK.

SOME men begin the day with loose sinews and a sluggish mind, and only acquire impetus as the hours proceed; others show a declining scale from the vigour of the dawn to the laxity of evening. It was fortunate for Lamancha that he belonged to the latter school. At day-break he was obstinate, energetic, and frequently ill-tempered, as sundry colleagues in France and Palestine had learned to their cost; and it needed an obstinate man to leave Crask between the hours of five and six in the morning on an enterprise so wild and in weather so lamentable. For the rain came down in sheets, and a wind from the north-east put ice into them. He stopped for a moment on the summit of the Crask ridge, to contemplate a wall of driving mist where should have been a vista of the Haripol peaks.

'This wund will draw beasts intil the Sanctuary without any help from Macnicol,' said Wattie morosely. 'It's ower fierce to last. I wager it will clear long afore night.'

'It's the weather we want,' said Lamancha, covering from the violence of the blast.

'For the Sanctuary—maybe. Up till then I'm no' sae sure. It's that thick we might maybe walk intil a navvy's airms.'

The gods of the sky were in a capricious mood. All down the Crask hillside to the edge of the Doran the wet tablecloth of the fog clung to every ridge and hollow. The stream was in roaring spate, and Lamancha and Wattie, already soaked to the skin, forded it knee-high. They had by this time crossed the moor-road from Crask to Haripol, and marked the nook where in the lee of rocks and birches Archie was to be waiting with the Ford car. Beyond lay the long lift of land to the Haripol peaks. It was rough with boulders and heather, and broken with small gullies, and on its tangled face a man might readily lose himself. Wattie disliked the mist solely because it prevented him from locating the watchers, since his experience of life made him disinclined to leave anything to chance; but he had no trouble in finding his way in it. The consequence was that he took Lamancha over the glacis at the pace of a Gurkha, and in half-an-hour from the Doran's edge had him panting among the screes just under the Beallach which led to the Sanctuary. Somewhere behind them were the vain navvy pickets, happily evaded in the fog.

Then suddenly the weather changed. The wind shifted a point to the east, the mist furled up, the rain ceased, and a world was revealed from which all colour had been washed, a world as bleak and raw as at its first creation. The gray

screes sweated gray water, the sodden herbage was bleached like winter, the crags towering above them might have been of coal. A small fine rain still fell, but the visibility was now good enough to show them the ground behind them in the style of a muddy etching.

The consequence of this revelation was that Wattie shuffled into cover. He studied the hillside long and patiently with his glass; then he grunted, 'There's four navvies, as I mak out, but no' verra well posted. We cam gei near ane o' them on the road up. Na, they canna see us here, and besides they're no lookin' this airt.' Lamancha tried to find them with his telescope, but could see nothing human in the wide sopping wilderness.

Wattie grumbled as he led the way up a kind of *nullah*, usually as dry as Arabia, but now spouting a thousand rivulets, right into the throat of the Beallach. 'It's clearin' just when we wanted it thick. The ways o' Providence is mysteerious. . . . Na, na, there's nae road there; that's a fox's track, and it's the deer's road we maun gang. Stags will no' climb rocks, sensible beasts. . . . The wind's gone, but I wish the mist wud come doun again.'

At the top of the pass was a pad of flat ground covered thick with the leaves of cloud-berries. On the right rose the Pinnacle-Ridge of Sgurr Dearg, in its beginning an easy scramble which gave no hint of the awesome towers which later awaited the traveller; on the left Sgurr Mór ran up in a steep face of screes. 'Keep doun,' Wattie enjoined, and crawled forward to where two boulders made a kind of window for a view to the north.

The two looked down into three little corries which, like the fingers of a hand, united in the palm of a larger corrie, which was the upper glen of the Reascuill. It was a sanctuary perfectly fashioned by Nature, for the big corrie was cut off from the lower glen by a line of boiler-plates like the wall of a great dam, down which the stream plunged in cascades. The whole place was loud with water—the distant roar of the main river, the ceaseless dripping of the cliffs, the chatter and babble of a myriad hidden rivulets. But the noise seemed only to deepen the secrecy. It was a world in monochrome, every detail clear as a wet pebble, but nowhere brightness or colour. Even the coats of the deer had taken on the dead gray of the slaty crags.

Never in his life had Lamancha seen so many beasts together. Each corrie was full of them, feeding on the rough pastures or among the boulders, drifting aimlessly athwart the spouts of scree below the high cliffs, sheltering in the

rushy gullies. There were groups of hinds and calves, and knots of stags, and lone beasts on knolls or in mud-baths, and, since all were restless, the numbers in each corrie were constantly changing.

'Ye Gods, what a sight!' Lamancha murmured, his head at Wattie's elbow. 'We won't fail for lack of beasts.'

'The trouble is,' said Wattie, 'that there's ower mony.' Then he added obscurely that 'it might be the day o' Pentecost.'

Lamancha was busy with his glass. Just below him, not three hundred yards off, where the ravine which ran from the Beallach opened out into the nearest corrie, there was a group of deer—three hinds, a little stag, and farther on a second stag of which only the head could be seen. 'Wattie,' he whispered excitedly, 'there's a beast down there—a shootable beast. It's just what we're looking for . . . close to the Beallach—'

'Ay, I see it,' was the answer. 'And I see something mair. There's a man ayont the big corrie. D'ye see yon rock shapit like a puddock-stool. . . . No, the south side o' the waterfa'. . . Well, follow on frae there towards Bheinn Fhada. Have you got him?'

'Is that a man?' asked the surprised Lamancha.

'Where's your een, my lord? It's a man wi' gray breeks and a brown jacket; an' he's smokin' a pipe. Ay, it's Macqueen. I ken by the lang legs o' him.'

'Is he a Haripol gillie?'

'He's the second stalker. He's under notice, for him and young Mr Claybody doesna 'gree. Macqueen comes frae the Lawlands, and has a verra shairp tongue. They was oot on the hill last week, and Mr Johnson was pechin' sair gaun up the braes, an' no wonder, puir man. He cries on Macqueen to gang slow, and says, apologetic-like, "Ye see, Macqueen, I've been workin' terrible hard the past year, and it's damaged my wund." Macqueen, who canna bide the sight of him, says, "I'm glad to hear it, sir. I was feared it was maybe the drink." Gey impident?'

'Shocking.'

'Weel, he's workin' off his notice. . . . I'm pleased to see him yonder, for it means that Macnicol will not be there. Macnicol—' Wattie chuckled like a dropsical corn-crake—'is maist likely beatin' the roddydendrum for the wee dog. Macqueen is set there so as he can watch this Beallach, and likewise the beallach of the Red Burn on the Machray side, which I was tellin' ye was the easiest road. If ye were to kill that stag down below he could baith see you and hear you, and ye'd never be allowed to shift it a yaird. . . . Na, na. Seein' Macqueen's where he is, we maun try the wee corrie right under Sgurr Dearg. He canna see into that.'

'But we'll never get there through all those deer.'

'It will not be easy.'

'And if we get a stag we'll never be able to get it over this Beallach.'

'Indeed it will take a great deal of time. Maybe a' night. But I'll no' say it's not possible. . . . Onyway, it is the best plan. We will have to tak a lang cast round, and we maunna forget Macqueen. I'd give a five-pun-note for anither blatter o' rain.'

The next hour was one of the severest bodily trials which Lamancha had ever known. Wattie led him up a chimney of Sgurr Mór, the depth of which made it safe from observation, and down another on the north face, also deep, and horribly loose and wet. This brought them to the floor of the first corrie at a point below where the deer had been observed. The next step was to cross that corrie eastward towards Sgurr Dearg. This was a matter of high delicacy—first because of the number of deer, second because it was all within view of Macqueen's watchtower.

Lamancha had followed in his time many stalkers, but he had never seen an artist who approached Wattie in skill. The place was littered with hinds and calves and stags, the cover was patchy at the best, and likewise the beasts were restless. Wherever a route seemed plain the large ears and spindle-shanks of a hind appeared to block it. Had he been alone Lamancha would either have sent every beast streaming before him in full sight of Macqueen, or he would have advanced at the rate of one yard an hour. But Wattie managed to move both circumspectly and swiftly. He seemed to know by instinct when a hind could be bluffed, and when her suspicions must be laboriously quieted. The two went for the most part on their bellies, like serpents, but their lowliness of movement would have been of no avail had not Wattie, by his sense of the subtle eddies of air, been able to shape a course which prevented their wind from shifting deer behind them. He well knew that any movement of beasts in any quarter would bring Macqueen's vigilant glasses into use.

Their task was not so hard as long as they were in hollows on the corrie floor. The danger came in crossing the low ridge to that farther corrie which was beyond Macqueen's ken, for as they ascended the wind was almost bound to carry their scent to the deer through which they had passed. Wattie lay long with his chin in the mire, and his eyes scanning the ridge, till he made up his mind on his route. Obviously it was the choice of the least among several evils, for he shook his head and frowned.

The ascent of the ridge was a slow business, and a toilful. Wattie was clearly following an elaborate plan, for he zigzagged preposterously, and would wait long, for no apparent reason, in places where Lamancha was held precariously by half a foothold and the pressure of his nails.

Anxious glances were cast over his shoulder at the post where Macqueen was presumably on duty. The stalker's ears seemed of an uncanny keenness, for he would listen hard, hear something, and then utterly change his course. To Lamancha it was all inexplicable, for there appeared to be no deer on the ridge, and the place was so much in the lee that not a breath of wind seemed to be abroad to carry their scent. Hard as his condition was, he grew furiously warm and thirsty, and perhaps a little careless, for once or twice he let earth and stones slip under his feet.

Wattie turned on him fiercely. 'Gang as if ye was growin',' he whispered. 'There's beasts on a' sides.'

Sobered thereby, Lamancha mended his ways, and kept his thoughts rigidly on the job before him. He crept docilely in Wattie's prints, wondering why on a little ridge they should go through exertions that must be equivalent to the ascent of the Matterhorn. At last his guide stopped. 'Put your head between these busses,' he enjoined. 'Ye'll see her.'

'See what?' Lamancha gasped.

'That dour deevil o' a hind.'

There she was, a gray elderly beldame, with her wicked pucklike ears, aware and suspicious, not five yards off.

'We canna wait,' Wattie hissed. 'It's ower dangerous. Bide you here like a stone.'

He wriggled away to his right, while Lamancha, hanging on a heather-root, watched the twitching ears and wrinkled nozzle. . . . Presently from farther up the hill came a sharp bark, which was almost a bleat. The hind flung up her head, and gazed intently. . . . Five minutes later the sound was repeated, this time from a lower altitude. The beast sniffed, shook herself, and stamped with her foot; then she laid back her ears, and trotted quietly over the crest.

Wattie was back again by Lamancha's side. 'That puzzled the auld bitch,' was his only comment. 'We can gang faster now, and God kens we've nae time to loss.'

As Lamancha lay panting at last on the top of the ridge he looked down into the highest of the lesser corries, tucked right under the black cliffs of Sgurr Dearg. It was a little corrie, very steep, and threaded by a burn which, after the rain, was white as a snowdrift. Vast tumbled masses of stone, ancient rockfalls from the mountain, lay thick like the cottages in a hamlet. At first sight the place seemed to be without deer. Lamancha, scanning it with his glass, could detect no living thing among the debris.

Wattie was calling fiercely on his Maker. 'God, it's the auld hero,' he muttered, his eyes glued to his telescope.

At last Lamancha got his glass adjusted, and saw what his companion saw. Far up the corrie on a patch of herbage—the last before

the desert of the rocks began—stood three stags. Two were ordinary beasts, shootable, for they must have weighed sixteen or seventeen stone, but with inconsiderable heads. The third was no heavier, but he had a head like a blasted pine—going back fast, for he was old, but still with thirteen clearly-marked points, and a most noble spread of horn.

'It's him,' Wattie crooned. 'It's the auld hero. Fine I ken him, for I seen him on Crask last back-end rivin' at the stacks. There's no' a forest hereaways but they've had a try for him; but the Deil's in him, for the grandest shots aye miss. What's your will, my lord? Dod, if John Macnab gets yon lad, he can cock his bonnet.'

Lamancha felt his heart beat faster. 'I don't know, Wattie. Is it fair to kill the best beast in the forest?'

'Keep your mind easy about that. Yon's no a Haripol beast. He's oftener on Crask than on Haripol. He's a traveller, and in one season will cover the feck o' the Hielands. I've heard that, oreeginally, he cam oot of Kintail. He's terrible auld—some says a hundred year; and if you dinna kill him, he'll perish next winter, belike, in a snaw-wreath, and that's a puir death to die.'

'It's a terrible pull to the Beallach.'

'It will be that, but there's the night afore us. If we don't tak that beast—or one o' the three—I doubt we'll no get anither chance.'

'Push on, then, Wattie. It looks like a clear coast.'

'I'm no' so sure. There's that hind somewhere afore us.'

Down through the gaps of the Pinnacle Ridge blew fine streamers of mist. They were the precursors of a new storm, for long before the two men had wormed their way into the corrie the mountain before them was blotted out with a curtain of rain, and the wind, which seemed for a time to have died away, was sounding a thousand notes in the Pan's pipes of the crags.

'Good,' said Lamancha. 'This will blanket the shot.'

'Ba-ad too,' growled Wattie, 'for we'll be duntin' against the auld bitch.'

Lamancha believed he had located the stags well enough to go to them in black darkness. You had only to follow the stream to its head, and they were on the left bank a hundred yards or so from the rocks. But when he reached the burn he found that his memory was useless. There was not one stream but dozens, and it was hard to say which was the main channel. It was a loud world again, very different from the first corrie, but when he would have hastened, Wattie insisted on circumspection. 'There's the hind,' he said, 'and maybe some sma' stags. It's early in the day, man; and since we're out o' Macqueen's sight, there's nae need to hurry.'

His caution was justified. As they drew

themselves up the side of a small cascade the tops of a pair of antlers were seen over the next rise. Lamancha thought they were those of one of the three stags, but Wattie disillusioned him. 'We're no' within six hundred yards o' yon beasts,' he said.

A long circuit was necessary, happily in good cover, and the stream was not rejoined till at a point where its channel bore to the south, so that their wind would not be carried to the beasts below the knoll. After that it seemed advisable to Wattie to keep to the water, which was flowing in a deep-cut bed. It was a job for a merman rather than for breeched human beings, for Wattie would permit of no rising to a vertical or even to a kneeling position. The burn entered at their collars, and flowed steadily through their shirts to an exit at their knees. Never had men been so comprehensively and continuously wet. Lamancha's right arm ached with pulling the rifle along the bank—he always insisted on carrying his weapon himself—while his body was submerged in the icy outflow of Sgurr Dearg's springs.

The pressure of Wattie's foot in his face halted him. Blinking through the spray, he saw his leader's head raised stiffly to the alert in the direction of a little knoll. Even in the

thick weather he could detect a pair of bat-like ears, and he realised that these ears were twitching. It did not need Wattie's whisper of 'the auld bitch' to reveal the enemy.

The two lay in the current for what seemed to Lamancha at least half-an-hour. He had enough hill-craft to recognise that their one hope was to stick to the channel, for only thus was there a chance of their presence being unrevealed by the wind. But the channel led them very close to the hind. If the brute chose to turn her foolish head they would be within view.

With desperate slowness, an inch at a time, Wattie moved upwards. He signed to Lamancha to wait while he traversed a pool where only his cap and nose showed above the water. Then came a peat wallow, when his face seemed to be ground into the moss, and his limbs to be splayed like a frog's and to move with frog-like jerks. After that there was a little cascade, and beyond, the shelter of a big boulder which would get him out of the hind's orbit. Lamancha watched this strange progress with one eye; the other was on the twitching ears. Mercifully all went well, and Wattie's stern disappeared round the corner of rock.

(Continued on page 355.)

U M S I N D U S I.

By JAY BROWNE.

I.

LONDON on the Thames, Paris on the Seine, Rome on the Tiber—cities and rivers alike are within the ken of every schoolboy; but it is open to question how many of the youths of South Africa could name the river on which has been raised the capital of Natal, the Garden Colony, one of the provinces of the Union.

Pietermaritzburg, on the Umsindusi, is named after Piet Retief and Gerrit Maritz, *voortrekkers* or pioneers of the Dutch who had worked their way up from the Cape when the restraint of British rule had become irksome, found their way over the Drakensberg Mountains into Natal, laagered and settled down in the place which perpetuates the memory of their leaders, eventually to acquiesce in the sovereignty from which they had endeavoured to escape.

This was over eighty years ago, when the rich grasses of the high veld, the sheltered kloofs and undulations of the midlands, and the bush and pastures of the coast lands provided food and cover for herds of game, big and small, which roamed the country end to end, but have long since disappeared before advancing civilisation with its uncontrolled slaughter of Nature's noblest animal creations.

No longer does the elephant trumpet in the

bush, the hippopotamus wallow in the rivers and lagoons, the rhinoceros and the zebra feed on the plains; or the gnu, the koodoo, the eland, and the buffalo attract the sportsman or the hunter.

In these later days, and almost too late even for them, the smaller surviving antelopes and their kin are perfunctorily preserved from extermination, whilst the establishment of a National Park, near those passes through the Drakensberg which admitted the *voortrekkers* of old, serves as a sanctuary for such animals as have been and are being gradually re-established within its area.

The seal of the city and borough of Pietermaritzburg, under the five stars of the Southern Cross, bears the representation of an elephant with the native name 'Umgungunhlovu,' possibly derived from the Zulu words 'Isikungu Sendllovu,' meaning the 'Elephants' Retreat.'

The association of the animal with the city is purely symbolic, and indicative of the importance of the latter as the seat of administration by the representative of the Great White Queen.

But it is not with the attractions and amenities of this colonial town of rapid growth, with the advantages and conveniences derived from modern science and experience, that we would

dally, unless to say that, with a delightful climate, botanical gardens, parks, and recreation grounds, a university college, fine public and private schools, and a situation of great beauty, it has few rivals, if any, as a place of residence in the sub-continent. It is to the river the Umsindusi, rising in the distant hills, that we would render our tribute of gratitude for happy hours away from the stuffy courts of justice, the office, or the store; and so, taking our fishing-rod and tackle, our kodak, and our field-glass, we make for the boathouse.

II.

Roberts, the Mauritian boatman, is worthy of the confidence of the club. Every boat of the fleet is his especial child; from keel to rowlock there is no flaw, no perfection of which he is unaware. The river is his father and his mother; the club-house, its garden, with glorious roses and hydrangeas, its banks of mesembryanthemums and neat hedges of *Abelia rupestris*, are his wife and brothers.

His, too, is the care of three miles of the river, the planting and maintenance of weeping-willows, casuarinas, pepper-trees, and what-not that beautify its banks. But it is not always blooming; the paint and varnish do not always shine. How, were it otherwise, could Umsindusi sustain its designation? Not without reason has the word *msundeze*, to 'push or carry away,' given the river its present name.

More than once disaster has fallen, when heavy thunderstorms 'up-country' have brought down the torrent so swiftly that Roberts and his native 'boys' have been unable to rescue all the boats from the twenty feet or more of flood that has suddenly overwhelmed them, and the labour of restoration has been arduous and prolonged. But now the telephone at the storage station sends down its warning of impending storm, and all is 'made fast' in anticipation.

To-day is glorious. It is the middle of March, and the last struggles of the summer sun in a cloudless sky are not too violent for comfort as I take up my sculls, and quietly, half drifting with the gentle current, pull down the stream.

The high banks, with their growth of trees and thicket, exclude all view except the distant hills, some covered with virgin bush, others with plantations of various eucalypti and of *Acacia mollissima*, the production of bark of the latter, for tanning purposes, being a substantial local industry. A hundred yards, and I am alone with the river and its secrets.

III.

Here and there a splash and a ripple tell of the rise, to some attractive grasshopper or other insect, of a scale fish (*Barbus Bowkeri*), attractive and carp-like. Yonder, from a ledge

of shale, a couple of water-tortoises waddle out of sight into the concealing element. The soothing cooing of doves mingles with the twittering of weaver birds hovering round their pendant and now deserted nests, and the persisting and distracting call of guinea-fowl in the long seeding grass is challenged by the crowing of a domestic fowl at a nearby homestead. On my right is a dense thicket from which proceeds the quick and prolonged kuk-kuk-kuk of the rain bird, the lark-heeled cuckoo, *Centropus Burchelli* of the ornithologist. Sinuously and noiselessly it emerges, and so well does its reddish-brown plumage blend with the tints of the foliage of the scrub that its movement alone reveals its presence.

I pass under the overhanging branches of a large willow, in a fork of the branches of which, high up and well over the river, is the abandoned nest of the hammerhead (*Scopus umbretta*), so named on account of the form of head and crest. This quaint and sepia-coated eater of frogs and other aquatic denizens favours the proximity of marshes and river banks, and its dancing displays, when two or three of them are gathered together, afford no little amusement to the fortunate spectator. Its huge domed nest of sedge and mud, sometimes three feet in diameter, is accessible only by a small hole in the side most distant from the points of attachment to the tree, and is practically unassailable to the predaceous assaults of enemies.

The nest above, though deserted by its architects, is not untenanted. A slight movement in the dimness of its interior reveals the blinking eyes of a barn owl (*Strix flammea*) peering through the sunlight at the intruder on its solitude.

A tree stump projecting from the river-bank appears to be the objective of a shag (*Phalacrocorax Afr.*) seeking a favourable perch for operations, but a sheering in its flight—as though changed intention had decided its noiseless dive into the stream—results in the discovery, through the glasses, of an iguana basking on the point of vantage rejected by the water-bird, which emerges some yards beyond, with its long snake-like neck above the surface. A bend in the river provides a shoaling stretch of bank covered with six-foot reed and bulrush, over which hover dragonflies and other winged insects, butterflies of brilliant colour, black-winged mosquitoes and midges, which harass the fisherman as he seeks a likely place to cast his line. That sparkling gem of iridescence, the malachite kingfisher (*Corythornis cyanostigma*), flits by, and, unafraid, allows us to admire its resplendent sheen before darting away to a more promising hunting-ground.

Here and there are clumps of arums, whose last ivory-white blooms of the season, set well above the vivid green of their foliage, contrast with those of ageratum, the attractive delicate

powder-blue flowers of which are said to bring ill-luck if used for decorative purposes; and wild geraniums and convolvuli, white, pink-streaked, and delicate blue, intertwine with the graceful feathery fronds of wild asparagus.

IV.

We are now at the weir, where the stretch of water suitable for boating terminates; so, mooring my small craft, I follow the stream down its right bank, making my way through primitive gardens, where a small community of free Indians endeavour to supplement their incomes and their food-supply by the cultivation, in patches, of maize (locally known as 'mealies'), dholl, sweet potatoes, chillies, and other vegetables dear to the heart of the Oriental.

These Indians, or coolies, as they are more generally called, are, for the most part, sometime indentured men and women, natives of India who, having completed their term of employment under agreement, have settled in this country of congenial climate and of employment unrestricted by caste. The supply of vegetables to Europeans is almost entirely in their hands; and various occupations, which would be considered *infra dig.* by the superior white man or the native, are followed, to his own advantage and profit, by the somewhat despised but indispensable Indian.

Leaving the gardens behind, a short tramp through swampy ground finds me in a derelict orchard, where oblivion and consequent decay have covered the growth of apricots, lemon, peach, and orange with habiliment of lichen, creepers, and degenerate grape vines. There is an indescribable charm about this deserted witness of former occupancy, the almost tangible silence broken only by the babbling of the river and the notes of the birds which flit from tree to tree and curiously eye the intruder on their solitudes.

Here and there one gets a glimpse of the glorious paradise flycatcher (*Terpsiphone cristata*), whose dainty nest is concealed from the unaccustomed eye by the coating of lichen which also covers the branch to which it is attached. Flights of colys (*Colius striatus*) in mouse-coloured plumage, with long tails and heads crested and beaked like parrakeets, reluctantly and protestingly leave the fruits on which they are feeding, and a fiscal shrike (*Fiscus collaris*) betrays his larder as he spikes a fat grasshopper on the thorn of a lemon-tree.

V.

But these enchantments are only a few of those the revelation of which delights the nature lover, and we again betake ourselves to the river-bank and fix up our rod and line, meantime considering the *modus operandi* likely to produce successful results.

Shall it be 'scale-fish' with grasshopper or artificial fly in the rapids, and where they broaden

out into the likely pool below, or bottom fishing for either scale or barbel in the greater depths with worm or mealy dough, soft crab, or the deadly larva of the hornet, robbed from the little clay nest under the framework of the veranda? We decide on the dough, the mealie meal which, with an admixture of wheaten flour to render it more adhesive to the hook, my native cook has carefully prepared by boiling, like a pudding in a cloth, to the correct consistency.

The current not being strong, a half-dozen buck-shot suffice to sink my bait, and, casting well out into deep water, I wait for the scarcely perceptible straightening of the line which indicates an inspection of the product of the kitchen. The line slackens. Has the bait been rejected as insufficiently attractive, or has it been raised preparatory to being taken? This is the moment when a sudden strike means loss of bait, or fish, or both. Carefully you raise the point of your rod, and again the line tautens, and training and instinct tell that it is the time to strike, not strongly and suddenly, but with conviction to your victim that the titbit will be lost to him unless he holds it.

In the toothless, muscular mouth the sharp hook finds a good hold, and, at the moment of penetration, a sudden rush confirms the capture. A little care, a little patience, a good deal of excitement, and some skill in manœuvring with the net, and a three-pounder lies in your creel. Perhaps your pleasure, as you admire the golden tints of your catch glinting in the sunlight, is modified by the knowledge that the sweetness of its flesh is somewhat spoiled by the rather numerous bones on which the frame is built; but appetite is a good sauce, and enjoyment is not marred when reminiscence blinds discomfort. The pickle jar of vinegar with curry powder, pepper-corns, and cloves renders the bones innocuous, and provides a breakfast dish of relish when the heat of summer dulls the palate and craves for stimulation.

VI.

The slightly heavier cast for bottom fishing is now discarded for one for fly, and after much energetic chasing with a small branch of wattle well covered with leaf, I capture a grasshopper, the underwings of a bright and attractive red colour. Carefully fixed on the hook, it floats on the rippling surface of the little rapid into the pool beyond. There is a swirl and a splash, but I strike too soon. Again the operation is performed and with the same result except that my grasshopper, bedraggled and insecure on the hook, must be removed.

It is now too hot, with the sun directly overhead and consequent increasing activity of the grasshoppers, to indulge in a further exhibition of skill in their capture, so tactics are varied by the substitution of artificial flies—a March Brown and a Coch-y-bonddu. The

selection of the latter is determined by the similarity of colouring to the attractive grasshopper, a choice which soon justifies the experiment.

Adopting the previous procedure, but with the greater confidence inspired by the more secure nature of the lure, I watch the flies bobbing on the water, and a small fish rises to, but does not take, the March Brown. There is no further movement as the cast travels over the pool almost to its farthest margin, where the reeds raise their heads amongst the clumps of elephant's ear (*Colocasia esculenta*). Shall I re-cast, or let out my line a few feet more? I decide on the latter, and hardly is the decision made than that delightful sensation of simultaneous rise and strike is communicated by the vibrating line.

An attempted break into the protective area of the reeds is quickly checked, and downstream with a rush goes the captured one, slackens, returns, and doubles again. To each movement the line responds, and after a plucky struggle, number two lies in the basket. Just under two pounds, less brilliant than his companion; but so it is, the smaller fish are of a duller, more leaden colour, though all fight as gamely and perhaps more strongly ounce for ounce than do the trout of the higher streams, which, maybe, have not improved in tone by their translation to the sub-tropics.

There is much bottom feeding in these rivers, and the larger fish rise less readily to the fly. Mudfish (*Clarius gariepinus*), which abound and grow to large size, are more easily taken with

worm or raw meat, but are unworthy of the time of the fisherman. Ugly in form, muddy of flavour, prone when hooked to dive and sulk for long in the depths of the pools, they are unfavoured and unsought, but in bottom fishing are—as well as eels and crabs—a source of annoyance to the Waltons of the river, who cannot discriminate between their unseen victims.

VII.

The sky, which has been unbroken, now shows sign of change. Heavy white clouds are rising rapidly from the horizon, swifts and swallows are flying lower; so, discreetly valorous, we take down our rod and wend our way back to our landing-place, which is reached as the first big drops of rain send up their splashes from the river. A rumble of distant thunder increases the strength and pace of our stroke, but the shower, though heavy, is of short duration, and has but served to brighten up the foliage, cool the atmosphere, and enliven the thicket and the undergrowth.

The bushes of cassia, of which this morning the yellow blooms were haunted by innumerable bees, busy with the collection of their generous supply of pollen, are now deserted. A solitary spotted eagle owl (*Bubo maculosus*), going out for the night, glides silently by, as though to conceal the early hour of assignation; and as I reach the boathouse the air is thick with flying ants, whilst the splashing of jumping fish proclaims their toll and revelry in glorious repast.

THE TENDERFOOT.

By H. K. DERRY.

AT the moment when Frankie settled himself into his camp-chair in the African log-hut, with a leopard-infested forest a few feet in front of him, a hundred black savages several yards to his right, and no other white man within five miles, Mr and Mrs Jinks were sitting down snugly to their high-tea in the dining-room at Hampstead, and talking lovingly of their only son.

Photographs of Frankie adorned the walls, mantel-piece, and bureau; Frankie as a suety-faced baby; a skinny little boy paddling at Ramsgate; a lanky creature in a Grammar School cap; a still lankier one in flannels at the suburban tennis-court; a rather pathetic figure in ill-fitting evening-dress trying to look manly; and lastly, a delicate-looking youth in a big pith helmet and white suit, scowling at the tropical sun.

Mr Jinks belonged to a Leek Club and played bowls; his wife read the *Picturegoers Weekly* and played 'patience' in the intervals of knitting

woolly undergarments for her offspring. They were neither of them the stuff adventurers are made of, and Frankie's spirit fled, yearningly, back to their safe and comfortable presence, when first the unearthly yells and shrieks of the work boys had fallen on his frightened ears.

'Wongai, what on earth is it? What's the row?'

Wongai stuck his woolly head out of the gap on the log-wall—it was called the 'window.'

'The Kisii, Bwana! They are all coming out of their huts. They have painted their faces.'

Frankie reached for his cigarette-case from the wobbly bamboo table. He felt that he could breathe more steadily if he were exhaling smoke.

'Yes, but what are they doing? Why this horrible noise?'

Wongai shook his head tolerantly and smiled. 'How can I tell, Bwana? This is a wild, un-

civilised tribe. I do not know their customs. It is perhaps some sort of a dance. Some have got spears. Ah! there is the man the Bwana whipped this morning. He has recovered. He is laughing, and holding a spear.'

That brought Frankie to his feet. A slight, delicate, rather comical figure, in the usual dinner-dress of the African wilderness—pyjamas, long coat, shabby slippers—he pattered across to the aperture, shoved his servant aside, and peered cautiously out—not because he was afraid of a hurtling spear, but because, tenderfoot though he was, he had learnt that the white man must assume supreme indifference to native activities, and never be discovered displaying undignified curiosity.

A half-moon was rising, but it was mainly from the glare of a leaping log-fire that the white man was able to distinguish dark figures, naked except for red paint and feathers, crawling out of the huts and assembling, to the accompaniment of wailing chants and weird physical contortions, in the open space around the fire.

It was not easy to see how many carried spears, for the occasional gleam of metal was the only proof of their presence, but when Frankie espied a particularly unpleasant-looking savage waving a long sinister object, he withdrew his fair head as if he had seen enough, and went back to the deck-chair beside his own small fire of wood.

He made no attempt to relight his cigarette, but his quivering fingers did occasionally push over a leaf of the year-old magazine on his knees, in pathetic response to the insistent command of his mind that a white man must appear unruffled in the presence of his dusky fellows.

But, consciously, his brain was busy with only two things: fear, and a passionate, resentful protest that this should have come upon him. Fear, because he had a conviction that this unexpected outburst was connected in an unpleasant way with himself.

He had, in the course of his three months in tropical Africa, seen several tribal dances, but they had always appeared mild, amiable performances, utterly unlike this mobilisation of sound and ferocity. The flashing glimpse of that evil-looking creature with a spear, evidently in the centre of things, had supplied a reason for the demonstration. For that morning Frankie, roused to irascibility by the impertinent laziness of the work boys and his inability to end it, had shouted for the *kiboko*, and given the worst offender twelve strokes, while the rest of the camp stood round, a wide-eyed audience, watching with silent astonishment the administration of white man's justice. They did not, of course, know that such an action was as unusual to the white man as it was to themselves; that though they had come to railway construction, wild and undis-

ciplined, from their native reserves, so had he, as innocent and unsophisticated, come recently from the peaceful security of Hampstead.

Frankie had been distinctly uneasy for the rest of the day, because he knew that the Kisii needed careful handling, and that it was really the task of a veteran to realise the right moment to ridicule a defaulter, and the right one to punish him.

He recollected the boss's shake of the head and terse comments when the Kisii had first arrived. 'Tough nuts! They take some managing'; and also a gruesome story told him on the voyage of a wild tribe which had burnt alive a settler who had struck one of them. Consequently, when he saw in the centre of the yelling group the man he had thrashed, brandishing a spear, he understood that he had judged wrongly that morning, and that he was going to pay the penalty of his inexperience.

This unnerving conclusion caused the resentment which filled the other half of his mind. He had not sought this situation. He had never had dreams of his own heroism in times of peril—he was not that sort! Like most lower middle-class people, when he read tales of incredible adventure in British outposts he had been moved to admiration, but never to envy.

He had, indeed, ventured out to uncivilised Africa, but it had been a cautious venture, merely to serve in the office of a cousin in up-to-date, paved Nairobi, where nowadays the most timid of men live without fear. It was a mere trick of fortune that had flung him into the wilderness, to keep the camp accounts of a man on railway construction work, and had caused him to remain in charge of the section for a couple of days while his boss went to town, at the time when a particularly wild set of work boys had been newly imported.

But the monotonous chant, punctuated by shrieks, was the only response to his reflections, and the appreciative murmurs of Wongai at this unexpected and novel entertainment.

'What are they doing now, Wongai? It's a beastly row.'

'They are dancing, Bwana. That man with the spear is leading them. They are coming towards this house, but slowly.'

Wongai spoke with casual cheerfulness. Evidently the ominous character of the dance had not struck him.

Frankie shut the magazine with a flop, and uncrossed his legs. He must think this thing out. It was no good indulging in maudlin regrets and useless resentment. He must face the fact that in less than an hour he would probably be lying, stark-naked, in the forest, with the hyenas hurrying through the undergrowth to make a meal of him. The point was, Could he avert it; and if not, how could he play this part that he had never even understudied, to the credit of the name of Jinks?

He might try to bluff the natives into obedience by emerging from his house and in loud, authoritative tones ordering them back to their huts. But he knew that his tones were not authoritative. His voice was high-pitched, his pyjama-clad figure slight and unimposing. Probably a shout of derisive laughter would be the answer to this effort.

He might, again, fetch the 'three-nought-three' from the corner, and see what a volley of shots would do to intimidate them. But he had not handled a rifle a dozen times, and six misses would only rouse them to immediate action. Besides, he must not fire until he was absolutely certain of their hostile intentions.

Lastly, he might saunter forth, as if he suspected nothing, watch their antics, and then, if possible, engage them in conversation, trying to discover their particular grievance, and endeavouring, without lowering his prestige too greatly, to come to some sort of terms. But this course of action, besides necessitating a far more fluent knowledge of the Swahili language than he possessed, required a considerable amount of nerve, and Frankie's education had not included the training of that desirable quality.

So he continued to sit, a very frail youthful figure, by his fire until the logs fell together with a crash which made him jump so violently that he was obliged to get to his feet to prevent Wongai from perceiving the state of his nerves. He sauntered across to the window, and peeped out. The noise of the shrieking and chanting was now so deafening that he could not hear the words his servant shouted at him. He merely shook his head, and peered forth, hiding behind the rough *Americani* curtain.

The procession was approaching. In front of it, and running down the sides, were naked men, brandishing burning logs, which they had seized from their own camp-fire. Their fitful flames, and the showers of sparks flying from them, lit the scene with a fierce red glow, contrasting strangely with the cold, calm moonlight of the surrounding country. Those torch-bearers, who held no weapons, supplied the spasmodic yells that enlivened the performance, the main body being far too much occupied with its droning and dancing to allow of any spontaneous effusions.

There were three circles of dancers. The widest one contained very few spear-holders, and several unpainted men, all, however, performing the same weird, wriggling movement with the lower half of their bodies, in strict time to the chanting. The savages forming the next circle were all painted, and every other one was carrying a spear, while their physical contortions included a curious writhing movement of the shoulders. The innermost circle was composed of a dozen painted, decorated, hideous devils, each one waving a spear and contracting his

body into fearful contortions, thrusting his head back and forwards as he droned out the few notes of the chant that, in spite of its paucity, was oddly rhythmical. In the centre of this comely group was the man who had been thrashed that morning, capering up and down, evidently enacting some dramatic episode.

Frankie wondered if he ought to pray; but there was nothing he wished for, except the defeat of those devils, and his faith was not strong enough to believe that even the Almighty could accomplish that. He supposed that he ought to feel sorry for his sins, but he could not remember any worth troubling about. He felt much more sorry for himself, and resentful against the Power that had flung him without warning into this terrible predicament.

He had decided that when the procession appeared at his door he would go out, asking what was the matter; but when at length the moment arrived, and a horrible painted head appeared at the window, he found he could not do it. Every part of him was weighted and lifeless except his heart, which pounded against his ribs as if it would burst.

Through the mist in his eyes he saw the flash of the flaming logs; through the singing in his ears there broke the sharp sound of a loud, authoritative voice. Something seemed to melt in his brain—the yelling and droning took a fainter note—the light from the torches faded. The thud of British boots floated like exquisite music into his consciousness as a burly white man strode into the room.

The boss had returned!

Maclaren threw off his hat, glanced casually at the motionless figure by the fire, and stooping to the pile of chopped wood, threw on another log. He stretched his arms wearily above his head and emitted a yawning sigh. 'Hullo! got back earlier than I thought.'

Frankie's face was shaded by his hand. 'Yes.'

'So the Kisii have been entertaining you with a dance. Very kind of 'em, but the noise was a bit deafening! Quite interestin', isn't it?'

'I didn't watch it,' the assistant admitted.

'Well, you're cool for a fresher! Anyone'd think you were a bored old hand. One of their best shows, too! Circumcision festival for their tribe in the reserve to-night, so I suppose they thought they'd have a bust-up, too. Quite worth seein'.'

'Oh well . . . I was a bit tired.'

The boss pulled up the other camp-chair, and, dropping into it, began to feel for his pipe, whistling gently. 'Well, how's things? Weather's been good for the work. Got on all right?'

Frankie moved for the first time, and put his hand to his forehead, where perspiration gleamed. He brushed it away, smiling. 'Fine,' he remarked.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE BALANCE OF THINGS.

By A. W. THOMSON.

YOU are 'only half of yourself. The other half is what you make of yourself, your personal significance in things, the Ego reflected as your contribution towards the general hurly-burly. Balancing each of these halves with the other purges life of the colourless outlook of its own non-stop march to the grave. In fact, life becomes quite rosy. It becomes an everlasting tinkering with something that looks like a pair of scales. You balance an ounce of personality by an ounce of something accomplished, an obligation to humanity by a cash receipt, a step backward by two forward, to-day, to-morrow, and the day after. The fascination of the game is a thousand times greater than that of the light for the moth. The problem of making and remaking, shaping and reshaping, that which you call your destiny, is the most delightful occupation between your first and seventieth birthdays. You are forever loading or unloading the scales. And the hard-worked pans no sooner balance than you set out to rebalance, in improvement, as you hope.

You cannot have both the penny and the toffee. Being human, you will not give something for nothing, and wild horses will not prevent you from taking the toffee. But, if you grasp both pans, you commit a sin against society, and are clapped into prison. On the other hand, if you decline to do any balancing because you want to stick to your penny, you are doing no more trade, or whatever may be your activity. If everyone stops dead in this fashion the world stops going, like a clock that has run down. What you must do is to balance and rebalance the scales a hundred times per day to suit a hundred exigencies, and again at night to suit the fellows who have tilted against you. This means that you keep faith with both nature and humanity.

You will perceive that this bag of pennies, toffee, morality, and jingling scales comprise the stuff of which life is compounded. As things naturally cannot stand still, but must ever go forwards or backwards, you really cannot cease dabbling with those scales. In three score and ten years you will have millions of balances to adjust and readjust. But, on one point you must be inflexible, to make sure the balance is dead true after each weighing, and before you start the next. When folk cannot or

will not attend to this point they are commonly described as having bees in their bonnets; or even more unsavoury epithets are applied. That the point is often forgotten is deplorable, but this is an imperfect world. In point of fact, quite a number of sound people at times find difficulty in getting the old scales to work properly.

Having read thus far of this paper you will be filled with two urgencies: first, to leave off juggling with those uncanny scales; and secondly, to deposit the writer in bedlam. The thing is impossible (the first urgency). The scales cannot be got rid of at any price. The practical man is never a profound theorist; likewise the fellow with a bent for mulling with his brains is not particularly effective in toiling with his hands. The artist is seldom a best-quality man of business; and the latter, being chock-full of affairs, has little time for artistical reflections. Now, to leave all these wholly lop-sided means that they may become something of a danger to society. The markets weigh out supply and demand. A surplus of enterprise in some people is weighed down by a deficiency in others. When a merchant makes much money his neighbour sets out in opposition; and two families now balance into competences. Also, as this balancing results in both becoming imbued with the preposterous idea that he is not making enough money, they fall to furious energy, splitting hairs, let alone tuppences, and to metaphorical murder. These are indeed naughty propensities, but redeemed by their virtue of getting the balancing and rebalancing of affairs to speed more merrily. You see that, unless you educate yourself in the use of the scales, you are likely to be out-classed by more vigorous manipulators. The wretched things are at your elbow whenever you turn, quite deafening in their clamourings for adjustment of the balance of the moment.

If you cannot acquire the knack of balancing things you are drifting towards becoming a public nuisance, or else towards the workhouse. The world is a confused medley of tits for tats, eyes for eyes, teeth for teeth, measure for measure, and pay and take (the parable of the penny and the toffee). Nothing stands without a prop. Everything has its value or counterpoise. You would think that the scales must be some-

what the worse for wear. Every moment of your life you must face the music, the other pan of the balance. There is no escape; it will get at you to restore the poise sooner or later, and somehow or other. From first to last you are in such a precarious position towards Nemesis that, compared with this peril, walking on a tight rope across a horrid chasm is child's play. The old scales garishly expose the trickshows of life. Truly the world is like an algebraical equation. Turn it how you will, side to side, top to bottom, it must come to some balance.

The bitter goes with the sweet. If you become a millionaire you must pay for the privilege in some manner. If you marry, as most people do, if only to be fashionable, the weight of a family may confer on you a permanent stoop. And such contraction presses on the organs and lessens your days. But, as there are balances within balances, the squashing of the liver, which is not a bad thing, may compensate for some of the annoyance to other bodily functions. Again, if you do not marry, and so keep a soldierly erectness until you become senile, your liver quite possibly may not get squashed enough. And you may be strangely tempered and something of an oddity. If you live a life of puritanical hue, you will, so some folk say, miss a lot of fun. If, on the contrary, you be a jolly dog, the game will certainly cost you some money in this life, and possibly endanger a reasonable insurance for prosperity in the next. The series of balances and counter-balances, bitters and sweets, and what not, is like a recurring decimal or 'Charley's Aunt,' both of which apparently are running forever. You cannot turn edgewise but you jostle against some kind of a balance demanding adjustment. You are eternally faced with such questions as 'This or That?' 'Are you or are you not?' The situation seems outrageous, and practical life a succession of forlorn hopes.

But the bitter need not invariably be an unpleasant accompaniment. It may indeed be indescribably seductive, like the bitter of beer, and other things. For instance, if the pleasurable vanity of a wonderfully smart new pair of shoes is balanced by pinched toes for a while, the prospect is really not so dreadful. The shoes will fit you in time, and the stricken toes heal. The healed toes now balance against shoes that have lost all their novelty, and some of their attraction. Again, when you take a wife, you take something with the bitter even more seductive than it is in beer, and certainly more camouflaged. Worse, you take the known with the unknown. Those features in your better half would make up an appalling problem, but for the fact that the same old scales once more save you. For, if she be known and unknown to you, you are the same to her, and, by a process of endless balancing and rebalancing, you eventually become quite well acquainted.

Then, if you happened to be brought up by parents who seemed to you unnecessarily harsh and rigid, as most parents were when the writer was a boy in Scotland, you will be aware that that had a balance too. You will see that, when one of a family goes awry, the others do well to give him no peace with their blistering tongues until they get him right again. The process really makes them all hang together. But, as no one ever can be perfect, something will always remain to be poised. And so life is a long, perplexing, muddling, and distracting adjustment of scales. The thing is worse than a thousand Chinese puzzles.

Yet there would be precious little spice without the scales; no excitement, no thrills, nothing to fling yourself against. And that would be a very sorry state of affairs, a perpetual boredom, ennui, a vast long yawn. Even the healthy excitement of making slightly more money than you require would lose its piquancy without the tit-for-tats with your competitors. But one, at least, of the interminable balances seems regrettable. It appears that love has some difficulty in living without hate. In the most intimate relations, even the depths of brotherly love, exists a slumbering jealousy. Yet, even here the redeeming feature emerges, crying to be weighed on its own account; and the very fact that your kinsman may be a potential policeman, if not a potential enemy, erects your guard. By the grace of God you go your way, but a human sentinel stands on your doorstep.

If you sit down with a bundle of foolscap and attempt to make out a list of the paradoxes and tit-for-tats that make up so much that is problematical in your own life, you are almost certain to conclude that the gods have ill-favoured you. With the fatuity of mankind you will probably blame everyone but yourself for the way things have panned out. You will frequently adopt the attitude of the fox towards the grapes to cover yourself. Yet you will perceive one great and unexpected blessing in the background. You will see that no man ever had a defect that was not somehow useful to him. As such unfits you for one purpose, so, in proportion, and by the use of those ancient scales, are you weighed out for another. The situation here has something of *noblesse oblige*, for your very infirmity imposes its obligations, its own balance.

That the gods never give their gifts with both hands is quite certain. Humanity is expected to balance the pans. We are given things in a hotch-potch, an exceedingly medley package, like a thief's loot sack. The job is to sort it out, weighing one thing against another in a way that will reasonably insure life going on in civilisation, sufficiency, and peace. Peace! That is the one thing, so far as you can discern, that has no balance. That is because it is not of this life, but of the next, where alone it can be given, but not taken away.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER XI.—*continued.*

HE laboured to follow with the same precision. The pool was easy enough except for the trailing of the rifle. The peat was straightforward going, though in his desire to follow his leader's example he dipped his face so deep in the black slime that his nostrils were plugged with it, and some got into his eyes, which he dared not try to remove. But the waterfall was a snag. It was no light task to draw himself up against the weight of descending water, and at the top he lay panting for a second, damming up the flow with his body. . . . Then he moved on; but the mischief had been done, for the sound of the release of the pent-up stream had struck a foreign note on the hind's ear. It was an unfamiliar noise among the many familiar ones which at the moment filled the corrie. She turned her head sharply, and saw something in the burn which she did not quite understand. Lamancha, aware of her scrutiny, lay choking, with the water running into his nose; but the alarm had been given. The hind turned her head, and trotted off up-wind.

The next he knew was Wattie at his elbow making frantic signals for him to rise and follow. Cramped and staggering, he lumbered after him, away from the stream into a moraine of great granite blocks. 'We're no' two hunner yards from the stags,' the guide whispered. 'The auld bitch will move them, but please God we'll get a shot.' As Lamancha ran he marvelled at Wattie's skill, for he himself had not a notion where in the wide world the beasts might be.

They raced to a knoll, and Wattie flung himself flat on the top. 'There,' he cried. 'Steady, man. Tak the nearest. A hunner yards—nae mair.'

Lamancha saw through the drizzle three stags moving at a gentle trot to the south—up-wind, for in the corrie the eddies were coming oddly. They were not really startled, but the hind had stirred them. The big stag was in the centre of the three, and the proper shot was the last—a reasonable broadside.

Wattie's advice had been due to his loyalty to John Macnab, and not to his own choice, and this Lamancha knew. The desire of the great stag was on him, as it was on the hunter in the *Iliad*, and he refused to be content with the second-best. It was not an easy shot in that bad light, and it is probable that he would have missed. But suddenly Wattie gave an unearthly bark, and for a second the three beasts slowed down and turned their heads towards the sound. In that second Lamancha fired. The great head seemed to bow itself, and then to fling upward, and all three disappeared at a gallop into the mist.

'A damned poor tailoring shot!' Lamancha groaned.

'He's deid for all that, but God kens how far he'll run afore he drops. He's hit in the shoulder, but a wee thing ower low. . . . We can bide here awhile and eat our piece. If ye wasna John Macnab I could be wishin' we had brought a dog.'

Lamancha, cold, wet, and disgusted, wolfed his sandwiches, had a stiff dram from his flask, and smoked a pipe before he started again. He cursed his marksmanship, and Wattie forbore to contradict him; doubtless Jim Tarras had accustomed him to a standard of skill from which this was a woeful declension. Nor would he hold out much hope. 'He'll gang into the first corrie, and when he finds the wund different there he'll turn back for the Reascuill. If this was our ain forest, and the weather wasna that thick, we might get another chance at him there. . . . Oh, ay, he might gang for ten mile. . . . The mist is a good thing, for Macqueen will no' see what's happenin', but if it was to lift, and he saw a' the stags in the corrie movin', you and me wad hae to find a hidy-hole till the dark. . . . Are you ready, my lord?'

They crossed the ridge which separated them from the first corrie, close to the point where it took off from the *massif* of Sgurr Dearg. It was a shorter road than the one they had come by, and they could take it safely, for they were now moving up-wind, owing to the curious eddy from the south. Over the ridge it would be a different matter, for there the wind would be easterly, as before. But it was a stiff climb and a slow business, for they had to make sure that they were on the track of the stag.

Wattie trailed the blood-marks like an Indian, noticing splashes on stones and rushes which Lamancha would have missed. 'He's sair hit,' he observed at one point. 'See! He tried that steep bit and couldna manage it. There's the mark o' his feet turnin'. . . . He's stoppit here. . . . Ay, here's his trail, and it'll be the best for you and me. There's nothing like a wounded beast for pickin' the easiest road.'

On the crest the air stirred freely, and, as it seemed to Lamancha, with a new chill. Wattie gave a grunt of satisfaction, and sniffed it like a pointer. He moistened his finger and held it up; then he plucked some light grasses and tossed them into the air. 'That's a merciful dispensation! Maybe that shot that ye think ye bauchled was the most providential shot ye ever fired. . . . The wind is shiftin'. I looked for it afore night, but no' this early in the day. It's wearin' round to the south. D'ye see what that means?'

Lamancha shook his head. Disgust had made his wits dull.

'Yon beast, as I telled ye, was a traiveller. There's nothing to keep him in Haripol forest. But he'll no' leave it unless the wind will let him. Now it looks as if Providence was kind to us. The wind's blawin' from the Beallach, and he's bound to gang up-wind.'

The next half hour was a period of swift drama. Sure enough the blood-marks turned up the first corrie in the direction from which the two had come in the morning. As the ravine narrowed the stag had evidently taken to the burn, for there were splashes on the rocks and a tinge of red in the pools.

'He's no' far off,' Wattie croaked. 'See, man, he's verra near done. He's slippin' sair.'

And then as they mounted they came on a little pool where the water was dammed as if by a landslide. There, his body half under the cascade, lay the stag, stone dead, his great horns parting the fall like a pine swept down by a winter spate.

The two regarded him in silence, till Wattie was moved to pronounce his epitaph.

'It's yersel, ye auld hero, and ye've come by a ground end. Ye've had a braw life traivellin' the hills, and ye've been a braw beast, and the fame o' ye gaed through a' the countryside. Ye might have dwined away in the cauld winter and dee'd in the wame o' a snaw-drift. Or ye might have been massacred by ane o' thae Haripol sumphs wi' ten bullets in the big bag. But ye've been killed clean and straucht by John Macnab, and that is a gentleman's death, whatever.'

'That's all very well,' said Lamancha. 'But you know I tailored the shot.'

'Ye're a fule,' cried the rapt Wattie. 'Ye did no siccan thing. It was a ver-ra deefcult shot, and you put it deid in the only place ye could see. I will not have seen many better shots at all, at all.'

'What about the gralloch?' Lamancha asked.

'No' here. If the mist lifted Macqueen might see us. It's no' fifty yards to the top o' the Beallach, and we'll find a place there for the job.'

Wattie produced two ropes and bound the forefeet and the hind-feet together. Then he rapidly climbed to the summit, and reported on his return that the mist was thick there, and that there were no tracks except their own of the morning. It was a weary business dragging the carcass up a nearly perpendicular slope. First, with difficulty, they raised it out of the burn channel, and then drew it along the steep hillside. They had to go a long way up the hillside to avoid the rock-curtain on the edge of the Beallach, but eventually the top was reached, and the stag was deposited behind some boulders on the left of the flat ground. Here, even if the mist lifted, they would be hid

from the sight of Macqueen, and from any sentries there might be on the Crask side.

Wattie flung off his coat and proceeded with gusto to his gory task. The ravens, which had been following them for the past hour, came nearer and croaked encouragement from the ledges of Sgurr Dearg and Sgurr Mór. Wattie was in high spirits, for he whistled softly at his work, but Lamancha, after his first moment of satisfaction, was restless with anxiety. He had still to get his trophy out of the forest, and there seemed many chances of a slip between his lips and that cup. He was impatient for Wattie to finish, for the air seemed to him lightening. An ominous brightness was flushing the mist towards the south, and the rain had declined to the thinnest of drizzles. He told Wattie his fears.

'Ay, it'll be a fine afternoon. I foresaw that; but that's maybe no' a bad thing, now that we're out o' Macqueen's sight.'

Wattie completed his job, and hid the horrid signs below a pile of sods and stones. 'Nae poch-a-bhuie for me the day,' he grinned; 'I've other things to think o' besides my supper.' He wiped his arms and hands in the wet heather and put on his coat; then he produced a short pipe, and as he turned away to light it a figure suddenly stood beside Lamancha and made his heart jump.

'My hat!' said Palliser-Yeates, 'what a head! That must be about a record for Wester Ross. I never got anything as good myself. You're a lucky devil, Charles.'

'Call me lucky when the beast is safe at Crask. What about your side of the hill?'

'Pretty quiet. I've been here for hours and hours, wondering where on earth you two had got to. . . . There's four fellows stuck at intervals along the hillside, and I shouldn't take them to be very active citizens. But there's a fifth who does sentry-go, and I don't fancy the look of him so much. Looks a keen chap, and spry on his legs. What's the orders for me? The place has been playing hide-and-seek, and half the time I've been sitting coughing in a wet blanket. If it stays thick I suppose my part is off.'

Wattie, stirred again into fierce life, peered into the thinning fog. 'Damn! The mist's liftin'. I'll get the beast ower the first screes afore it's clear, and once I'm in the burn I'll wait for ye. I can manage the first bit fine mysel'—I could manage it a', if there was nae hurry. . . . Bide you here till I'm weel startit, for I don't like the news o' that wanderin' navvy. And you, sir,—this to Palliser-Yeates—'be ready to show yourself down the hillside as soon as it's clear enough for the folk to see ye. Keep well to the west, and draw them off towards Haripol. There's a man posted near the burn, but he's the farthest east o' them, and for God's sake keep them to the west o'

me and the stag. Ye're an auld hand at the job, and should have nae deeficulty in ficklin' a wheen heavy-fitted navvies. Is Sir Erchie there wi' the caw'r?'

'I suppose so. The time he was due the fog was thick. I couldn't pick him up from here with the glass when the weather cleared, but that's as it should be, for the place he selected was absolutely hidden from this side.'

'Well, good luck to a.' Wattie tossed off a dram from the socket of Lamancha's flask, and,

dragging the stag by the horns, disappeared in two seconds from sight.

'I'll be off, Charles,' said Palliser-Yeates, 'for I'd better get down hill and down the glen before I start.' He paused to stare at his friend. 'By gad, you do look a proper black-guard. Do you realise that you've a face like a nigger, and a two-foot rent in your bags? It would be good for Johnson Claybody's soul to see you!'

(Continued on page 374.)

A QUEEN MARY MYSTERY.

By JOHN PRINGLE MILLER.

I.

NEVER in all the turbulent history of Scotland was there a time when so many tragic and mysterious events took place as in the reign of the unfortunate Mary. For the first time there was a queen regnant in Scotland—and the lawless and rapacious barons were not prepared to let such a fine opportunity pass without profiting thereby. All of them were greedy for wealth, and not a few for power. A surprising number of the greater nobles were itching to grasp the reins of power, either by marrying Mary themselves, or by getting rid of her by some more drastic method. Naturally, after her marriage with Darnley and the birth of their son James, those nobles who had aimed at gaining the supreme control of the kingdom became her deadly enemies—in which attitude they were in no way discouraged by Queen Elizabeth.

Secret intrigues, like the famous supper in Ainslie's tavern, were the order of the day. One could name a dozen such mysterious incidents. But, besides the more famous historical problems, there are darker and more mysterious happenings—happenings which touch Queen Mary with the greatest intimacy. I refer to the strange problems of the coffin in the wall of Edinburgh Castle, and the secret birth which took place in 1568, during the queen's confinement in Lochleven Castle.

The former problem has been very fully discussed, although there still seems reason to think that James I. was indeed a changeling;¹ but no historian of repute has been prepared to hazard his reputation in attempting to elucidate the Lochleven mystery. This is due perhaps to the fact that the evidence at present extant is of a very flimsy and unauthenticated character.

In order to understand the situation it must be remembered that at this time Mary was imprisoned in Lochleven Castle, and had just signed her deed of abdication. James, her

infant son, had not long been crowned king, and her bastard brother—the Earl of Moray—was regent. If James were to die, it was unlikely that the nearest heirs, the Hamiltons, would succeed to the throne of Scotland; in all probability Moray, Morton, or some of the other great Protestant lords would lay hands on the crown. Now if a child was born to Mary it would be the direct heir to the throne—whether it was male or female. Thus great issues were involved; and what makes this tragic little intrigue so mysterious is that obvious attempts were made to hush it up by the various parties concerned.

II.

Of all the strange secrets which surround the hapless Mary there is none of which we possess less evidence and around which romance has wreathed fewer legends. All the evidence at present known, which alone can prove that the birth actually did take place, is contained in two semi-contradictory accounts. Both versions were written by Frenchmen, and such evidence must be taken *cum grano salis*—as the saying goes—since sixteenth-century French historians are notorious for their appetite for the remarkable and mysterious. But the real strength of the case does not lie so much in the direct evidence, but rather in the indirect evidence, which proves that it was quite likely, and indeed highly probable, that a child was born at this time.

The evidence of the two Frenchmen is extremely short, and since we have no corroboration it can only be offered at its face value. The fuller account is to be found in the *Memoirs of Messire Michel de Castelnau*; and although Castelnau was a contemporary of Mary, his memoirs were not published till 1724. He gives no proof, but merely concludes his account of Mary's life with the brief statement: 'I shall conclude the history of Mary Stuart, after having said that she had by the Earl of Bothwell, her third husband, a daughter who became a nun in the convent of Notre Dame at Soissons.'

¹ 'The Mystery of the Coffin in the Wall,' by Dowager Lady Forbes, in *Chambers's Journal* for October 1923.

The evidence of the second, Claude Nau by name, is even more cursory. In his diary, discussing the state of Mary's health during her imprisonment, he remarks that she was suffering from loss of blood due, as he declares in an interlineation, to the fact that she had lately given birth to twins, who had been still-born, however. Nau was in a very much better position to know the real facts of the matter, since he was for a time Mary's private secretary. Almost all the information contained in his manuscripts was gleaned from Mary or from his own personal investigation, so it seems practically certain that he learned of the birth from Mary herself or from one of her personal attendants who was with her on Lochleven Island.

That is all the direct evidence which has remained to us after three centuries; but there is indirect evidence which is of almost greater importance. This evidence is not so directly connected with the case, for it in no way helps us to prove that the birth really did take place, but only that it was likely that a child should be born. But it is more authentic in that it is the statement of Queen Mary herself. It is to be found in a letter—the original of which is still in existence—written by Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, who was several times English Ambassador in Scotland between the years 1561 and 1567. In a despatch to Queen Elizabeth, dated 18th July 1567, he says:

'I have also persuaded her to conform herself to renounce Bothwell for her husband, and to be contented to suffer a divorce to pass betwixt them. She hath sent me word that she will in no wise consent unto it, but rather die, grounding herself upon this reason, that taking herself to be seven weeks gone with child, by renouncing Bothwell she would acknowledge herself to be with child of a bastard, and to have forfeited her honour; which she will not do to die for it.'

This evidence is of the greatest importance, for if it is true—as there seems every reason to believe—one can no longer reasonably doubt that the birth really took place. But the question now arises, Whose account are we to believe; or are we to believe either account? Claude Nau was only twice in Scotland, and then his visits were of short duration; so it is certain that he got his information from Mary or from one of the two *femmes de chambre* who were with her during her imprisonment in Lochleven Castle. Both the ladies, Mary Seton and Marie Courcelles, accompanied Mary into captivity in England, and must have known Nau well. But he cannot have heard of the birth till long after the event, certainly not until after 1575, which was the year he came over from France. Probably his information is of a very much later date, since his account

takes the form of an interlineation, added to his manuscript in a different ink. He dates the miscarriage of the twins as early as July 1567, while, as we have seen, Mary declares that she was only 'seven weeks gone with child' at this time. All things considered, Mary's statement made at the time from personal knowledge carries greater weight than Nau's, which was written down from hearsay over a decade after the event. There is every reason, then, to believe that the birth took place some time about February or March 1568.

Nau's account conflicts so much with Mary's own, and is so improbable, that it lacks conviction; so that, for want of other evidence, one is compelled to accept Castelnau's story. It is the more plausible in that a female child would stand a much better chance than a male one in escaping with life. Indeed, as most rumours have a certain degree of truth in them, it is highly probable that the child to which Mary gave birth was a girl. In any case this account must hold good till further and more authentic evidence is produced.

III.

It is significant that the birth was never once referred to in the correspondence of the period, and that the very existence of the child seems to have been a complete secret. It is only natural that Mary should desire to keep the birth secret. About this time, as we saw from Throckmorton's letter, the Scottish barons were trying to have her marriage with Bothwell annulled; and, in the eventuality of a divorce being granted, her child would become illegitimate and her own honour would be tarnished. Moreover, to make public the fact that an heir, or rather an heiress, had been born to the throne, and that it was a child of Bothwell, might well have cost Mary dear. Thus we can easily understand that Mary would wish to keep those who did not know of the expected birth ignorant of it; and 'at the same time to delude those who were suspicious that the birth had taken place into believing that the child had died at birth. This would explain Claude Nau's account, which is very probably only an explanation given to him by Mary after she had forgotten some of the real facts of the incident.

So well was the secrecy of the whole affair maintained that it might appear likely that the Earls of Moray and Morton and their partisans connived at the secret. Queen Elizabeth was aware that Mary was going to give birth to a child many months before the event took place, and we may be sure that she would quickly pass the news on to the Regent Moray—who may have already learnt of it from the captive queen herself. Mary was his half-sister, and at least one very intimate conversation took place between them during the queen's pregnancy. If, however, Mary's enemies did not

help to remove the child secretly out of the country, there is a faint possibility that Mary and her supporters were able to do it themselves. It is just probable that the child was born and smuggled out of the castle before her guardians were aware of anything unusual having taken place.

Controversialists still wrangle as to whether the queen's guards—who were almost wholly composed of the family and servants of the Laird of Lochleven—were tampered with or not. There is no doubt that Queen Mary during her imprisonment used all her guile in order to gain the sympathy and support of those around her, and that she was very successful too. We have evidence that as early as October 1567 the Regent and his supporters learned with dismay that she had 'won the favour and goodwill of all the household, as well women as men.' The household during the time of Mary's captivity was quite small, since the almost impregnable situation of the castle rendered a large garrison unnecessary. It consisted of the Laird and his family (which included his mother and brother) and some twenty servants. His mother, Margaret Erskine, a daughter of Lord Erskine, had at one time been the mistress of James V., by whom she had become the mother of the Regent Moray. She had afterwards married Sir Robert Douglas, and their son, Sir William, was at this time the Laird of Lochleven. The Laird's brother George, who was also the Regent's half-brother, resided in the castle at this time, as did a young foundling to whom the family name of William Douglas had been given. Sir William Douglas had married Lady Agnes Lesley, and it was the duty of this lady—together with her little daughter and niece—to keep a constant vigilance over the captive Mary. Indeed, in order to spy on all her actions, both of the children slept in Mary's chamber.

As I have said before, it is a well-known and admitted fact that before the end of 1567 Mary had captivated both the young girls, as well as George and Willie Douglas—the foundling. That they were all her ardent supporters there can be not the slightest doubt. Since they were able to contrive Mary's escape, it is not too much to expect that they could perform the much easier task of conveying the infant to the queen's adherents, who would, no doubt, be awaiting it on the mainland. We know of one person who would willingly have performed this service—and who possibly may have done it. She was a laundress from Kinross, who often came to the castle with clean linen and took away soiled. It would have been a simple task for her to smuggle the child out in her clothes-basket. Once the child was out of the castle the rest would be easy.

There is another and more probable theory, which presupposes, however, that the whole family took a more or less active part in keeping

the queen's *accouchement* secret. It is now generally admitted that the longer she was confined the more friendly the household became towards Mary, who encouraged the Laird and his mother with wildly ambitious hopes. The Laird himself never appeared to be much affected by her promises, or at least he never dared to show any changed attitude towards her. Nevertheless there were ugly rumours in circulation. The English envoy Drury wrote at the end of March: 'The Queen's liberty, by favour, stealth, or force, is shortly to be looked for.' We know also that Lochleven's own brother-in-law, William Lesley, declared that he (Lochleven) was brought before the Regent and reprimanded for promising to procure the queen her freedom. The stories sometimes included his veteran mother, Lady Margaret, who was also deeply implicated in the scheming. A contemporary writer, Sir James Melville of Halhill, writes in his memoirs that 'the auld lady his mother was also thocht to be upon the consail' which planned Mary's escape. By piecing together the various shreds of evidence which have from time to time become known, it is now quite clear that the whole Lochleven family was indulging in the dangerous pastime of running with the hare and chasing with the hounds.

This scheme, then, which was probably devised for keeping the birth a secret, was a tolerably safe one, which implicated only the Laird's wife. This would recommend it doubly to Sir William, who would wish to keep as clear as possible of all intrigues. It was a very simple plan, which merely consisted in the lady adopting the royal infant as her own child. Soon after the plans commenced to be laid for the queen's escape. Claude Nau tells us 'it happened very conveniently that the Laird's wife (whose business was to be the constant companion of her Majesty, and to act as her spy and keeper) had just given birth to a child.' Mary escaped from Lochleven Castle on the 2nd of May, but as the plans would take a month or two to evolve, this would place the date of the birth of Lady Douglas's child about February or March 1568, which we know was just about the time that Mary was expecting her child.

This is a remarkable coincidence, which becomes all the more suspicious when we read that the lady was Mary's constant companion, and would therefore more than probably be friendly to her. Again, we can prove nothing definitely, but this theory seems to solve the most difficult problems of this mysterious little incident.

IV.

The whole affair is exceedingly dark and mysterious, and will most probably never be fully explained; the deliberate attempts to hush up the whole story militate against any further evidence being brought to light. That the child was born is practically beyond doubt, if Mary's

declaration to Throckmorton is to be believed. Yet there is something grim and incredible that a child should be born and should live, and that its very existence should remain a most profound secret. There can only be three explanations of the entire mystery: firstly, that the child or children died or were murdered at birth; secondly, that the child or one of the children did survive, to become a nun in a French convent; and lastly, that there never was a child born at all.

Any of the three explanations is possible, and the first would certainly have been the best if there was any corroborative evidence—but there is not the slightest fragment. So far as is known at present, Queen Mary never made any statement in reference to the birth, and one can understand that she would not be well able to know much about it. She would not be in a state to judge whether the child, or children, were dead when born, or if they were murdered and thrown into Lochleven immediately after their birth. But we can discount Claude Nau's story entirely, for his statements conflict. He declares that the twins were the fruit of Mary's union with Bothwell, but dates the miscarriage so early in 1567 that they must have been by Darnley. At the time of this event Darnley was but five months dead, according to Nau; and no one has yet accused Mary of gross immorality. The story of the still-born twins, therefore, can be ignored, with the rest of his account. That the child was murdered as soon as it was born is more probable.

Moray and the lawless barons who supported him would be only too pleased to get rid of the child so surely and secretly, since the queen, and even Bothwell, had still a large number of adherents in the country. Of course the child might have been killed by Mary's own attendants, in the view that it was to their mistress's benefit to do so.

With regard to the second theory and the truth of Castelnau's account one can say nothing, as the source of his information is unknown. Certainly Castelnau held a high position in the French diplomatic service, and besides having secret knowledge, he was in a position to verify his statements by consulting the registers of the convent of Notre Dame at Soissons, and to make sure that it was really the daughter of

Mary Stuart who had been a nun there. All the reliable evidence we possess tends to prove that this is the correct explanation, highly improbable though it seems.

And lastly, there is the theory that no child was ever born, and that the whole affair is only a myth. It is indeed possible that Mary, in order to prevent herself being forced into divorcing Bothwell, deliberately told her enemies that she was pregnant when she was not. She was a pious Catholic, and would therefore have a great and natural repugnance to divorce; besides, it is quite apparent that she still harboured a great affection for Bothwell. Her plea that she was about to give birth to a child was certainly believed at the time by her captors, and proved an excellent defence. As to the veracity of Nau's account, he, as Mary's confidential secretary, would do his utmost to shield his mistress, and to improve her cause in any way he could. That a birth was expected was quite sufficient to hold up the proceedings for divorce; while the fact that the children were dead would in no way hinder her actions towards further matrimonial ventures.

Thus there are two contradictory theories, one of which declares that there never was a birth at all, and that it was Mary who spread the rumour of a miscarriage to suit her own ends; the other, however, argues that a child was born, but that all information concerning it was deliberately and systematically suppressed. These conflicting views are entirely due to lack of evidence, for contemporary events make any one of the various theories quite plausible.

Yet in spite of all our theories we are compelled by this lack of evidence to return to our starting-point. We cannot doubt that the child was born, but beyond that we can be sure of nothing. We must accept Castelnau's account, for although not the most probable, it is the only explanation about which we possess any evidence worthy of credence.

In conclusion, if the child was born and entered a convent, as we must perforce believe, surely this must have been the most unhappy princess that ever lived. She came into this world unwelcomed, lived unbefriended, and dying vanished, scarce leaving a trace on the dim pages of history.

THE YELLOW FIELD.

PART II.

II.

FOR a little space I continued standing, with enough returned reason to meditate on what was past, but with not enough to think on the present, save that (though dully) I knew now that the water-spears could not help me,

and believed I knew that I should be dead not many minutes hence—for I would fight *them* into killing me.

The sky above the slope's rim was very blue, with here and there a wraith of brown cloud—the last of the rain clouds. The sun was falling hotly upon me. Presently I felt sickness, and

saw that the slope's crest seemed to swing against the blue sky. Whereat I sank down on one knee and there remained, pressing a hand on my wound (beginning to stiffen) which I had hurt in kneeling, and holding my pistol in my left hand. Anon I looked down at the pistol, feeling some wonder that I had clung to it through all my terror and my running. And 'twas as I stared at its blued steel barrels, blotched by mud and water, that, suddenly and completely, my true, proper senses rushed back to me, with two questions as their vanguard. *'Why had I not thought to recharge the pistol?'* *'What—fool that I was!—did I here in this pit, whence I could see nothing of the enemy till they were right above me, to their increased advantage?'*

Taking my hand from my wound, wiping it across my coat, snatching forth my ammunition purse, I recharged, reprimed, swiftly, tremblingly; then, with hammers acock, I got upright, and, with my feet agonising me, walked, teeth-clenched, to the yellow slope and upward nearly to the brim, lowering to hand and knees then, crawling, and bringing my eyes over the brim, a little higher than the grass and flowers—noting, as the first of those things which I had been too sightless to know of when I came to the hollow, that I had drawn very close to trees and rising ground. The space of pasture nearest to me, which I must have lately traversed part of, was as yellow with flowers as the slope I was on, and was marked as a field by some lines of little shrubs and sproutlings, with intervals betwixt many of these, planted to form hedges, when they should grow. Beyond one of these toy hedges I saw, amid trees, a roof and chimneys. Moving my eyes I beheld, just beyond the next hedge, the brown of a road that passed into trees—my Hastings road. Lifting higher, to sweep a glance for my enemies, I looked to a third side of the field—and in an instant my heart had leapt hard and was racing hard, because of a great sweet hope—gladsome beyond telling—which had taken possession of me. For, beside the line of plantlings which stood for the third hedge, I saw a horse—a gray, with a cloth on his back and a bridle on his head; a woman's figure in a pale dress, white or primrose, holding his rein while he cropped—so that I might have believed she waited for me with the means to save me.

They were not two hundred paces from me—she and the horse. I rose to my feet, stepped clear of the hollow, then waited to look behind me. The end had been very close. It sent me cold, with my breath stopped, with much of my fear returning, to see how close. Only a little way from the farther side of the hollow were standing two soldiers and the blue-scarved, square express, with two men in farm clothes—their faces all from me, though, as they waited

to speak with divers others, farm men and a soldier, who were coming from another point, straggling by twos and threes.

I whipped my eyes from them and ran, very stumblingly and weakly, towards the horse, believing I should hear a shout and a shot, but hearing neither. I drew close, discerning that the woman had not seen me. Her face was a little aside, she being intent with watching my foes. I perceived that she was very young—a girl, with dark hair showing at the edges of her summer hood, which, like her gown, was of a pale primrose.

The gray horse, suddenly aware of me, threw up his head and backed blowing, having lifted the maid's hand, holding the rein, high, and having drawn her back with him—and now she set eyes on me, ten yards from her. I saw her eyes, shining and blue, turn large with quick affright, saw a fluttering of fear about her mouth and nostrils, saw that her face had fallen white. I pointed my pistol well to the earth beside me, ceased running and walked, holding out one hand. 'Give me the horse,' I said. Then, she stepping backward and roundwise with the gray to avoid me, I ran again and took hold of the rein. The gray lifted, bringing her against me for an instant, our faces well-nigh touching. Then, kicking, the gray backed yards, but came to a stand under my hard pull; and she and I stood facing, her expression all great fright and loathing at the thing of mud and blood that I was, but her grasp on the rein as firm as mine.

'Give me the horse,' I said again. And then, seeing only fear, wide-nostril'd fear, and loathing in her face, I pleaded: 'Oh, madame, I mean you no hurt. They are after me—look you.' And myself I looked back to the enemy—seeing them astand with every of their faces turned to us as though, having just noted me, they were uncertain that I was their man. 'Give me the horse,' I pleaded, looking at her, wondering that she did not do so.

'Nay, nay,' she answered, her lips trembling, but her eyes a little recovered of their affright. 'Nay, he is sick. You would kill him to ride him. Go to my father—in the house yonder. He will parley and help you if you are a worthy man. You cannot ride Michael.'

'Nay, I must,' I said, 'to save my life.'

Renewed fear came to her eyes. Fear for the horse—I thought; since a kind of anger was with it. 'You shall not kill Michael!' she said breathlessly. 'Go to my father. You shall never kill Michael!'

'I pray you unloose him,' I entreated, pulling the rein a little; she pulling it back.

She answered in determined way, though her voice was trembling fast, 'He is sick. You shall not have him!' And her blue eyes, in anger and fear, strove to make me accept that answer.

I looked over my shoulder ; for I had thought that I heard voices from the enemy ; and, sure enough, they were streaming forward to examine me, the express and a soldier leading at hasty pace.

'Oh, unloose, madame,' I said. 'What are you thinking of? 'Tis my life you are holding from me!'

'Go to my father,' she said again swiftly. 'You shall not take Michael's life—you that are the greatest villain perhaps. . . . Nay!' she cried in wild apprehension, her eyes desperate—as I wrenched at the rein. And she set both hands to it.

I stooped to lay my pistol in the grass—for, with what I meditated, 'twould be dangerous cocked in my pocket. Straightening, I drove my arm around her ; and, thrusting the rein one way, I sought instantly to swing her from it and break her grip. She was but lightly formed—a young girl withal ; yet, from my sorry, weak state, I could not break her grip.

She was crying aloud in a sobbing fashion for some one to aid her, breathing wildly within my arm, and striving, by turns of her body, to free herself, yet holding, both-handed, to the rein ; while the gray, blowing, lifted so hard that I was afraid the whole head-harness, which seemed but loosely fastened, would slip off him, and I thus lose him. Yet 'twas one of these liftings that gave me my advantage. The force of it tore the rein from one of her hands ; and as she strove to grasp again I swung her athwart my hip with well-nigh my last strength, breaking the grasp of her other hand and casting her clear from me so that she fell amid the flowers and grass, as I had meant for my better safety—truly the villainest thing I had ever done, I thought, as I saw her primrose hood and gown lie still for a bare second amid the yellow-and-green ere she raised her head.

Dizzy from pain, for I had drawn her across my wound, I snatched for my pistol in the grass, but the gray pulled me from it, and I left it, for I had no strength or time to fight him over this, with another struggle before me—that of mounting him without a stirrup, which I half believed I was too weak to accomplish.

Letting him pull me a few paces, speaking to him, soothing him, I brought him to a stand, came beside him ; then, passing a hand through the rein-loop, I gripped his mane, and thrust a hand across his back, and lifted myself from the ground, and hung while he wheeled. And, since 'twas my life that hung thus, I found a final strength, and, after a moment, was asprawl on the cloth on his back, and then sitting up, throwing the rein into position—but feeling myself so ill that I thought to fall from him.

The gray had brought me facing her. She was standing now. She stretched her hands

out to me ; and I saw tears shining down her face, saw how her lips were shaking. She strove to speak, ran two or three steps toward me, stopped, and spoke, her voice scarce more than a moan. 'Get down!' she said. 'He is mine—my poor Michael, that I love. You will not take him from me to kill him!'

I could but refuse her by a shake of my head, and turn the gray toward the road. I sent him forward with a twitch of the rein and a slap of my palm, hearing her cry out most piteously at the slap—but I had seen that the express and sundry others were past the hollow now, and running. And, indeed, as I steadied the gray to take him through the plantings on to the road two musketoon balls clipped the twigs beside us, and the musketoons roared. Then the gray and I were on the road and almost instantly hid by trees.

I rode him but gently after a little, believing from what she had said that he was heart-strained, but finding him very willing to go. Presently, having been looked at with extreme curiosity by several persons that I met on the road, but having been offered no hindrance, I turned on to the turf which ran to the cliff-top above my fisher-boat, with no man in sight now save Collins the fisher-captain, in his rough shirt and skirt, who had climbed up to watch for me, the wind being of good strength by this.

I was safe, safe ! With full force that knowledge came to me now—that, under Providence, I was to see St Germain woods anon and have my homecoming. I could have shouted frenziedly for gladness as I waved my hand to Collins, who had not known me in my disarray. I could have gabbled, even screamed—I do remember.

To master my emotion I dropped my hand and stroked the gray's neck as he trotted. I wondered how I could best leave this friend Michael secure for his mistress to find—tethered to a stake, or wandering cropping at the grass hereabout? And then, in a flash, the green ground seemed flung up at me, and I discovered myself lying on it, thinking surprisedly that this was the second time to-day I had been cast from horse. When I picked myself up I saw Michael lying on his side, with his gray neck far out-stretched on the grass—dead. And I lost much of my gladness from thinking on what the girl would say.

III.

The newspaper, the *Morning Mercury*, which reached me at St Germain on the 5th day of August had travelled by various hands ; and I knew not whose hand had written the superscription, containing my name, upon the paper that wrapped it about—

GIVE TO THE HONOURABLE MR HENRY JERVOIS,
WITH KING JAMES,
ATT S. GERMAIN-EN-LAYE, IN FRANCE.

I unfolded the newspaper and perceived that some one, by drawing thick lines with ink, had marked a piece of intelligence for my notice—which intelligence I forthwith read, it being this:

'It is now believed that the second person concerned in the late felonious attack upon one of Their Majesties' Admiralty expresses between Bourne and Hastings was the Honourable Mr H. Jervois, Lord Ferristown's son; for 'tis ascertained that Mr Jervois was appointed to meet with Sir Eves Culloch, the one of the two villains who was shot dead, near the place of the attack. As was told last week, Mr Jervois (if 'twere he) made good his escape, being enabled to do this by the act of a young lady who gave him a horse.

'The expectation that this lady, who hath been committed on a Privy Council warrant to Hastings jail for her act, would be indicted and brought to trial was yesterday proved well founded, it becoming known that she is to be put to trial at a Sussex assize in August on the charge of treasonously aiding an enemy of Their Majesties to escape after active treason in arms. Whereby she is now in danger of her life, since, if she be pronounced guilty, she will be sentenced to die.

'She is Miss Herbert, daughter of Morgan Herbert, Esquire, of Stanningly Manor, Sussex, and is eighteen years old. She is said to plead that Mr Jervois took the horse from her by force. To-day 'tis common opinion that, would Mr Jervois appear at the assize and make testimony of this, he would be like to clear Miss Herbert of the accusation. But 'tis by no means sure that Mr Jervois, who is thought to be at St Germain, will learn of her unhappy and perilous circumstance—and, if he should, there is no reason to conclude that he will abandon his safety and yield himself to the law by coming hither to protect Miss Herbert.'

'Twas on the terrace, in bright sunshine, that I read this—with a sense, as I began it, of being carried back to a thing that had been left far behind in the past and was almost forgotten. For, with some weeks of ordinary life at St Germain intervening, together with some days of great stir, occasioned by the King of France and his court coming to us for the baptism of His Majesty's and the Queen's little daughter, my mind had been much lulled and distracted from that desperate, fugitive morning of mine in England, which all this was so different from, and soon I gave not much thought to it—scarce any at all, when my wound was healed past reminding me.

But—what need to say?—ere I had read many lines of the newspaper, that morning was as clearly lit in my memory, was as present to me, as if it were to-day. Indeed, for a space, 'twas verily as though I yet stood in that

yellow-flowered field, with her little hand holding Michael's rein, and her blue eyes on me as she told me (truly indeed) that I should kill Michael by riding him.

It seemed strange to me, as I held the newspaper after reading, that I had not thought of her more since reaching St Germain—that I had not sought (though I knew not her name till now) to send her some word of sorrow anent Michael, whom she loved—and she but eighteen.

But what time was this to think of Michael! 'Twas easy to believe that the authorities, who already had shown themselves so spleenful to her, would see that she suffered death if she were sentenced to it. And this my fault—she the innocentest creature, as those spiteful, false-swearing blackguards, the express and his rabble, must have seen for themselves.

I crushed the newspaper, dreading that the assize had been already held, yet having one errant thought, namely, that I fain would flail my cane upon that knave writer, who, with curious malice, taunted I should not come.

Turning into the château, I craved admittance to His Majesty, who, I knew, was in his cabinet; he presently receiving me, and giving me leave to go away on a private matter, whereof he asked no particular question—to my relief; for, had I been forced to tell much, he, in his kindness, might have commanded me not to go.

Then took I farewell of my mother, telling her—dear heart—no more than that I wished to make my duty to a lady, who was distant—whereat her mien, though wondering (wondering what French mademoiselle this could be), was in no wise unhappy. And then—my father being away at Fontainebleau—I straightway rode from St Germain for the coast.

My spirits were overcast from my leave-taking of my mother so deceived; and, as I journeyed, the more and more did they become overcast by apprehension that Miss Herbert's trial had already taken place and gone ill for her. But I found I had no fear for myself, to make the shadows blacker, though truly it seemed I was going to my death.

Though I had borne myself with excellent calmness at St Germain to-day, in reality my mind was all turmoil and astoundment from learning that I had brought this young lady to peril of death, but I perceived one thing in a clear, steady way—namely, that, with all my heart, I would be glad to die, rather than to live remembering I had cost this maid her life. In sooth I could not endure to live knowing that. Wherefore there was no room left for any fear for myself in this errand of mind to save her. I knew that I should be a proper man throughout the errand—unless I came to England too late.

(Continued on page 377.)

SCENES FROM MOROCCO—FEZ.

By E. C. MATTHEWS.

PART I.

I.

A CHILD of perhaps ten summers took me in hand during my first visit to Fez, and decided that it was his obvious duty to show me the wonders of his native city. I have a strong dislike for the whole race of guides, but Mohamet b'el Abdelwah'h'd was no ordinary member of that fraternity, and as it is quite impossible for a stranger to avoid losing his way in the crazy labyrinth of Fez, I was content to surrender to the whims of this infant. He rarely adopted any suggestion of mine, but firmly went his own way in his own time. Occasionally I expostulated, and at first Mohamet treated my protests with tolerant amusement. Finally, however, he delivered a crushing rebuke. I was in a hurry to get back to my hotel in time for lunch, and told him to take me there as quickly as possible. He led me out of one of the gates of the city and along a tortuous, cactus-edged path, through olive groves and fields of maize. It was a roundabout route, and, being hungry, I asked him irritably why he had brought me that way. There was contemptuous pity in his voice as he answered, 'To give pleasure to the eyes.'

With this quaintly-worded phrase did a diminutive child of the East pass criticism on Western civilisation. In the West we have subdued the forces of Nature and produced much remarkable machinery, but Nature has taken her revenge and made us the slaves of our own time-tables. The first man lost Paradise by eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge, but of all the sons of Adam the Arabs have remained the nearest to the gates of their ancestral home. The more inquisitive races are ever striving so hard towards fresh discoveries, that they have no time to spare for contemplating the finished perfection of Nature.

In and around Fez it is still abundantly possible 'to give pleasure to the eyes,' but it was not until my seventh or eighth visit that I discovered the ideal spot from which to gaze down upon that amazing city. As to the exact position of my vantage-point I intend to maintain a jealous silence. The fairness of Imperial Fez is too rare to be subjected to the unmannerly staring of the average tourist. It is more seemly that, like some veiled Mohammedan maiden, she should only reveal the glorious beauty of her face to her chosen lover and his nearest relations. Suffice it, therefore, for me to explain that somewhere in a hill to the north of the city is a small cave, and by the merest

chance I discovered its obscure entrance. I like to imagine that Fez, knowing me to be an ardent and respectful lover, had rewarded my devotion, and shown me how, in undisturbed tranquillity, I could contemplate her perfect beauty.

The tiny entrance to the cave is on the top of the hill, and, when first I saw it, appeared to be a mere hole in the ground. Exploration, however, revealed a precipitous, narrow passage leading down to an opening in the cliff-face of the hill. Down the steep slope two friends and I stumbled in the darkness, till we reached the cavern from which there is the most perfect uninterrupted view of Fez. The almost unearthly beauty of the scene before us held all so spellbound that none ventured to break the silence, and none was conscious of another's presence.

It was but a few minutes before sunset, one glorious December evening. Not one cloud was to be seen in the gradually paling blue sky. In the valley some 200 feet below us were olive trees and straggling cactus plants, and a small field of young green corn. Narrow pathways edged with aloes pursued their somewhat haphazard courses, and along one of these came an Arab boy driving a small herd of goats towards one of the gates of the city. He was playing softly to himself on a native two-stringed instrument, and the plaintive notes of his melancholy tune rose up to us through the stillness of the evening. Beyond the gardens—for in Morocco every place where green trees are to be seen is called a garden—lay the venerable city. In the background rose a line of hills dotted with olive trees, to the east the road to Taza threaded its way through the plains to the mountains beyond, while to our right the westerling sun was sinking in a blaze of glory.

Old Fez, founded in the ninth century, lies mostly in a hollow, though the western end has clambered up a hill, where the palaces of the wealthy overlook the lower portions of the old town. In the centre of Old Fez is the great mosque of Moulay Idriess, with its green tiled roofs and its aged minaret. Until recent years a 'forbidden quarter' surrounded this greatly venerated mosque, and death was the punishment for any infidel found upon that holy ground. To the west of Old Fez the imperial quarter—the narrowest portion of the city—joins the old to the new town. In this quarter are the Sultan's palace, the Sultan's mosque and government buildings, and from above we could clearly see into their gardens and spacious courtyards.

New Fez, dating from the thirteenth century,

contains some streets wide enough to drive through, though the numerous internal gateways placed at awkward angles render the process somewhat trying. The whole of Fez is enclosed by crenellated gray walls, with defensive turrets at irregular intervals, and in the whole seven odd miles of ramparts there are only ten gates.

As we looked down upon it from our cave, the city seemed wrapped in a mysterious silence. There was no clamorous noise of modern machinery, not even the rumble of traffic, nothing but the gentle murmur of human voices. Not a street was visible, for the tortuous alleyways of Fez were all hidden by the confusing mass of houses. Here and there specks of colour could be seen as Moorish women came out upon the flat roofs of their houses. The fast setting sun cast a soft radiance over gray Old Fez, so that we seemed to be looking down at some dream-city fashioned out of mother-of-pearl.

Abruptly the silence was broken by the loud report of the sunset gun; and before the sound had ceased reverberating amongst the hills began the evening call to prayer. Starting from the Mosque of Moulay Idriss, the shrill cry was taken up and passed from minaret to minaret, till the whole valley was filled with the sound of men's voices proclaiming the greatness of God. It was fully five minutes before the last echo had died away and the city had fallen once more into silence. The sky behind the hills to the south rapidly changed colour. Deep red gave way to rose, rose merged into pale yellow, with here and there a hint of green, while the delicate evening blue gradually deepened towards the east before the steady advance of oncoming night. The hills, now in deep shadow, took on a vaguely purple hue; an evening mist began to form in the valley, and the colour of Old Fez in the twilight resembled that of the outside of an oyster shell.

I shut my eyes and tried to force my brain to retain every detail of that magnificent scene; then, turning round, I found my way up the dark passage, out to the summit of the hill. Not till we were all outside did any one of us break the silence, and even then we spoke only in the low, awed tones of those who have seen wonderful things.

II.

We had all lived some time in Morocco, and had, in consequence, got to know a certain number of Moors, and we had received an invitation to dine that evening in an Arab house. At about half-past seven one of our host's black servants, a freed slave, came to conduct us to the house. Carrying a small Arab lantern, he led the way through the narrow, tortuous streets of Old Fez. Some were dark and deserted and a little eerie; in others lights were to be seen, where a few

Arabs still remained in their shops. At night the blank walls of houses towering high above the murky alleyways look mysterious and almost ominous. They all appear somewhat mean and shabby, for the Moors pay no attention to the exteriors of their homes; and for this they have two good reasons. The first is that they live inside, and consider it a waste of time and money to adorn the outside; the second and more important reason is, that in the old days an expensive-looking exterior to a house might have attracted the attention of some rapacious governor, or perhaps the sultan himself. As a result, even in the quarters where the richest Moors live, the European at first imagines himself to be in some dreadful slum. When we arrived at the house we passed through a modest doorway, along a dark passage, and into a magnificent courtyard.

The change from darkness, poverty, and squalor to light, splendour, and luxury was so startling as to be almost theatrical. To us Europeans it looked at first like a stage-setting for a scene from the *Thousand and One Nights*. I for one should hardly have been surprised had Haroun el Raschid appeared, accompanied by Giafar his vizier and Mansour his sword-bearer.

The courtyard was about twenty yards long and fifteen wide, and was paved with white marble tiles laid diagonally and edged with blue. In the middle a fountain played lazily in a shallow alabaster bowl, and beside it grew a jasmine bush then in full flower. Round the courtyard ran a covered arcaded passage with a ceiling of painted cedar-wood, and along each side was a row of massive columns. To the height of about five feet the walls and the columns were inlaid with richly-coloured mosaic work in conventional Moorish designs. Above this was plain white, but the capitals of the columns were decorated with filigree carving in plaster, and no two were alike.

At the far end of the courtyard we could see through a Moorish archway into a brilliantly-lighted room, where dinner was shortly to be served.

As we arrived, our host advanced to meet us. He was a magnificent specimen of humanity, tall and dignified. His skin was almost white, and his face bearded; his features were clear-cut, and his eyes keen.

After the customary greetings he led us to the room at the end of the courtyard, and there we found his uncle, an ex-minister of justice, who was to do the honours of the feast. In this particular household it was the host's custom not to dine with his guests, but personally to supervise every detail of the dinner. We took our places on a large divan, and, propped up with many cushions, sat in an incomplete circle, the unoccupied portion being for serving purposes.

To begin with, tea was made in the usual

Moorish style, with considerable ceremony. Green tea was used, and the pot nearly filled with enormous pieces of sugar from a sugar-loaf. A good handful of mint was then put in, and the pot filled with water which had been boiling in a magnificent samovar. With the tea some most delicious almond-cakes were served; and there was a great temptation to spoil a good appetite by over-indulgence in these dainties. One variety was infinitely delectable. In the form of a crescent moon, the inside was made of almond paste; this was covered with the finest pastry, and the whole powdered with the kind of sugar usually found in boxes of Turkish delight. After each guest had drunk three cupfuls the tea was removed, and a procession of servants appeared in the courtyard carrying a number of dishes. There were twelve courses, each in a large earthenware dish covered with a conical lid of parti-coloured basketwork. The servants laid these dishes in a row in front of the fountain; and a small round table, not more than nine inches high, was placed in the midst of the guests. Two servants then brought a copper bowl and a kettle of hot water, and we all washed our right hands. After this the first dish was carried in, and, on the cover being raised, a magnificent 'pastella' was displayed. It was circular, about two feet in diameter and an inch and a half in depth. The outside was of the lightest pastry imaginable, and the inside of tenderest roast pigeons. We ate it native fashion with our fingers.

There is a tendency amongst Europeans to consider this an ill-mannered method of conveying food to the mouth. It is therefore salutary for us to ponder for a moment over the Arab point of view, which is that ours is an unclean way of eating, for it is impossible to tell who last used your spoon or fork. Those who have taken their meals with any frequency in the smaller restaurants of Europe will admit that there is much to be said in favour of this Moorish contention. It must also be borne in mind that, except when eating kous-kousu, well-brought-up Arabs consider it bad manners to dirty more than the tips of the thumb and first two fingers of the right hand. On no account should grease penetrate beyond the top joint of the fingers. Meat retains the heat far better when it is not cut up into small portions, and, to me at least, roast mutton never tastes so good as when torn in small pieces from a whole sheep. Many a time have I proved to my own satisfaction the literal truth of the old proverb, 'The nearer the bone the sweeter the meat.' There is a remarkably succulent morsel clinging to the backbone of a sheep, and this is seldom, if ever, tasted unless first pulled away with the fingers.

For a period of nearly two hours dish followed dish, and each in itself was a culinary triumph.

There were five courses of chicken, and five chickens to each of these courses. Chickens boiled with maize and flavoured with mint; roasted and served with olives; spiced with cummin seed and cooked in oil; dished up with salsify and yolks of eggs; stuffed with raisins and pounded almonds. This last I would especially recommend to the attention of the fastidious gourmet. There was a sheep roasted whole with a plentiful stuffing of cummin seed; and I must confess that whenever this dish has been placed in front of me, I have always endangered my capacity for eating anything else which might follow. There was a form of stewed mutton served with a variety of vegetables, and, to complete the more serious part of the feast, there were two courses of pigeons admirably cooked.

Throughout the dinner musicians sang to us or played on curious native instruments. Arab-singing is decidedly strident in tone, and, at the first hearing, somewhat displeasing to European ears. The songs were mostly of love or adventure, and the words were in the usual Eastern form of couplets repeating one general idea in different phraseology. As a rule a man and a woman sang alternately, and the following will give an impression of the type of song.

The man sings :

When first I saw the radiance of my beloved's face,
I thought I was gazing on the full moon in the
month of Ramadan.

I said, 'Surely such human beauty was never seen
till now';

And I said, 'The works of the Creator are perfect
beyond understanding.'

The woman replies :

There is a soft down upon my lover's cheek,
And his eyes can be gentle as a young gazelle's;
But his strength is greater than the lion's,
And as a warrior none is his equal in valour.

The instruments used by the musicians were a kind of mandolin, and a violin keyed down to an unusually low pitch. This instrument, instead of being held to the shoulder, was played in the manner of a double bass. A species of native drum was also used. This was composed of a piece of pottery in the shape of a straight vase, the bottom being replaced by parchment which had frequently to be heated over a brazier in order to maintain the desired tone.

The two final courses of the dinner made us wish they were not the eleventh and twelfth, for their excellence was beyond praise. One was an enormous flat round piece of pastry filled with almond icing; the other was a sugared kous-kousu. This latter is the staple Arab dish. It is composed of a form of semolina, and in this case raisins were added and the whole covered with a fine powdered sugar. The method of eating it presents considerable difficulties to the unpractised Westerner, although it is permitted, and indeed necessary, to use

the whole of the right hand. The correct way to set about it is first to scoop out a small handful, then by a curious circular, jerky movement to make this into a ball about the size of a walnut, in the palm of the hand, and finally to slide the ball with the thumb up the first and second fingers into the mouth. To become efficient at this pastime requires long and careful practice.

After the kous-kousu the copper kettle and bowl were again produced for very necessary ablutions. The remnants of the feast were handed to the musicians, who certainly deserved refreshment after their strenuous entertainment. Finally the various dishes were passed on to the remainder of the household, who were doubtless waiting in eager anticipation for their share in this lavish feast.

We lay back amongst our cushions, feeling much like the small boys in comic pictures who have just finished their Christmas dinner. Lazily we looked around us, and, attracted by the sound of whispering, our gaze was directed to the far end of the courtyard; there we could just distinguish glistening eyes surveying us from behind the moucharaby on the first floor. The ladies of the harem were evidently deeply interested in the guests of their lord and master.

More tea was brought in, and we each had to drink another three cupfuls, and to eat a suitable number of cakes. At this stage our host, relieved of the anxieties of the dinner, sat with us, and we exchanged compliments. My contribution was roughly as follows:

'Though I have had the honour of being entertained in Moorish houses before, and though I hope to have that great pleasure again,

I know that nothing can ever surpass the wonderful courtesy and lavish hospitality with which I have been received to-day.'

To which the reply was:

'Unworthy as I am of the honour given to me by your presence, I cannot properly express the feelings which inspire me; I can only assure you that this is the happiest day of my life.'

The musicians, after their refreshment, sang a final, quaintly-worded song, of which the following is a rough translation:

The sons of Adam are never contented,
Not satisfied with walking upon their feet.
They enslaved the horse and made him carry them,
And then they made swift travelling motor-cars,
So that they could travel faster than all the beasts
of the earth.
But they saw the birds of the air and envied them,
So they made aeroplanes and flew faster than the
wind.
And now they are seeking for some new thing to
make,
For the sons of Adam are never contented.

This song is interesting, for it shows the only forms of locomotion then known to the Moors. They never used carriages, so to them the first real progress made was from horse-riding to the use of the motor-car. The next stage was the aeroplane, used considerably by the French against the rebel tribes in the Atlas Mountains. Trains hardly enter into their calculations, for the only railways then in Morocco had a 2-foot gauge, and the principal traffic was composed of infrequent goods trains.

After this song the musicians withdrew, and a little while later we also took leave of our host, and returned somewhat slowly to our hotel.

(Continued on page 382.)

SUGAR.

By SYBIL SEWELL DASH.

I.

A SOUND of rippling breezes through the leaves; a swishing, gentle swaying of uncut sheaves; warm, hazy mist on the dim horizon; in the distance a myriad sea of pastel shades, touched here and there with the sun's fiery rays; a soothing hum from the cutters at work, their voices rising and falling in mingling cadences, like the droning of busy bees; miles upon miles of billowing sugar-cane, emerald and yellow in the ripening, and, over all, the never-to-be-forgotten aroma of fresh-cut canes—a panorama of potential sugar at harvesting time.

Sugar-cane and maize (or Indian corn) are somewhat similar in appearance, especially in the shape of the leaves. Cane, however, is hard and tough, as suggested by its name; and instead of being mowed by machinery, as is corn, it is stripped of its leaves, then cutlassed,

and flung into heaps by a gang of black labourers. The leaves are put into pens, serving thereby a dual purpose, namely, food for stock and a base for manure; or else they are used as mulch, being packed round the young cane plants to conserve moisture in the soil throughout the dry season.

Loaded mule-carts carry away the stripped canes almost as soon as they are cut, otherwise rapid deterioration in the sugar contents takes place, and much loss is entailed. From the field they are conveyed to the nearest railway-siding, where lines of trucks, not unlike coal-trucks at home, have been shunted, ready to transport, when filled, their sweet, juicy burden to the factory. These trucks are drawn by steam locomotives through avenues of waving sugar-cane to their destination, where each truck passes over a scale arranged in the track itself, the weight of the cane being thus accurately

measured. From more distant estates bordering sea, canal, or river the cane is brought in on lighters.

II.

It is fascinating to watch for a while the scene of tremendous activity that surrounds a factory and its neighbourhood during crop time. Shouted orders, screaming, puffing engines accompany the roar of machinery in motion night and day, to which one may add the mingled odours of steam, sweat, and boiling juice.

Reaching the factory, the canes are automatically tilted from the trucks onto an endless chain or platform, which carries them forward towards the first step in the complicated system of sugar manufacture. Only a few yards of their journey is travelled, when a row of sharp knives slash the cane into small bits, simplifying the process of juice-extraction, which is accomplished next by the aid of three or four successive trains of three roller-mills, until, as the cane passes through the last mills, every drop of juice has been relentlessly expressed from it, leaving the canes ground into dry bagasse. This bagasse is used as fuel for the great furnaces, and in well-appointed factories little or no other fuel is required.

Rapidly flowing from the mills, the juice from the live canes is pumped to the top of the factory, where it runs down from the juice heaters to the clarifying tanks. In these tanks the process of clarification is accomplished by the aid of lime, and a separation of injurious substances and impurities occurs, these substances being eventually carried to the filter-press, where they are made into filter-press cakes, and used as manure and food for stock.

From the clarifiers the juice journeys downwards through the filters to what is known as the 'triples' or concentrators. These are large round vessels covered with wood, the first having a temperature of 200° F. and a vacuum of 5; the second a temperature of 180° F. and a vacuum of 16; and the third a temperature of 160° F. and a vacuum of 28. This arrangement of triples was invented in order to save fuel, the steam generated from the first tank being sufficient to furnish boiling power for the second, and similarly the second for the third.

III.

The juice, having been heated, clarified, filtered, and concentrated, has now become what is known as syrup, and has the appearance of clear molasses. The syrup, descending through pipes, is conveyed to the vacuum pans, where crystals are formed at a temperature of 160° F. The crystals, still enveloped in their mother-liquor, which is the real molasses, drop from the bottom of the vacuum pans into receiving tanks on the main floor.

This dark-looking mass of semi-liquid substance is termed *masse-cuits*. The *masse-cuits* are passed into the centrifugals, which are numerous, revolving, perforated baskets standing in a row. These baskets revolve on pivots at a tremendous rate of speed; the centrifugal force generated therefrom separates the liquid coating from the crystals, driving it outwards through the perforations to an outer receiving case, leaving the crystals in the baskets clean, sparkling, dry, and of a delicate creamy tint. The crystals are then dropped through a trap in the bottom of the baskets to a moving platform below the level of the main floor, where they are carried off and bagged, later to be conveyed by motor-lorry or railroad to the dock, where vessels tranship the newly-made sugar to all parts of the world.

The molasses is run into the distillery, diluted with water, and set up in large fermentation vats. When the sugars are completely changed into alcohol and fermentation ceases, the process of distillation takes place in closed retorts or stills. The alcohol is driven off by steam, then condensed, and the process repeated until the desired strength of spirit is obtained. It is stored, and, when required, is filled into puncheons for shipment. If coloured rum is wanted, a little caramelised molasses is put in the casks to give it colour. The residue from distilled alcohol is termed *vinasse*, and is sometimes made use of as a fertiliser.

The finished product in factories is designated 'raw sugar'; in this form it goes to the refineries, where it is granulated. Sugar refineries are gradually being added to the original factories, thus affording a tremendous saving in transportation expenditure, the whole process of cultivating the sugar-cane and manufacturing the sugar being accomplished within a certain district or area.

LOCH GOIL.

(A Roundel.)

LOCH GOIL in a rapture of heathery shadows is lying,

As a rainbow it gleams on the tears and the trances of toil,

And my soul all the day from the dawn to the sunset is sighing:

'Loch Goil!'

As the sun in the mists of the morning is caught in the coil,

As the bird in the net that is captive, but dreams it is flying,

As the star swinging free of the cloud that its glory would foil,

So my heart for the freedom of heights and of waters is crying

For the heath and the haze of a gloaming and glamorous soil,

And thy shadow is ever before me, serene and undying,

Loch Goil!

LEWIS SPENCE.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

A STORY OF INDOLENT NOON.

By E. ST GEORGE BETTS.

I WAS walking through the greenwood not long ago, leisurely threading a sinuous path round massive trunks, and sweeping aside the obstruction of resilient branches, when, for the second time, I came upon a little open space that had attracted my attention twenty minutes earlier. Unconsciously I had completed a circle, experiencing within the limits of this little wood the same illusion of direction which has so often befallen, on a tragic scale, travellers through vast forests in other countries.

This little clearing was in shape a short oblong, and I had noticed it particularly because of the miniature perfection of the scene. On one of its sides a bank declined to the edge of the luxuriant summer growth which fringed the area all around, and on the short sward of this slope stood, very clearly defined, the upright stems of red centaury and yellow-wort, which with plummet-like precision indicated the shelving of the bank. There was no rankness in the surrounding vegetation, and the turf on the level above the bank, though densely starred with daisies and sprinkled with speedwells, was otherwise smooth and trim. Running across one of the corners, a streamlet emerged from the summer gloom of a thicket, and for a few feet twinkled and lilted over a pebbly bed in the open light of day. By its margin grew a tuft of round-stemmed soft-rush, plumed midway their length, and of vivid pale green at the base, where they issued from the damp moss; and in the streamlet itself the brooklime was in flower. One delightful bush of woodbine spread like a wave over blackthorn and bramble, filling the air with fragrance from its bugle blooms; and sprays of wild roses, some white as vestals, and others pink like glowing daughters of earth, hung about.

Save for the humming of insect wings and the cooing of turtles among the distant sapling oaks, all was so still and stirless that the daisies at my feet appeared to be dreaming above their shadows, and it seemed a violation of the peace when a travelling beetle shook and bowed a flower on his clumsy passage. A short pollard ash-tree, mere dry and lichened touchwood with a big dryad's saddle fungus upon it, had fallen forward, and lay partly within the clearing. Mingled shade and sun fell pleasantly

there, and I sat down with my back against the log, and allowed the tranquil sights and sounds to fill my senses.

An early red admiral butterfly floated over the billow of a lofty hawthorn, and, settling on the head of a mauve-banded teasel flower, unfolded, with a gentle fanning motion, splendours which might have been filched from sunset skies and the purple night. A pair of linnets passing overhead spied the sparkle of the brooklet, and, abruptly diverting their course, dropped down to sojourn there awhile.

The noonday warmth, the drowsy murmur of innumerable hyaline wings, all the sweet encompassing influences conspired to induce a sense of well-being and content that brought me near to sleep, when a thing befell that in an instant transported my senses back from the border with a jump; for on the edge of the turf two or three yards away a minute but perfectly formed hand was suddenly thrust from behind a large burdock leaf, claspings its edge as one would clasp that of a curtain. The leaf was drawn aside, and instantly an elf stepped into the open and looked about him.

Once as a child I had known, or thought I had known, some such happening as this; but the memory had become so faint and far away that long since I had decided it must have been merely a vivid dream of childhood which had become confused with the realities of daylight hours. Now I was not so sure about that later judgment, and in any case realised that at the present moment some conjuncture of time and place—the completion of that circle possibly—had caused my unwitting actions to set in motion the power which withdraws the veil from human eyes, revealing all that the word 'fairy' connotes, while at the same time rendering the mortal himself invisible. An intuition made me aware that this latter virtue now resided within me.

The little man—he was about three-quarters of an inch in height, certainly not more than an inch—stood for a moment glancing keenly about him, and then ran swiftly across the open, nimbly avoiding the daisy stalks, and ducking his head to avoid the petals of the lowlier ones. Arrived at the farther side, without a moment's hesitation he 'shinned'

up the stem of a tall flowering umbel, and took his station among the radiating stalks immediately beneath the flower-head. I arose in breathless excitement. With unnecessary caution I stepped slowly and delicately to the spot and stood above the flower; but the elf was manifestly unconscious of my presence. Judged by a mortal standard, this little fellow appeared to be seventeen or eighteen years of age, and his form and features were faultless in beauty of line and exquisite clearness of chiselling. He was armed with a weapon like a boy's pea-shooter, but very diminutive, and discharging what appeared to be the dried seeds of wild poppies, which he carried in a tiny wallet slung to his waist. His upturned face, dappled with the delicate shadows of the flower canopy, shone with health and joy of life; and if an insect alighted on the flower above, his eyes glittered with excitement as he changed his position in order to get an unobstructed aim. I observed, however, that he treated the big buzzing humble-bees with more respect, and seemed to be a little afraid of these. He had acquired great precision with the shooter, and delighted in taking pot-shots at fairy boys and girls when a favourable opportunity offered; for by this time a number of elves had appeared. When a sharp little cry of pain told of some lucky hit he threw back his curly head in an ecstasy of delight, and I heard the tiny peal of merriment escaping from his lips. There was something in his nature closely akin to innocent malice.

I had been watching this marksman of the flower-top a long time with intense interest, when I became aware of a terrific combat which was taking place a few feet away between two fairies and a shrew. The battle was proceeding in the middle of that path which crossed the clearing, evidently a track worn by the gamekeeper in the course of his periodic rounds. The agility of these two symmetrical little men was marvellous, as they thrust and dodged and leapt at their savage foe, whose vicious squeaks were pitched in the same key as the cries of the two hunters. Several times when the shrew was off his feet for a moment the elves leapt clean across the body, plunging their needle-like rapiers into the huge side of their prostrate antagonist the moment they alighted. The fight was by no means one-sided, and often seemed of doubtful issue. Once, indeed, the shrew obtained a hold on the gossamer vest of a combatant, but his fellow with prompt initiative seized the tail of the beast, and, while the fingers of the fallen elf clung desperately to the dried imprint left on the pathway by a hob-nail, tugged with such super-elfin strength that the fine-spun fabric was rent, and the hunter freed from his dangerous plight. The shrew was in truth making a gallant fight, but his move-

ments were becoming slower, and the heaving ribs told of laboured breath and spent power. A few minutes later the brute lay motionless upon its side, presenting an opportunity for the final thrust, which left it dead in the midst of the path, with scarce a mark to show the cause, so fine were the fairy weapons.

It was a little later that I saw a ring of elfin youths and maidens dancing hand in hand around a frog, which had hopped into the open from the brink of the streamlet. With big protruding eyes, glassily staring, it sat like a frog wrought in plaster while the dance wavered about it. I had often before seen a frog sitting thus, never dreaming that it was under the spell of the fairy folk; but now the mutual relation between myself and those little people was changed.

While this dancing and singing went on, a hare, with dark-tipped ears erect, came slowly loping across the domain, followed in a few minutes by another, which, with twitching nostrils, carefully picked out the exact course of the first. Then a rabbit scurried across with less ceremony, and a blackbird with peevish cackle of alarm flew overhead. The turtle-doves and the wood-pigeons ceased their cooing, and some of the latter, with a noisy beating of wings, rose from the tree-tops and, after making half a circle, flew away. Then came the sound of some one approaching, a dry stick snapping here, or a bough swishing there, and presently the gamekeeper emerged and glanced about him.

A big man with sandy whiskers, quiet shadowy eyes, and broad, slightly-rounded shoulders, some quality of silence hung about him like that of a lonely tree brooding under the moon of a still night. He caught sight of the shrew, and carelessly kicked it from the pathway as he went by; the retriever trotting at his heels turned to sniff at the body, and then, with more interest, put his nose to the track along which the hares had passed. Meanwhile I had withdrawn into a recess behind a wild-rose bush. The fairies had left the bemused frog—which immediately with three big hops reached the sanctuary of rushes—and had ranged themselves in two irregular lines on each side of the path, to watch the progress of this gigantic being built in their own shape. They found this pastime wonderfully exhilarating, if smiles and shrieks of laughter were evidence. They accompanied the gamekeeper's diagonal course through their realm, and when he was half-way across I saw one adventurous young hooligan frantically tugging at the end of a loosened boot-lace which hung from the keeper's right boot, in an effort to free it entirely. Where the path again entered the undergrowth hung the honeysuckle I have mentioned, and as the keeper brushed through, a fairy gymnast, swinging from a tendril, dexter-

ously placed a green caterpillar on his shoulder, which straightway commenced to peregrinate towards his collar.

A propensity to puckish malice was very noticeable, especially among the bigger boys. For instance, a pretty fairy girl was standing under a glittering globe of dew that hung from the tip of a grass blade. With rapture in her eyes the little maid gazed at the luminous sphere, that reflected not only her own sweet beauty, but the green world around and the blue dome above, when an imp of mischief, spying the pretty scene, stealthily crept through the jungle of grass, and, grasping the base of the blade from which the dewdrop hung, gave it a vigorous shake. Full on the upturned face fell the pendant drop, drenching the golden curls and saturating the lovely frock, which for fineness of texture might have been fashioned from the azure of the sky. The child would have fallen to the ground had she not clasped the stalk of a hare-bell for support. And near at hand, peering between two violet leaves, the author of her distress gleefully watched the dripping little figure of the weeping child as she threaded her way among the crowded daisy stems.

Absorbed in these and like unwonted experiences, I had been unconscious of the passing hours; but at length I realised that some change, some subtle alteration in the conditions, had come about. The elves had disappeared. I looked at my watch and found that it had stopped. Feeling very tired, I sat down in my former place near the fallen ash, and presently fell into a dreamless and refreshing sleep. When I awoke the sunset hour had passed into summer twilight. Without difficulty I found my way out of the wood, and walked slowly in the direction of the village and home.

Across the valley on the left I heard the sharp cry of a little owl, which was immediately answered by another, and by yet another from more distant pastures. White moths fluttered over the wayside grass and flowers, and overhead the snap of a bat's jaws could be heard,

like the crack of a green laurel leaf broken across the mid-rib. From far away came the hoot of a motor-horn, and, nearer, the sound of a fast-trotting cob's hoofs rang on the hard road. On reaching the highway I lit my pipe, and before I arrived at the garden-gate the moon had risen in silent splendour above the valley.

The next morning I took a rod with me, intending to try for a big chub I had seen a mile or so down the river. As I passed the last house of the village where Peagrim, the gamekeeper, lived, I saw him under the walnut tree feeding his ferrets.

According to custom I stopped to pass the time of day, for he was something of a naturalist, and we had interests in common. With such skill as I could command, the conversation was conducted to a point where I could ask in a natural way if he had ever noticed and considered the fact that dead shrews were seen lying on the ground more commonly than other small creatures of the sort.

He said he had—often, but more particularly in the autumn, although it was only yesterday he had noticed one in Shackwell wood, on the side nearest to Dicksie's farm. He said, further, that a gentleman down for the shooting in autumn had told him that a shrew-mouse couldn't go long on an empty stomach, but died very quickly unless it got enough to eat. He wouldn't deny that this might be true, but in his experience as a gamekeeper he had often observed that shrews were vicious little beggars, and his opinion was that when a couple of bucks meet in the open they fight like blazes, and the weaker of the two is left to feed the blow-flies and carrion beetles. He said also that he had an old book in his house which told of folk and cattle being shrew-struck, and that, as a consequence, whenever a shrew happened to cross a human pathway it suffered instant death as a sort of judgment upon it; but nobody, he remarked, believes such tales now-a-days.

After a little further talk I said good morning and passed on, without telling him I had been in Shackwell wood the day before.

'AMBASSADORS OF COMMERCE.'

By CLIVE HOLLAND.

I.

THE calling of the commercial traveller is almost as ancient as commerce itself. Indeed, one can easily imagine that the 'commercial' had a seat in the Phœnician galleys and the Greek triremes which carried civilising and conquering hosts into then unknown portions of the world. Certainly there must have been a commercial traveller among the Canterbury Pilgrims of Chaucer, and in the

employ of the rich merchants of the Elizabethan age, who pushed their commodities through the Continent, and did so much to lay the foundations of the commercial supremacy of the British Empire to be.

Few callings have in recent years been so rapidly developed and changed by the advances made in the science of transport and locomotion as has that of the commercial traveller. From the led pack-horse, which in the Middle Ages bore the samples and goods, to

the swift aeroplane of to-day, now rapidly coming into use for 'rush' tactics in trade pushing, is indeed a far cry. The introduction of steam and electric current and petrol driven motors has revolutionised transport, as regards both human beings and goods. It is only natural that this speeding-up has led to competition in trade being so immeasurably increased in keenness that it has become almost impossible for any but the best men, with strong physique, and of high mental calibre, to stand the wear and tear of conducting business and bringing trade negotiations to a successful issue.

The head of a great commercial house recently said that 'it is only those who are thoroughly abreast and in sympathy with the times, and who have good physical health, and those who can think and act promptly, who can hope for a place in the race for success. One must possess an encyclopædic knowledge of the variations and developments of the particular trade in which one is engaged, and be able to "push" the "lines" in which one travels, not only with persuasive eloquence, or (as it is commonly known) "the gift of the gab," but with intelligence, and a whole battery of facts relative to the advantages which will accrue to the trader in the handling of the particular goods in question.'

II.

The changes in the art of trading and the art of advertisement—which latter may not unjustly be considered as the pioneer for commercial travellers—are so subtle and so rapid nowadays as to place an immense additional strain upon all concerned therewith.

How different, indeed, are to-day's conditions from the old-fashioned, steady-going, ding-dong days of business when commercial travellers went along the high roads on horseback with their saddle-bags in front of them containing their samples. They sallied forth, and were absent from London for six months at a time. They took their statements of accounts with them, and wrote to their houses only occasionally, sending in orders once a week, or once a fortnight, or even at longer intervals, so as to save the then expensive postage. What a contrast even to the old coaching times, when it took as many days as it does hours now to reach London, and when the shopkeeper who had ordered the goods had to get up at all hours in the night to receive them from the London stage delivery vans. The coaching days passed away when the railways came, and to-day the railways are being outdone by motor transport for both the commercial traveller and his goods, and high-powered aeroplanes are pressed into service for the rapid transit of specially valuable or perishable articles in cases of emergency.

Fifty years ago 'commercial' visited their customers every two or three months, which was by many of them considered too often. Then the visits were increased to monthly ones, fortnightly and even weekly in some cases. And nowadays, unfortunately for the 'commercial' of the smaller and less up-to-date type, parcels post and quick delivery have caused many a country shopkeeper to do a great amount of his orders by post and from catalogues.

Commercial travelling to-day has, indeed, from its extraordinary developments, become one of the most laborious and anxious of occupations; and the practice of ordering small and frequent parcels of goods, in place of the large orders of the past, has made it necessary to take a dozen orders instead of one or two daily. And instead of visiting in almost a leisurely manner two or three towns a week, the 'commercial' may have to visit eight or ten. The prevalence of frequent small orders, in place of the usual quarterly or monthly delivery of goods, has in the large commercial houses led to a great increase in overhead charges, and in the expense of packing-paper, string, and packing-cases.

Here is a reminiscence of an old commercial traveller whose memory can go back pretty clearly for a period of sixty years. He paints a vivid contrast when he says: 'In the old days when I used to drive out in a gig from a town served by the then incomplete railway systems to neighbouring towns and villages, some of my customers would, in good weather, come out along the road to meet me for the pleasure of hearing the latest news, and obtaining a local monopoly in a certain line of goods, and for the drive back. Then next morning there was the leisurely chat, and equally leisurely display of samples to one's customers, in place of the nowadays' rush and tumble of a ten minutes' rapid and sometimes disjointed talk with the manager of a department, or chief salesman of a smaller shop.

'There were "scoops" (as the newspapers say) in those days, and it was easier than it is at the present time to get ahead of a rival by the exercise of a little push and additional enterprise, and pick up a good fat order in consequence. I remember on several occasions many years ago, when the exclusive sale of some Christmas novelty in country towns was considered a far more important matter than it is to-day, doing wonderful business by taking night trains across country, or driving in a conveyance all night, and by these means arriving at some town or other a day or even half a day ahead of a rival. Nowadays, the day or half a day has been reduced to half-an-hour, or even a few minutes, in the rush of competition.'

III.

Another phase, connected with the altered conditions in the lives of commercial travellers

during recent years, is the fact that thirty years or so ago good wholesale firms would have considered it almost as much beneath their dignity to send out a circular or a price-list as did then first-class retail firms to ticket the goods in their windows. All this has been altered; the former spend hundreds and even thousands a year in circularising their customers, and the latter have so run to ticketing their windows that it is almost a case of being unable to 'see the wood for the trees.' Indeed, if the retail traders read all the circulars they receive, and saw all the travellers desiring interviews, they would have no time to conduct their legitimate business.

When one reflects upon the romance which once clung to the calling of a commercial traveller, who made leisurely journeys from town to town, and along the high-roads of the countryside; who was known to all his customers; who was usually an urbane and even placid individual, instead of the often 'nervy,' highly-organised, pushing salesman of to-day, who rushes about in express trains and high-speed motor cars,—one wonders if things are better than they were. Whether the 'commercial' of to-day is happier than he of yesterday? Whether he enjoys life more? And lastly, whether 'the game is worth the candle'?

Certainly to-day there has to be more business done by the 'commercial' to attain the same monetary results. To those who know him we think the following conclusion regarding him will be arrived at, namely, that he has immensely improved in intellectual type during the last half-century; he is less of an animal and more of a man; he eats (how some of the old 'commercials' could eat!) and certainly drinks less, and thinks more. He may not have quite the same bonhomie, and he is certainly more 'nervy'; and though he tells good stories of the road, he does so in a less leisurely and pompous, and more staccato manner. He occupies a more important position to-day than formerly, if he is a first-rate man. His duties are less in the nature of a dull routine. He is less of a traveller, and more of an agent; and the greatest of 'commercials' almost, indeed, deserve the somewhat grandiloquent description sometimes given them by public speakers, of 'Ambassadors of Commerce.'

An increasing amount of latitude in the exercise of individuality of method is permitted the first-rate man; and, indeed, is it not by the granting of such liberty that the capacity of the salesman is increased, and the fame of great business houses built up throughout the length and breadth of the country?

The spirit of the age is such as compels men, almost against their wills, if they would succeed to the highest degree of which they are capable, to set a standard which arouses in them an enthusiasm for commerce.

IV.

The pack-horse led by the 'commercial' of the Middle Ages along the infrequent highways and the almost unknown byways, the saddle-horse and saddle-bags of a later period, the gigs of the Victorian age—all have been left behind by the coming of the railway and the motor car. The six or seven miles an hour has been increased to fifty or sixty, and, on occasion, by aeroplane to over double that amount. The one or two orders a day has given place to a score or so; the multiplicity of small things, rapidly but carefully executed, has taken the place of the two or three large parcels a year of former days.

All this, of course, has meant additional wear and tear upon the mental, physical, and even moral qualities of the 'commercial.' To-day he has no time for the substantial meals of a former period. His travelling expenses have been increased; but there are compensations. The heavy drinker and the gay liver of former days—and there were such—are no longer met with to anything like the same extent, for they cannot hope to compete with the healthy, youthful, quick-brained, clear-headed, active, moderate man who, though often not a teetotaler, is frequently more temperate than some so-called temperance folk.

Among other benefits and boons that modern conditions have brought about is the possibility for men who can travel long distances to get home two or three times during the week; and for practically all commercial travellers to get their week-ends at home.

Those who sit in judgment upon the commercial traveller are usually those who know least about him, his strenuous life, the taxing of his energies, the discomforts of his calling even under present-day conditions, his temptations, and his aspirations. His critics are usually men surrounded by the safeguards of home, of wife, and family ties; and what these things stand for few can realise except those who are, save for brief periods of home life, cut off from their influence for weeks and months at a time.

The commercial traveller has large amounts of money passing through his hands and at his disposal; he lives in the very midst of temptation; he has often a positive excuse for drinking, as it is called, 'for the good of the house.' These things truly test the stuff of which human nature is made, and in many cases does the commercial traveller prove his superiority to the temptations with which his path is beset.

Few who know him will deny that the modern commercial traveller is a brighter, wiser, happier man than his predecessor in past times.

It is true that he has to compete with forces which urge him onwards with lightning speed; but he has increased opportunities of home life,

greater variety of mental interests, and more physical comforts.

World-travellers will tell one of the competition in foreign fields, and urge the necessity for the employment of the highest types of men and the best intellects as 'Ambassadors of Empire and of Trade.' One is inclined to think

that in the past this need for supremacy has been underrated. Every traveller with his eyes open must know that the future of British trade with foreign countries and undeveloped lands lies not only 'upon the knees of the gods,' but in the hands of those who form units in the great business calling of the commercial traveller.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER XII.—HARIPOL; TRANSPORT.

IT may be doubted whether in clear weather Sir Archie could ever have reached his station unobserved by the watchers on the hill. The place was cunningly chosen, for the road, as it approached the Doran, ran in the lee of a long covert of birch and hazel, so that for the better part of a mile no car on it could be seen from beyond the stream, even from the highest ground. But as the car descended from the Crask ridge it would have been apparent to the sentinels, and its non-appearance beyond the covert would have bred suspicion. As it was, the clear spell had gone before it topped the hill, for Sir Archie was more than an hour behind the scheduled time.

This was Janet's doing. She had started off betimes on the yellow pony for Crask, intending to take the by-way from the Larrig side, but before she reached the bridge of Larrig she had scented danger. One of the correspondents, halted by the roadside with a motor bicycle, accosted her with great politeness and begged a word. She was Miss Raden, wasn't she? and therefore she knew all about John Macnab. He had heard gossip in the glen of the coming raid on Haripol, and understood that this was the day. Would Miss Raden advise him from her knowledge of the countryside? Was it possible to find some coign of vantage from which he might see the fun?

Janet stuck to the simple truth. She had heard the same story, she admitted, but Haripol was a gigantic and precipitous forest, and it was preserved with a nicety unparalleled in her experience. To go to Haripol in the hope of finding John Macnab would be like a casual visit to England on the chance of meeting the King. She advised him to seek Haripol in the evening. 'If anything has happened there,' she said, 'you will hear about it from the gillies. They'll either be triumphant or savage, and in either case they'll talk.'

'We've got to get a story, Miss Raden,' the correspondent observed dismally, 'and in this roomy place it's like looking for a needle in a hayfield. What sort of people are the Claybodys?'

'You won't get anything from them,' Janet laughed. 'Take my advice and wait till the evening.'

When he was out of sight she turned her pony up the hill and arrived at Crask with an anxious face. 'If these people are on the loose all day,' she told Sir Archie, 'they're bound to spoil sport. They may stumble on our car, or they may see more of Mr Palliser-Yeates's doings than we want. Can nothing be done? What about Mr Crossby?'

Crossby was called into consultation and admitted the gravity of the danger. When his help was demanded, he hesitated. 'Of course, I know most of them, and they know me, and they're a very decent lot of fellows; but they're professional men, and I don't see myself taking on the job of gulling them. *Esprit de corps*, you know. . . . No, they don't suspect me. They probably think I left the place after I got off the Strathlarrig fish scoop, and that I don't know anything about the Haripol business. I daresay they'd be glad enough to see me if I turned up. . . . I might link on to them and go with them to Haripol and keep them in a safe place.'

'That's the plan,' said Archie. 'You march them off to Haripol—say you know the ground—which you do a long sight better than they. Some of the gillies will be huntin' the home woods for Lady Claybody's pup. Get them mixed up in that show—it will all help to damage Macnicol's temper, and he's the chap we're most afraid of. . . . Besides, you might turn up handy in a crisis. Supposin' Ned Leithen—or old John—has a hard run at the finish, you might confuse the pursuit. . . . That's the game, Crossby, my lad, and you're the man to play it.'

It was after eleven o'clock before the Ford car, having slipped over the pass from Crask in driving sleet, came to a stand in the screen of birches, with the mist wrapping the world so close that the foaming Doran, six yards away, was only to be recognised by its voice. All the way there Sir Archie had been full of forebodings. 'We're givin' too much weight away, Miss Janet,' he croaked. 'All we've got on our side is this putrid weather. That's a bit of luck, I admit. Also, we've two of the most compromisin' objects on earth—Fish Benjie and that little brute Roguie. . . . Claybody has a hundred navvies and a pack of gillies, and every

beast will be in the Sanctuary, which is as good as inside a barb-wire fence. . . . The thing's too ridiculous. We've got to sit in this car and watch an eminent British statesman bein' hoofed off the hill, while old John tries to play the decoy-duck, and Ned Leithen, miles off, is hoppin' like a he-goat on the mountains. . . . It's pretty well bound to end in disaster. One of them will be nobbled—probably all three; and when young Claybody asks "Wherefore this outrage?" I don't see what the cowerin' culprit is goin' to answer and say unto him.'

But when the car stopped in the drip of the birches, and Archie had leisure to look at the girl by his side, he began to think less of impending perils. The place was clamorous with wind and water, and yet curiously silent. The mist had drawn so close that the two seemed to be shut into a fantastic, secret world of their own. Janet was wearing breeches and a long riding-coat, covered by a gray oilskin, the buttoned collar of which framed her small face. Her bright hair, dappled with raindrops, was batted down under an ancient felt hat. She looked, thought Sir Archie, like an adorable bgy. Also for the last half-hour she had been silent.

'You have never spoken to me about your speech,' she said at last, looking away from him.

'Yours, you mean,' he answered. 'I only repeated what you said that afternoon on Carnmore; but you didn't hear it. I looked for you everywhere in the hall, and I saw your father, and your sister and Bandicott, but I couldn't see you.'

'I was there. Do you think I would have missed it? But I was too nervous to sit with the others, so I found a corner at the back below the gallery. I was quite near Wattie Lithgow.'

Archie's heart fluttered. 'That was uncommon kind. I don't see why you should have worried about—I mean I'm jolly grateful. I was just going to play the ass of all creation when I remembered what you had said—and—well, I made a speech instead of repeating the rigmarole I had written. I owe everything to you, for, you see, you started me out—I can never feel just that kind of funk again. . . . Charles thinks I might be some use in politics. . . . But I can tell you when I sat down and hunted through the hall and couldn't see you, it took all the gilt off the gingerbread.'

'I was gibbering with fright,' said the girl, 'when I thought you were going to stick. If Wattie hadn't shouted out, I think I should have done it myself.'

After that silence fell. The rain poured from the trees on to the cover of the Ford, and from the cover sheets of water cascaded to the drenched heather. Wet blasts scourged the occupants and whipped a high colour into their faces. Janet arose and got out. 'We may as

well be properly wet,' she said. 'If they get the stag as far as the Doran they must find some way across. There's none at present. Hadn't we better build a bridge?'

The stream, in ordinary weather a wide channel of stones where a slender current fell in amber pools, was now a torrent four yards wide. But it was a deceptive torrent, with more noise than strength, and, save in the pools, was only a foot or two deep. There were many places where a stag could have been easily lugged through by an able-bodied man. But the bridge-building proposal was welcomed, since it provided relief for both from an atmosphere which had suddenly become heavily charged. At a point where the channel narrowed between two blaeberry-thatched rocks it was possible to make an inclined bridge from one bank to the other. The materials were there in the shape of sundry larch poles brought from the lower woods for the repair of a bridge on the Crask road. Archie dragged half-a-dozen to the edge and pushed them across. Then Janet marched through the water, which ran close to the top of her riding-boots, and prepared the abutment on the farther shore, weighting the poles down with sods broken from an adjacent bank. 'I'm coming over,' she cried. 'If it will bear a stag, it will bear me.'

'No, you're not,' Archie commanded. 'I'll come to you.'

'The last time I saw you cross a stream you fell in,' she reminded him.

Archie tested the contrivance, but it showed an ugly inclination to behave like a see-saw, being insufficiently weighted on Janet's side.

'Wait a moment. We need more turf;' and she disappeared from sight beyond a knoll. When she returned she was excessively muddy as to hands and garments. 'I slipped in that beastly peat-moss,' she explained. 'I never saw such hags, and there's no turf to be got except with a spade. . . . No, you don't! Keep off that bridge, please; it isn't nearly safe yet. I'm going to roll down stones.'

Roll down stones she did till she had erected something very like a cairn at her end, which would have opposed a considerable barrier to the passage of any stag. Then she announced that she must get clean, and went a few yards down stream to one of the open shallows, where she proceeded to make a toilet. She stood with the current flowing almost to her knees, suffering it to wash the peat from her boots and the skirts of her oilskin, and at the same time scrubbing her grimy hands. In the process her hat became loose, dropped into the stream, and was clutched with one hand, while with the other she restrained the efforts of the wind to uncoil her shining hair.

It was while watching the moving waters at this priest-like task that crisis came upon Sir Archie. In a blinding second he realised with

the uttermost certainty that he had found his mate. He had known it before, but now came the flash of overpowering conviction. . . . For swelling bosoms and pouting lips and soft curves and languishing eyes Archie had only the most distant regard; he saluted them respectfully and passed by on the other side of the road—they did not belong to his world. But that slender figure splashing in the tawny eddies made a different appeal. Most women in such a posture would have looked tousled and flimsy, creatures ill at ease, with their careful allure beaten out of them by weather; but this girl was an authentic creature of the hills and winds—her young slimness bent tensely against the current, her exquisite head and figure made more fine and delicate by the conflict. It is a sad commentary on the young man's education, but while his soul was bubbling with poetry the epithet which kept recurring to his mind was 'clean-run.' . . . More, far more. He saw in that moment of revelation a comrade who would never fail him, with whom he could keep step on all the roads of life—a brightness which by his side would make a glory of the dullest stages. It was that which all his days he had been confusedly seeking.

'Janet,' he shouted against the wind, 'will you marry me?'

She made a trumpet of one hand. 'What do you say?' she cried.

'Will you marry me?'

'Yes.' She turned a laughing face. 'Of course I will.'

'I'm coming across,' he shouted.

'No. Stay where you are. I'll come to you.'

She climbed the other bank and made for the bridge of larch poles, and before he could prevent her she had embarked on that crazy

structure. Then that happened which might have been foreseen, since the poles on Archie's side of the stream had no firm foundation. They splayed out, and he was just in time to catch her in his arms as she sprang. 'You darling girl,' he said, and she turned up to him a face, smiling no more, but very grave.

Archie, his arms full of dripping maiden, stood in a happy trance.

'Please put me down,' she said. 'See, the mist is clearing. We must get into cover.'

Sure enough the haze was lifting from the hillside before them, and long tongues of black moorland were revealed stretching up to the crags. They found a place among the birches which gave them a safe prospect, and fetched luncheon from the car. Hot coffee out of a thermos was the staple of the meal, which they consumed like two preoccupied children. Archie looked at his watch and found it after two o'clock. 'Something must begin to happen soon,' he said, and they took up position side by side on a sloping rock, Janet with her Zeiss glasses and Archie with his telescope.

His head was a delicious merry-go-round of hopes and dreams. It was full of noble thoughts—about Janet and himself and life. And the thoughts were mirthful too—a great mellow, philosophic mirthfulness. John Macnab was no longer an embarrassing hazard, but a glorious adventure. It did not matter what happened—nothing could happen wrong in this spacious and rosy world. If Lamancha succeeded, it was a tremendous joke; if he failed, a more tremendous; and as for Leithen and Palliser-Yeates, comedy had marked them for its own. He wondered what he had done to be blessed with such happiness.

(Continued on page 395.)

THE LURE OF OLD BOOKS.

By DANIEL J. M'ARTHUR.

BETWEEN the collector of first editions of modern authors, and those steeped in the lovable smell of old leather and faded parchment, there is a wide gulf fixed. The lure of well-worn morocco and rough, hand-made paper is a strong one, and the contents of such volumes are veritable gold-mines of interesting anecdotes and sage wisdom; written, too, in a style of English which would put many a modern product to shame.

Old books are like old friends—the better for the keeping; landmarks on life's journey. And if there be no fashion-plate air about them, one is sure they will fit the shelves of the old mahogany bookcase (with its capacious cupboard beneath for the 'paper-backs') without alteration, while, if their dignified regularity of shape may not flirt with our sense of colour, like

many of the slim, smartly-bound modern books, yet their virtues are greater than merely having a pretty 'jacket' to cover their inner weaknesses.

The side-notes (written in an old-fashioned, crabbed style of handwriting) on many book-stall bargains are often the best part of these dog-eared volumes, and are a distinct stimulus to those who can appreciate their worth. The affectionate inscriptions on the title-pages are equally interesting. Once, no doubt, boon companions, these old books, even now, convey an atmosphere which stirs up in their new owners reveries of bygone days and lives long since forgotten.

Yes. To rummage over the flotsam and jetsam of the bookstalls, or browse leisurely in the dark recesses of the back shop—once you are known, and permitted to enter that

inner sanctum—is a pleasure which has many devotees. There one may spend half a day poring over many books and buying none, without a word being passed; for old books need no conversation, rather the reverse.

And there is no haggling over the price. As a rule they are huddled together, at set prices, irrespective of subject, binding, or original cost; or the price is obscurely marked inside the cover—a gummed price-label is an abomination to all book-lovers, remember.

One should never approach a bookstall with any definite object in view. Any book really worth having, despite the fact that it may now be lying midst a heap of undusted, unclassified miscellanea, is most unwilling to be wooed in any such commercial spirit. Besides, half the pleasure surely lies in the casual looking-over many volumes in spare moments.

But it is equally unwise ever to pass by a favourite bookstall or delay making a purchase. 'The next time' is always too late. The desired book has come and gone, as many a book-buyer has learned to his cost.

'Hope springs eternal' is, of course, the unconscious motto of all book-buyers, and one need not be averse to finding a bargain in the course of searching for our own more humble books. There are a few minor prizes still to be picked up. To some men these seem to come quite readily, while others search vainly, but with keen enjoyment, all their days, without finding one volume of any note.

'First loves are best' in books, and no new edition of a favourite work can ever take the place of that old, tattered copy one picked up 'for a song' in the now far-back days of our literary youth.

THE YELLOW FIELD.

PART III.

IV.

I RODE post in the hardest way to get to the coast, reaching Fescamp a little past midnight, finding the place asleep, but rousing it to such purpose that well ere two of the clock I sat in a fisher-boat, drifting off shore with the tide—with the fisher-captain, his son, and me holding our cheeks for a sign of wind to take us across.

The wind came soon after dawn, but anon veered contrarily; and what with its unfavour, and with having to run many sea-miles out of our road to keep from some English war-vessels that might have seized us, we were ten miles from the Sussex coast at dawn of next day. Presently there came along to us an English boat—her captain being none other than Dick Collins, who recently had taken me to France; he now thinking we had a cargo of brandy.

I transferred to him. I asked him no word of Miss Herbert, and was glad he spoke not her name; for, since the first streak of daybreak, a new, great dread had been growing in me—that I should hear, not that she was put to death, but that she was dead of prison fever. So, as I have told, I asked nothing; and shortly after seven of the clock Collins landed me at Hastings itself. For, so long as I was in England, whereby I was in touch with the authorities, I cared not if I were recognised and arrested forthwith. Indeed, I had some thought that I should help Miss Herbert most speedily (were I not too late) if I went at once to the house of some justice, surrendered to him, and told him why I was come.

I stood on Hastings water-front, in the morning sunlight, debating—chilled, despite the sunlight, from my long hours at sea; stiff,

weary, hungry too, with my head aching withal. And I was hard looked at by some fisher-folk near me until Collins spoke with them (bidding them mind their own affairs, I think); for, except that I wore a cloak, now fallen half open, and riding-boots, I was dressed as on St Germain terrace, in my rose-hued court clothes, with a hat of new French mode and a new French peruke.

I wondered where the jail lay, being much inclined to turn thither, that Miss Herbert, if alive, might swiftly know I was here. And then my best plan came to me. I would first seek her father—Morgan Herbert, of Stanningly Manor, the newspaper had said; and doubtless the Manor House was that one near the yellow field, whereof I had seen the roof.

I called Collins, learnt this was the house, then walked to the nearest inn and ordered a horse, while which was being readied for me I shaved and ate a mouthful. Then I rode out of the town, and presently past the green turf (coarse and short) of the cliff-top where Michael had died, and then along the road over which he had brought me most willingly—with my spirits sunk lower than they had yet been, for dread that I should find Mr Herbert mourning for his daughter.

I came—where the road was amid trees—to some gates that I knew must be those of the Manor. In drawing rein I bethought me that, were I to go on for a few paces, I should see the yellow field. I had no wish to see it, but I was fain to delay a minute from Mr Herbert's tidings; so I twitched my horse forward. I passed from the trees to the little plantings which separated the field from the road, and, in the hot sunshine, I looked at the field—no

longer yellow, save for specks of flowers peeping, for the grass was grown very high, billowing like a sea of smoky brown—and away in the midst of the grass, waist-high, *was some one that instantly I knew*, though I had seen her but once ere this, and her hood and gown were faint blue now instead of primrose.

When I had got from my horse and fastened him to a plantling, I stood with my back to the field wiping my eyes with my kerchief before doing aught else. For, with the words of thankfulness, all mingled and confused, that had rushed from my mouth—to see *her* well, and free, with no sign of danger about her—there had run, pretty fast, tears from my eyes, with my throat very strange and aching. And when I was come to foot the thought that, with her thus safe, I was like to see St Germain again and greet my mother did nothing to stay my tears. I had not expected to see St Germain.

I wiped and pressed at my eyes; blew my nose. I took off my cloak and laid it on the saddle; then wiped my eyes again, hard. Then I turned to the field and stepped between the plantlings into the billowing of brown-feathered grass, and so toward her, drawing off my hat.

She had been searching for certain grasses and flowers. When she saw me she stood holding a thick wisp of them, mostly grasses, against her blue gown, her darker blue eyes intent with me, but not knowing me for the cropped-pated, muddled wretch who had fought with her that day—not knowing me, not suspecting, even when I was two yards from her, I could tell.

I made my bow; and then, lest she should be a little afraid when I discovered myself, and because I was very penitent, I knelt down on one knee, looking no higher than her hand which held the grasses. 'Madame,' I said, 'I am sorrier than I can tell that Michael died. But I did not beat him or ride him hard, madame. He and I were friends before we were past the trees, and he was happy to canter, and wished I would not check him. There was no unhappiness for Michael, madame. And I think he could not have lived above a week or two—though I would not have you blame me less for that.'

She had given a little astonished cry, in no way loud, when I spoke Michael's name. And I saw her move a little backward from me through the grass. I saw her slim hand, holding her grasses, move and move, tightening and relaxing. But I paused not in telling her what I believed would comfort her for Michael—and moreover was true. And then, still gazing no higher than her hand, I said: 'I am very sorry I did you cruelty and brought you sufferings. You will believe I am sorry, will you not, madame, when you see I have come back to England, thinking you needed me?'

She spoke no word. I saw her hand with the grasses steal upward; and I looked up at her. She was crying. I saw her blue eyes aswim with tears, aswim pinkly, where they were not dark blue, from the force of her tears. And in this moment I noted what, in my base cowardice of the other day, in my emotions as I walked to her to-day, I had not noted till now—though in sooth 'twas very clear to be seen—I noted she was of extreme, sweet prettiness—of such prettiness that, methought, whether she cried or smiled there could be no change of her prettiness. I knew not that I should ever see her smile. She was far in the midst of tears now. Her eyes had met mine for the briefest space—then she turned away, pressing the stem parts of the grasses in her hand against her lips, and seeming to sob under her breath against the grass stems.

I could not tell whether 'twas more for Michael or more for her imprisonment that she cried; or whether, most of all, 'twas because she found herself with me, who had used her so cruelly ill. I knew not how to speak to stay her tears, but said again, 'You will believe I am sorry, will you not, madame—from my being here?'

With the grasses pressed to her mouth, with her sobs perceptible by the shake of her blue hood, edged with dark curls, by the shaking of her arm lifted with the grasses, she spoke nothing for seconds—I kneeling on, watching her, thinking, well-nigh to the exclusion of all other thoughts, that the picture of her thus was going to follow and reproach me through many years of my life—perchance to its end.

'Oh, madame!' I said pleadingly.

Whereat, after a moment, she turned and looked directly on my face, her eyes strangely wide in their unhappiness, very dark blue and pink-swum in the shining tide of her tears—with tears by threes and fours upon her cheeks. She moved the grasses, by a lip's breadth, spoke to me over them, in a trembling whisper. 'I would . . . you had not come!' she said. 'I would, *so verily*, you had not!'

'By your favour, madame,' I answered, 'I am very glad to be here—to tell you I am sorry, to clear you of blame—if they blame you still?'

'They never blamed me,' she whispered. 'Twas a lie—a snare . . . that I begged them lay. . . . And you are enticed into it!'

She turned her face a little, still holding the grasses to it, and looked at the road. And I, with that word 'snare' in my ears, could not forbear to cock my chin and gaze sharply over the brown—high around me as I knelt—toward the road; perceiving it empty save for my horse.

Then I looked at her, her eyes returning to me at the same instant. 'I am happy 'twas only a snare,' I said; and I knew that I was

very sincere in speaking thus. 'Nay,' I insisted, seeing in her eyes that she would not believe me—'nay, I am truly happy 'twas only that. Why, think you, madame, when I was on my road hither I was wretched with fear that—that you were dead. After that, what doth a snare matter when you stand here alive?' And verily (being a proper man to-day) I found that I cared scarce anything what the snare she had spoke of threatened to me, since she was here in full life in the sunshine. And how pretty she was!

She was speaking again, still over her swathe of grasses, still not above a whisper. 'I did believe you were too hard to come,' she said. 'I did believe you would care nothing—however great wrongs you deemed you had done! . . . While I did believe that I was fain to try to fetch you—fain to bring you to harm, even to your death . . . I cared not, I was so wicked! . . . I cared not, because of Michael . . . that I loved, and you killed.' She paused, breathing a sob, her eyes,

in their tear-swim, remaining on my face. 'But now you *are* come,' she whispered, 'now you are not so hard—oh, *I would you were not come!*' She breathed a sob again; and again. 'Oh, I would I did *never* think to beg my lord!'

'My lord?' I asked, wondering—of all wayward thoughts—if he were a lord she was betrothed to.

'My Lord Nottingham, my mother's cousin,' she whispered.

And then her hand with the grasses moved from her face, moved toward me in a gesture at my kneeling. 'Do not, pray,' she whispered. 'I had meant to bid you not . . . but I am all thoughtless, all distressed—you can tell.'

I stood up, conscious that I did it the more lightly from knowing that the lord was no betrothed of hers, but Nottingham, the lord chamberlain (a powerful man he, in this present England); conscious that I was wishing much that she was betrothed to no one.

(Continued on page 388.)

WAYFARERS OF THE HIGHLAND HIGHWAYS.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN, F.Z.S., Author of *Habits and Characters of British Wild Animals, Tracks and Tracking, &c.*

I.

TWO of the most interesting and refreshing characters with whom I have 'rubbed shoulders' during sixteen years of motoring in the hill country were a brace of Scottish road-menders. For over twenty years the two of them had lived and slept alongside their road-roller, all their worldly possessions being stowed in the gray caravan which the old engine towed faithfully over hill and dale. For her they lived; she was the pride of their lives, their only worldly care, for both were unmarried. Every nut she wore shone like a star, every brass plate was a mirror—particularly the one which bore her name, 'Heather Queen.' Why Heather Queen I do not know, because she had nothing to do with the heather; but there we are.

The interior of the caravan was almost depressingly spotless, and from the whiteness of the sheets and the lace curtains one would have thought that some Martha-like housewife tended the place with loving care. If Peter was not polishing and smoking, he was elbow-deep in the washtub, and Ewen was smoking and polishing. Never was either of them idle, except when they had company, which was not uncommon.

These two men and their engine had, of course, been tied to one county, and certainly there was no nook or corner of its highways

and byways which they did not know, no regular roadfarer with whom they were not on nodding terms. In those days the roads required less attention than they do to-day, and having repaired one section, the outfit would amble elsewhere according to instructions. It always seemed to me a very leisurely proceeding, and indeed it could not very well be otherwise, for though the Heather Queen shone as if she were new from the works, she was a back number, and her maximum speed was in the vicinity of 3 m.p.h. In so hilly a region she would probably not average over 2 m.p.h., which seems almost incredible to a different section of the road-faring fraternity. Still, it is purely a matter of educating oneself to given circumstances. We have learnt to think along a basis of 30 m.p.h., but Peter and Ewen had grown up to 2 m.p.h. That was the speed at which they thought, that was the bedrock of their reasonings. If, descending the mountains, they actually knocked off three miles in the hour they thought they were 'going some.' At four miles an hour they would have been bewildered. How can one take in the scenery when hurtling along at walking pace?—and assuredly that night Peter would feel it behooved him to touch up every nut with a spanner. For speed will kill even a road-roller.

All the same they were very sound men, and I used often to call in for a smoke and a chat

with them of an evening. In their company one was ever conscious of a sense of leisurely repose, for few people these days know the refreshing rest of company which thinks at 2 m.p.h. Neither of them ever hurried; it would have been as impossible to hurry them as it was for them to hurry the Heather Queen. Each and every day they went steadily ahead with their work, and it must be admitted that they achieved a long and a good day's work. For what better than the task of repairing life's highways and byways for others to tread? Back and forth, back and forth, squashing in the stones, squelching down the slush, then a bite at the wayside and more water for the Heather Queen, gaily hissing steam. Sometimes a way-farer would ask to leave a parcel in the caravan till he or she returned; sometimes Peter would close the accelerator and place a massive thumb on the crank of the safety valve while Ewen led by a refractory horse. Yes, there was more variety in their lives than in the lives of those whose sorry lot chains them to pen and desk. More incident, more anecdote, though not much breathless thrill.

II.

And the evenings? Sometimes they were parked in a farmyard, sometimes in a flower-starred offing at the roadside. When one strolled along Ewen would be sauntering up with the drinking water in his shining bucket, and Peter scouring the girdle. But soon the three of you were squatting on the steps with pipes well going, discussing at 2 m.p.h. whatever it might be. Sometimes politics; more often nature and one's fellow-men, if there is any difference. Here a throstle was singing, there in the distance was the rush of the river; then, as the sunset darkened, one would remark—'Are ye no' fishin' the nicht, Ewen?'

At this Ewen would rise. 'I was half-minded tae tak' a turn,' he would remark, going into the caravan, where his rod slept intact above his bunk. He was a keen fisherman, and all the fishing in that region was free. 'Wull ye be comin' along the noo?'

So the three of us would saunter down to the river, where Ewen would fish while Peter and I conversed in that sleepy way which the rush of running water seems always to induce. 'Why don't you fish, Peter?' I would ask him sometimes, at which he would shake his head gravely.—'The old caravan's no' too big, and one fisherman jist aboot fills it!'

So at times Peter would chaff Ewen about the fishing, and at times Ewen would chaff Peter about a certain widow lady, who, I gathered, lived somewhere in a farm of her own. 'Och well, Peter,' Ewen would say, 'nine weans are no' sae muckle to start off wi', when ye get a farm thrown in!'

I do not know whether there ever was a widow on Peter's horizon, but if so she had long since faded beyond it; but what I do know is that though Ewen was an angler he fell short in one supposedly essential respect, for no man lacked more the art of lying, save where Peter's widow was concerned. There Ewen's imagination could run riot to some tune, but nevertheless the two were closer than many brothers I have known.

But we must leave these peaceful sons of the oil-can and cotton-waste to the highways and byways over which no doubt they still ramble, though, looking back on the days when I knew them, I find them and their gray caravan and the old Heather Queen enshrined in very sunny memories.

III.

There are the Highland gipsies—those wandering wisps of humanity, as R. L. S. might have called them, whose heritage is the mountain way, whose brother nomad the hill storm. Of that wistful procession of nomads, for ever drifting over the mountain roads, washed to the outside edge, as it were, like so much of life's flotsam, very few are banshee gipsies of the old true stock. Among these the women are handsome—fine upright creatures, of clear dark skin, who support the colours of their race, and who do most of the work. The women it is who gather the willows and weave the baskets, though the men generally do the tinkering, from which they derive their Highland name of 'tinklers.' Some of them are very skilled, and one old fellow I knew could do anything from dressing salmon-flies to riveting and repairing porcelain breakages. But he belonged to the old school, and I fear that for the most part the male element of even the pukka gipsies has sadly deteriorated during recent years, as 'savage races' generally do when civilisation creeps in. For the gipsy of twenty years ago *was* little more than a savage. He lived in the main by predatory means, or rather he possessed the gift of living without any means at all. Now it is all too easy to pick up loose cash by dint of the bag-pipes, or by other means which open up with the advent of the holiday-maker, and generally speaking the Highland gipsy of to-day is a shiftless, idle lot, whose unkempt hair and unwashed face tell their own story of degeneracy.

Still, there are gipsies and gipsies, and in spite of the woeful story of poverty and privation which most of them can pitch, there are many who have more than a wee dram in the bottle for the morning.

Often when in the hills I have made friends with these people, who have their own little etiquettes and their own code of hospitality. From the tourist they are ever ready to beg, and tweeds that are too bright, an accent too

distinctly southern, stamp one at once as their natural prey. But come down from the deer forest in old storm-faded tweeds, a foot of peat-stained puttee wound round your boot tops to keep out the ling tips, your thumb-polished rifle bearing the mark of more than one impact with the rocks, then perhaps—but no, it is not that at all! Garbed or ungarbed, the gipsies would weigh you up, for how does one lover of the great outdoors instinctively recognise another? How do we know at a glance that here is one who is a kindred spirit—one who, like ourselves, knows the lash of the storm, and loves the great loneliness of the hill road? How do we know as our eyes meet that here is one in whose veins the gipsy blood runs, whose heart is for the wild sports which are alone with God and the infinite, and who would not turn from the roadside for all the cut-and-dried methods of the sports of to-day? Champagne for lunch, a collapsible seat, a peg bearing your number, and a scythe-swept pathway leading up to it. A dry sheltered seat, a man to work the dogs, and a host of flying targets drilled to rocket as they should. On the other side—with a deep gulf between the two—the long tramp through the heather, the storms, the cutting winds, the flooded torrents, and in the end, if you are lucky, a wee, uncoloured dram in a peat-roofed bothy away back in the glens.

IV.

But enough of that. The wild sport of the hills, as Charles St John knew it, is not within the reach of everyone, and we have to take what we can get. But the gipsies know at a glance the kindred spirit who saunters uninvited to their big camp fire, seats himself on a log with a gratefully weary sigh, and forthwith produces his tin tobacco-box (always preferable to a pouch, which powders the tobacco when working hard all day).

As a rule the visitor does not have long to wait. The lid of a saucepan is raised, and the air becomes fragrant with the scent of rich venison stew, which bears the magic of such herbs as we know not in everyday life. Or perhaps hare broth, the broth of the white mountain hare, which in this land is thought to be fit only for making broth. Some broth too, because the whole hare, freshly killed, goes into it—barring fluff and clockwork. Or perhaps boiled salmon, which falls apart in pale pink flakes on your tin plate. There are no trimmings, no etceteras. You pull out your skeandhu, if you have one, if not, your corkscrew, and eat as your fathers ate. You know that the salmon was a kelt, which you would not touch at home, and which should have been returned to the water, even had it been caught in the first place by legal methods, which it was not.

There is no hint of payment for such a

meal, but if there is game in your bag you take out a plump blackcock or a brace of grouse, as the case may be, and drop it indifferently by the fire as you rise to go. You make no comment, you expect no thanks, and you get none.

The gipsies do not talk much to strangers, but there are times in one's life when one may hear these people yarning—when their tongues are freed over the smouldering peats in some place where one ought never to have gone. There still are such places back in the corries, where the mother bosom of the hill secretly yields her colostrum, and where nothing is asked of the sportsman save that he live up to the morals he would set, and wipe out, on leaving, all memory of that place where he was an uninvited guest.

Strange conversations are those, drifting in fragments as one lies in one's heather bed, cut off here by a whisper, there by a sentence muttered savagely in Gaelic—stories which bear the fury of the upland blizzard, the wildness of the wind where the jackpine grows low and twisted; tales of forefathers who perished by the ice, who were broken at the penitentiaries, or who lived hale and hearty for incredible years. Tales of love sometimes, into which hatred may have entered, of mean and despicable vengeance, struck snake-like in the dead of night, and belonging to another era; or again, stories which bear the reflected sunlight of the river, and the music of running waters. For our gipsy is nothing if not versatile as the elements which mould his ways, his tongue one moment bearing the venom of the Fork, and the next soft with the love of children, with the poetry of the birch groves when the sunbeams caress them. But there, for what little I know of these children of the storms I find their story still a closed book to me, so we must leave them as we found them—passing travellers on the height of land.

V.

Once I became friendly with a Highland character of a type doomed to extinction, though not so far gone as most people think. I had seen this laddie often, and one day the opportunity occurred of giving him a 'lift.' Scion of a long line who had taken free bounty of hoof and fur and feather, Ronald McQ. was a poacher by birth and by choice. Every keeper and stalker in the glens knew him as such, and by a judicious mingling of giving with one hand while he took with the other, Ronald kept on good terms with everyone. For example, if eagle or fox was proving particularly destructive, and all the keeper's devices had failed to bring it to book, he had merely to pass the word to Ronald, and assuredly the varmint was doomed. A few days later Ronald would saunter up to the keeper's cottage, his game-bag

over his shoulder. With a nod, he would empty the bag over the wall, then with another nod he would go his way. He had perhaps given several days to attaining his object, but he knew that his time was well spent, and, if humanly possible by a knowledge of woodcraft and hillcraft, he would succeed in the end. He had, indeed, been offered several excellent posts, but regular hours and regular pay were not for him.

Again, one day the stalker, meeting Ronald, would remark pointedly—'Some one was out on the hill last night, Ronald, and lifted a stag from the twa' marches.'

'That so?' Ronald would answer airily.

'And I'll tell you what, Ronald,' the keeper would proceed; 'I'm wanting a bag of capercaillie to send away to London on Wednesday night, and the birds seem to have left our hill. Anyway, I can't get them.'

'That so?' Ronald would iterate, and sure enough before the date intimated, he would appear at the keeper's cottage with his bulging game-bag over his shoulder.

So in reciprocation lies the art of success, but Ronald never talked much to me save on natural history subjects. I suppose he regarded me as a Sassenach and a foreigner, but I obtained much useful information from him. One day he was accompanying me in the car to a neighbouring river, where he was to initiate me into some of the secrets of salmon lore, and on the way he told me of some of his narrow escapes. On one occasion, returning from a poaching affray at night time, he misjudged the crossing where he had to ford the burn, with the result that he was whirled off his feet and carried two hundred yards on the flood waters.

He escaped death by hanging to the trunk of a dead tree overhanging the stream, almost at the brink of a fifty-foot fall. Ronald pointed out the exact spots where all this happened, and though the icy immersion was nothing to him since he was accustomed to standing half the night up to the shoulders in the *sna' bru'* when the salmon were running, it must have taken the strength of a Hercules to drag himself out at the point he indicated. Indeed, he was as fine a sample of manhood as one would meet anywhere.

On another occasion Ronald wounded a roebuck, and thinking it was about to escape, he rather rashly closed with it. There followed what must have been a pretty deadly struggle, for the old buck was far from being dead, and by accident or design it planted one of its dagger horns through Ronald's right calf, so that he could not free himself. The scar of the wound and lacerations marked his leg on both sides.

But Ronald, who had lived by manly ways, went eventually by a road more open than he had chosen to follow in the past, and to-day his name is engraved at the base of a monument in a lonely Highland glen—a kilty, whose boyish face, open as the day, is raised towards the skies, instead of being downcast in sorrow. The winds and the rains and the sleets and the snows lash that face, yet it smiles on, its cheerful greeting to others who tread the hill road, an emblem which is unmindful of what lies behind, and eagerly heedless of the mysteries ahead. And the boys of the village say, half chaffingly, half in earnest, that when at the end another clay-bedaubed kilty peered into Ronald's face, all Ronald had to say was—'Haud yon net up, laddie!' Then he crossed the March.

SCENES FROM MOROCCO—FEZ.

PART II.

III.

THE following day was a Saturday, and we had received an invitation from the Grand Rabbi to the Sabbath midday meal. Even at the risk of appearing too much interested in food, I cannot omit a short description of this ceremony. The Jewish rule of doing no work on the Sabbath day is still kept in Morocco with remarkable strictness. The meals for that day have, therefore, to be cooked on Friday. The courses are then placed together, one on top of the other, in an immense pot. After this the lid is put on, and hot embers are heaped up all round. Just before twelve o'clock on Saturday the ashes are cleared away by Mohammedan servants, who then open the pot and remove the food, course by course. The meal, which is called *aadafina*, is then served.

Our host, who has recently died, was a most pleasant old man. A painter would have delighted to use him as a model for a picture of Abraham or any other of the Biblical patriarchs. He received us with great courtesy, and introduced us to the various members of his numerous family. In Morocco, Jewish married women are not allowed to show their hair, and they hide it partly with a silk scarf, and, in front, with a kind of horsehair wig plastered down close to the head. One result is that they tend to look much alike, and I could not help recalling an early impression of Dan Leno as the 'Widow Twankey.'

The interiors of Jewish houses are semi-westernised, and the effect is far from pleasing. Their occupants display too great a liking for tawdry decorations, mostly made in Birmingham. The quaintest contrivance I ever came across

was a decanter, which, on being tipped up, played alternately 'The Bluebells of Scotland' and 'Home Sweet Home.'

We were first received in a room in which the most notable article of furniture was an enormous four-poster bed. From the top of the posts curved rods rose and supported a large golden crown. On the walls were somewhat crude oleographs of his majesty King George V., M. Clemenceau, Mr Wilson, and Maréchal Foch.

We were served with remarkably potent liqueurs distilled from dried raisins, and after two glasses each, we proceeded to the dining-room. When we had taken our places at a long table, the Grand Rabbi and his son sang grace. This rite has to be performed with the head covered. The son was wearing European clothes, and consequently wore no skull-cap, so his right-hand neighbour placed a napkin on his head. After grace our host took a flat loaf of native bread, and broke it into small pieces. These he dipped in salt, and threw one to each guest. The meal then began, and, contrary to our expectations, proved to be excellent. The various dishes, after being together in the same pot for nearly twenty-four hours, were similar in colour, but this had in no way impaired their flavour. The principal courses were of mutton, and we were relieved to find that there were not more than eight altogether. We drank a strong red wine, made locally by the Jewish community, and two kinds of liqueurs, served in glasses which we found too big for a beverage containing so high a percentage of alcohol. Indeed, we decided it was not only for business that the native Jews had good heads.

After dinner we returned to the room in which we had originally assembled, and were regaled with sweet cakes and more liqueurs, to the accompaniment of Moorish music played on a cottage piano of uncertain tone. At about three o'clock we bade farewell to our host and his family, and then spent the rest of the afternoon indulging in the luxury of a long siesta.

IV.

One street in Old Fez is comparatively straight, and wide enough for two horses to be ridden side by side. The remainder are narrow, tortuous, dark and infinitely fascinating. To provide as much shade as possible the houses are built high, and in many instances the first floor crosses the street. In some cases tunnels more than fifty yards long are thus formed.

The most interesting quarter is that in which are all the native shops. Each shop has a frontage of some five feet. The floor is raised about two feet from the ground, and goes back roughly six feet from the street. The height of the walls is rarely more than seven feet. The whole is closed in by solid wooden shutters, usually secured by a vast padlock. In some instances this padlock is of the old native type

which is said, though I know not with what degree of truth, to have given the idea for the Yale lock.

There are no fixed hours in a native shop in Morocco, no closing time at 8 P.M., no compulsory half-holiday. When the owner thinks it would be pleasant to sell some of his goods, he takes down the shutters, and squats in the middle of the shop, surrounded by his wares. When he feels that a little tea or some other distraction would add to his contentment, he closes up again and goes off in search of his modest requirements. This is surely a most rational method of doing business. The Moor, with a keen sense of the fitness of things, refuses to become a slave to routine. He is like a child playing at shops, and he appears thoroughly to enjoy the pastime.

Merchants selling the same goods are all in the same street. The great advantage for the purchaser is that, if not pleased with one man's goods, he has but to go next door. The shoe street at about four o'clock in the afternoon is filled with a seething mass of shrieking humanity.

The leather shops have always proved an irresistible attraction to me, and just opposite one of the doors of the great Karaouine Mosque is one belonging to an old and venerable man with a gray beard. He is devoted to the sport of bargaining with his customers. Ever since I first visited his shop a strict routine has always been followed with the exactitude of a long practised ritual. First, I shake hands and go through the customary greetings. Then I say that this time I have merely come to see how he is, and really do not want any leatherwork. Then he invites me into his shop, and I squat down beside him. A few book-covers are produced, beautifully worked with conventional Moorish patterns, and I begin to waver in my decision to purchase nothing. However, I try to appear unconcerned, till presently, with gleaming eyes and a finger to his lips, the old man touches me on the arm, with the air of letting me into a great secret. To the accompaniment of a peculiar shrill intake of his breath he finally produces some treasure hitherto hidden away in the back of his shop. Invariably I fall, and I select two or three book-covers. Then begins the bargaining, and this is what he has really been looking forward to all the time. He heaves a few sighs and settles down comfortably in his place. Adjusting his spectacles, of which he is vastly proud, he makes rapid calculations on a small piece of paper with the stump of a pencil. After a while he proposes forty douros as a fair price for the things of my choice. A douro is equal to five francs, and of course the sum is much too big.

'No,' I say, 'that is really ridiculous; you must remember I am an old friend, not a tourist. I'll offer you fifteen douros.'

'Impossible,' says he; 'these are the finest I have in my whole shop. Now, here are some I could sell you at fifteen douros, but I know they are not of the good workmanship you always choose. But, as a special mark of friendship, I'll say thirty-five douros.'

'I never bargain,' I reply; 'I am prepared to pay fifteen, possibly sixteen douros, but not a guirch more.'

Then he throws up his hands with a cry of despair, and starts muttering and making tremendous calculations.

'Thirty-two and a half,' he says, looking at me out of the corner of his eye.

And so it goes on till finally he puts all his things away at the back of his shop, exclaiming that it is impossible for him to sell anything at the price I offer. He would like to do so; he looks on me as a friend, but these particular book-covers cost him thirty-two douros; he is a respectable man with a household¹ to support, and he cannot start selling at a loss at his time of life. After this we shake hands again and I go away contented, knowing that everything is going on capitally. About an hour later I chance to stroll by once more, and as I pass his shop he whispers to me, 'Twenty-five douros'; but I shake my head and continue on my way. After the correct interval I again walk along his street. This time he has the things I selected all wrapped up in newspaper and tied with an amazing tangle of string. 'Twenty douros,' he says, with tears in his voice. Now I agree to the price, and his face becomes wreathed in smiles. I had known all along that he would come down to twenty douros, and he had been equally certain that I would come up to that sum. We are both perfectly well aware that that is the fair market-price, so the game may be said to have resulted in a draw. It would, of course, have been far simpler to have started at the final figure, but that would not have been nearly so amusing.

In various parts of the city it is possible to see the manufacture of articles of clothing, ceremonial curtains, and magnificent brocades. All are, of course, made on hand-loom of primitive design. These looms are just such as existed in Biblical days. They seem somewhat crazy affairs, composed of a rough wooden framework and a confusing tangle of strings. The whole is distinctly reminiscent of the comic drawings of Mr Heath Robinson. In some instances it takes more than a month to prepare the loom, but the brocades which are made on them are of faultless workmanship and remarkable beauty. In Morocco craftsmen still take a pride in their art.

It is interesting to pass through a street where dyes are being made. These are all pro-

duced from vegetable ingredients, and the colours never lose their tone. A Moorish carpet made from wool tinted with native dyes can be washed in the sea without causing the colours to run; but the European substitute never passes this test. The tailors' street provides entertaining sights. In it men are to be seen all day busily embroidering the principal garment of Arab attire, which much resembles a cassock. Each man is assisted by a small boy apparently about four years old, and rarely more than three feet in height. This infant usually stands just outside the shop, holding a looped thread in each hand. These threads he continuously passes from hand to hand with an air of tremendous solemnity.

Alone of all streets, that of the butchers is unpleasing. There the proprietors sit in their shops, attempting, mechanically but ineffectually, to drive away the flies from the meat which is displayed for sale. Generally this is of the kind optimistically described as edible offal.

It would be possible to go on almost indefinitely describing the multifarious things of interest to be found in this wonderful city of Fez. Gorgeous trappings for Arab steeds, leather cushions of many kinds, embroidered hangings of finest work, copper kettles, and trays of brass, Moorish lanterns in quaint designs, all these and many others are to be found by those who seek. However, if I were to give details of each and every attraction, there would be no end to my tale. But there is one street of which I cannot omit a short description, and that is in the potters' quarter.

For many centuries Fez has been famous for its pottery. This is somewhat crude in colour and design, but the general effect is decidedly pleasing. The article most usually made is a large round plate, and the colours most commonly employed are blues and greens. The shops, side by side, all filled with pottery, form a very picturesque sight. At one point just off the street is a kind of courtyard in which are many jars of various shapes and strange designs. All are made of unglazed porous earthenware, and they are uncoloured, though some are decorated with curious patterns in tar applied with the potter's thumb. This retired spot is almost always deserted. The owners of the diminutive shops appear to think it is not worth while to sit there for more than an hour or so each day. I have a particular affection for this quiet secluded corner. The pots and jars have an almost human air about them, and they bring to mind the lines from Fitzgerald's translation of the verses of Omar Khayyam:

Shapes of all sorts and sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall;

And some loquacious vessels were; and some
Listen'd perhaps, but never talk'd at all.

THE END.

¹ The Moors always refer to their wives impersonally as the 'household.'



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

REVERSION TO TYPE

By Brigadier-General C. DALRYMPLE BRUCE.

PART I.

I.

IT was in London that I first made 'Sandy' Ling's acquaintance, for so he was known to his intimates. His proper name was San Ti-Ling. He was, of course, a Chinaman.

At the time we met he occupied the pleasant and far from arduous post of Assistant Secretary at the Chinese Legation in Portland Place. 'Sandy' and his bosom friend and inseparable companion 'Polly Kerr' were well known and equally popular in London society. 'Polly'—Poli-Ka to give him his proper name—was generally considered to be 'Sandy's' twin-brother, possibly because to Englishmen all Chinese look alike, as do we to them on first acquaintance. Nor is this to be wondered at—to the majority of people all foxhounds in a pack appear to be brothers and sisters. 'Sandy' and 'Polly' were no relations.

Why the two young secretaries were so much run after by certain ultra-smart society ladies, who should have known better, is hard to say. The reason may have lain simply in the present-day craze for any kind of novelty. Or was it still the age-long lure of sex? Both lads were in their way most attractive, had the charming manners of all well-bred Chinese, besides possessing to the full that virile air of the dominating male common to many Oriental races. It was also possible that the cause of their popularity with the fair sex lay, to some extent, in the fact that both 'Sandy' and 'Polly' sought their amusement for choice among their male friends. But to this rule, as to most, there was an exception.

For the whole of one brief season, that is, if the hectic round of social pleasures occurring between the 'Varsity boat race and Cowes week may still be called a season, the 'twins' might have been seen everywhere in close attendance upon Lady 'Bunty' Knightsbridge, that high-spirited, somewhat riotously-inclined young society representative, herself the daughter of a well-known British diplomat.

There were few things Lady Bunty in her brief career had not managed to do. Still fewer that she was not at a moment's notice prepared

to do if challenged. This irrepressible offspring of British diplomacy never failed, for example, to turn up on a gala-night at the National Sporting Club. When 'Dinky' Lewis was taking on 'the Frenchie,' backed, moreover, to knock out that gallant Continental at all costs in ten rounds, Lady Bunty was, of course, there.

'Such a cheery little fight, my dear. I *do* like blood,' she remarked to one of her intimates after it was over, and the Frenchie's broken thumb and minor facial dilapidations had been put right. When the ever-courteous and exceedingly efficient representatives of Scotland Yard raided a notorious gambling hell in Soho Street one summer night, it was commonly reported that only one of the players present escaped; further, that that one was a very well-known society lady, who, flinging her cloak over the head of the inspector in charge of the raiding party, dived past him on the back staircase, and escaped just as the electric lights were turned out. At the various night-clubs where Society with a big 'S' danced and drank as late as post-war regulations permitted, as well as on every race-course within a motor-run of London, who so well known among society stars as Lady Bunty Knightsbridge, the much-photographed, much-puffed heroine of many a good story? And she was indeed worth photographing.

Above the ordinary height, and exquisitely proportioned, with her brown luxuriant hair always beautifully coiffured, her free lithe movements, her delicate skin and lovely colouring, her go-to-the-devil well-bred air, how could such a type of British aristocracy not be run after? 'Polly' and 'Sandy' were far from the only two who had fallen under the spell, and it was quite plain that Lady Bunty liked the handsome pair.

Returning from one escapade or another, the folding seats of the girl's big limousine—or, to be correct, her doting father's—were as often as not occupied either by 'Sandy' or by 'Polly,' not infrequently by both, for the object of their joint admiration was as reckless as she was incorrigible.

'Oh! there's safety in numbers,' she was wont to retort with her gay laugh when some

old friend offered a word of warning. Lady Bunty forgot, perhaps, that it takes two to make a quarrel—may take three—especially where Orientals and the female sex are concerned.

'Polly' and 'Sandy' were no longer boys, youthful as their appearance and hairless faces might lead anyone to think. Two years at Oxford had entirely obliterated—to outward seeming at least—the Oriental in the two secretaries. The process had already been begun at the English University at Hong-kong. It is true, at that excellent half-way house, where Oriental and Occidental educational methods have been judiciously combined, the outlook of the collegers had been carefully safeguarded. But at Oxford? Well, as the saying goes, they hadn't missed much.

Upon first meeting them, either 'Sandy' or 'Polly' might have been taken for the finished product of an English public-school or university education. Entirely self-contained, adaptable as all educated Chinese are to any environment, the pair were as perfect specimens of the Europeanised Oriental as England can produce. And to her possible eventual undoing she has produced a good many. But we know the leopard cannot change his spots.

II.

It was a hot summer night in London towards the end of July. A single loafer, who had carefully hidden himself in the Green Park overnight, was already waking as the dawn began to break, and a cooling westerly breeze to sweep gently down from the top of Constitution Hill. The three inseparables, as her intimates were already beginning to call them, were seated, 'cooling off,' as Lady Bunty described it in her expressive vernacular, in her own den in her father's house in Arlington Street. She herself was reclining almost at full length on a low settee piled with black silk cushions. Against this sombre background the yellow of her low-cut almost armless frock stood out a brilliant splash of colour. As the girl lay fanning herself slowly every curve and line of the lithe figure showed up. An electric lamp, heavily shaded in orange silk, stood on a small black wood table, throwing a soft half-light over the low, narrow room. 'Polly,' as cool and calm as usual, had fallen gracefully into a big arm-chair, covered with Persian saddle-bags; while 'Sandy' had taken up a position at the far end of the room, almost in semi-darkness.

The three had been dancing most of the night as usual, a night of bitter hell to 'Sandy,' who with murder in his heart had watched Lady Bunty in 'Polly's' arms, sailing away gracefully and without effort through the crowd of dancers at the Ritz.

How dared she neglect him? Black thoughts of hatred and murder boiled in 'Sandy's' brain,

though the other side of him, the Oriental, sat outwardly passive and self-contained as ever.

Somehow to all three the evening had not been the usual success. Lady Bunty for once was out of gear; so she expressed it in her somewhat involved vernacular. What was the cause? The girl, had she been asked, could hardly have answered. She looked across at 'Polly's' smiling face as he sat sucking a cooling drink through a long straw. Inscrutable as always, the secretary's eyes met hers frankly. 'Sandy' still sat silent. The only sign of the storm raging within him was the quick puffs of a cigarette through his flat nostrils.

'What's up, Lady Bunty?' 'Polly' asked, taking the straw from his mouth.—'Got a cigarette, "Sandy"?''

'Nothing's up, "Polly"; why should there be?' the girl answered. She let her long sinuous body sink lazily farther back on the black cushions, putting both arms behind her head. 'Sandy' tossed his friend a cigarette, which 'Polly' deftly caught and lit. The eyes of both men were concentrated on the beautiful figure on the settee. 'Sandy's' mask of a face grew even colder in expression. The light in 'Polly's' eyes there could be no mistaking.

Lady Bunty—female intuition at work—looked quickly from one to the other.

The girl knew she had lied in answering 'Polly's' question. Felt deep down in her heart that there *was* 'something up.' Her colour deepened. A crimson flush spread over neck and bosom. She turned away as she lay on the settee, though luckily her face was almost invisible in the deep shadow.

For a few moments Lady Bunty felt herself poised on the edge of an abyss. She closed her eyes and lay quite still. Then her will rallied. It must *not* be possible. She could not be in love with 'Polly'? With a Chinaman? No; such things were not done, not even thought of, in her class, among her kind. But as Lady Bunty let her eyes rest once more on 'Polly' the girl felt—they could be. They almost had been! Of course it was madness, sheer madness, and as that thought surged uppermost in her brain the girl broke into a peal of mirthless laughter. Swinging herself off the settee, Lady Bunty walked rather unsteadily to the window. With an abrupt movement she swept aside the heavy curtains.

'Got the pip, "Sandy"? Buck up!'

There was something challenging in the sound of her voice, and Lady Bunty knew it. But the girl knew also that she must at any cost create a diversion from the whirl of thoughts that thronged her brain. 'Sandy' looked up. For a moment it seemed as if his invariable composure was about to forsake him.

'No, there's nothing wrong, thank you, Lady Bunty,' he said, after a distinct pause. The voice was almost too quiet and restrained. The

girl in the yellow frock turned to face 'Sandy.' She stood, one upraised arm holding the curtain, her back to the coming dawn.

'There's something up with "Polly," though,' Lady Bunty went on. 'Look at him! Why, he's fallen asleep, or has he fainted?' Her voice rose rapidly. The girl took three or four quick steps to where 'Polly' lay, seemingly lifeless, in the armchair. 'Sandy' stood up abruptly, but did not move. What Lady Bunty had said was only too true. 'Polly's' head had fallen back as he sat, the cigarette still clasped between his fingers. The slim figure looked limp and helpless. His dress shirt had slightly crumpled as he collapsed.

Something altogether unusual in the young secretary's face struck the girl as she bent over him and took hold of one arm. She noticed an extraordinary change. The deadly pallor of the yellow skin in the half-light frightened her. From 'Polly's' half-open lips came some muttered words. Lady Bunty thought she heard 'Opium! Opium!' As she passed one arm round 'Polly's' shoulders 'Sandy' sprang like a wild-cat across the room. The girl felt herself jerked to her feet, felt both wrists seized as in a grip of steel, felt 'Sandy's' hot breath on her cheek. Saw his distorted features almost touching her face, and saw, for the first time, the real Oriental convulsed with passion, capable of anything.

'D'you think I haven't seen it all along?' The words came hissing from the clenched lips. 'D'you think I don't know you love him? But he sha'n't have you; I'll kill him first.' 'Sandy's' grip tightened like a vice. Any other woman would have shrieked with the pain. Lady Bunty was frightened for, perhaps, the first time

in her life, but she was brave enough. Her kind are not easily upset. For what seemed to her an age the two faced one another—the tall yellow figure held in a vice by the claw-like well-manicured hands. Then, as always hitherto in the age-long struggle between the two, West dominated East. 'Sandy's' eyes lowered. His grip relaxed.

'Let me go at once, you Chinaman! How dare you?' Lady Bunty spoke very quietly; she hardly recognised her own voice, such was the volcano raging within her. The lash of the words caught 'Sandy' like a whip across the face. He let go suddenly of the girl's hands, reeling slightly backwards.

'You fool,' Lady Bunty went on, speaking in the same restrained, hard tone. 'Don't you know I have only to ring the bell, and you would be thrown out like a dog? After all, you are no better.' She glanced down, nodding her head at 'Polly's' figure. 'So *this* is your work, is it? Now go before I do ring!' With an unconscious gesture the girl pointed to the door. 'Sandy' did not answer. After looking once at the speaker, he walked straight to the door and opened it. Then he turned and spoke. Lady Bunty instinctively faced him. She saw a thin wiry figure holding the half-opened door, a civilised man in evening clothes he looked, until 'Sandy's' eyes met hers. Then the truth revealed itself. She was gazing into the face of a wild animal balked of its prey, relentless, pitiless, cruelty in every line.

'Wait!' The single word shot from between the compressed lips like the fangs of a cobra.

'Sandy' went out, closing the door very quietly behind him.

(Continued on page 410.)

A JUNE NIGHT ON TWEED.

By 'PISCATOR.'

IT is a June evening. All day the sun has shone in a blue sky, and in the clear, fine water of Tweed, at low summer level, no trout has moved. We have lain happily for long hours upon the bank, basking and drinking in the beauty of hill, wood, sky, and stream, watching the birds—the cheery little water ouzels, the graceful wagtails, the jolly, fussy sand-pipers, the sand-martins—so industriously feeding their young, and catching a glimpse of that most gorgeous living jewel, the kingfisher, as he darts round a bend of the river. The sight of him always gives a curious thrill of pleasure. He is the veritable Blue Bird.

Now, the frugal dinner over, we sit in the garden with pipes and coffee, looking over the hedge, with the line of crimson poppies against the green, away down the peaceful valley, and talking about the fishing in April, when Scrape

stood white with snow, and the bitter frost of morning made gloves and double sweaters necessities rather than luxuries; when Tweed ran big, strong, and very cold, and the trout showed little, and when even the big ones condescended to a sunk fly. And we recalled the rare gleams of sunshine in the middle of the day, bringing up the fine hatch of March Browns; then the quick change to dry fly, and the graceful arch of the big one as he took the lure and made the reel screech in his mad run down the pool, to show himself in all his glory in a succession of wild leaps. Yes, April fishing was good, if rigorous.

But now the sun has sunk behind the western woods—nine o'clock has come; we don our waders, take up our rods, and, with a final slap at our pockets to see that nothing has been forgotten, we stroll down to the darkling river.

Will there be a rise to-night, and where? I choose the long pool under the lime trees, a favourite haunt of one who loved Tweed even as we do, but who, alas! fishes it no more. As I wander through the wood, I see only a few small fry jumping at the tail of the pool. The water is still clear as crystal, every stone showing in the shallows. No use to fish yet awhile. So I seat myself in the lush grass by the great clump of yellow marigolds and listen to the sand-piper's call, 'chee wee-wee,' as he flies from the gravelly bank, and watch the play of blues and greens on the water where the run breaks into the pool. And now the western sky reddens, the red deepens and spreads in long horizontal bars across the sky. The river, too, becomes encarmined, and all is a riot of glorious crimson. But only the small fry break the surface. The glory fades and dies, the pool becomes dark and mysterious, and the 'plop, plop' of rising trout worthy of the name begins. The line shoots out, sending the fly under the willow at the end of the run. There is a gleam in the dusky water, and a splash. The line tightens, and, after a moment's pause, the reel screeches, to tell that this indeed is

one of the proper sort—no mere half-pounder—and I dimly see him leap far down the pool. Gradually his rushes become less fierce, and there is time to notice that other goodly trout are jumping. If I am to make more of the rise he must be brought to the net without delay. So all the pressure that the tiny black spider will warrant is put upon him, and at last he shows his big side and is netted, a good pound trout in the pink of condition. And so to work again in the pool, ever darkening and becoming more mysterious, till a pale light shows through the trees, and a silver pattern appears on the water, and the moon has risen above the shoulder of Scrape. The rise is over. Eleven o'clock—'the hour after sunset' is nigh over—so, reeling in the line, I again plunge into the wood, dappled now with pale lights, and emerge into the glory of the full moon riding high above the hills. And so, up the field, through the little plantation, with the bloom of the rhododendrons and the broom showing a queer, pale, unearthly colour, through the little gate, through the garden exhaling some strange subtle scent, to the lamp-lit parlour, and—to bed.

THE YELLOW FIELD.

PART IV.

v.

'WHY are you distressed?' I asked. 'Save for Michael, who rests untroubled, what need for distress?' And, knowing that she was not frightened of me, I took two easy steps and so stood near her—she keeping her eyes on my face, with no afraidness in them, as I had expected, but with tears brimming and overflowing.

'I did beg my lord to get you by some means,' she whispered, very intent, I could perceive, to tell me of the snare. 'My lord vowed there were no means—but I did beg him. . . . My lord declared your name was found out . . . and that he would be pleased enough to—to lay you by the heels (so he spake), for government reasons, because you were begun to be mischievous—so my lord did say of you.'

I smiled, but could win no trace of smile from her wet eyes. She looked down at the grasses in her hand; with her free hand she touched a flower or two amid them; then she turned the crests of some of the grasses betwixt her fingers. And, with those little sobs of hers under her breath, she whispered on: 'Yet there were no means to get you, my lord said . . . though he was truly fain to, because you did *dare* (so he spake) to set hands on me, and because you might have endangered me with the government, from it being thought that my

striving with you was a pretence, and I helped you. . . . My lord would have guarded me, were I endangered, but he did believe you would not stir from France to me were I put to prison and to trial . . . since men have little honour in these days—my lord did warrant.'

I saw her move her shoulders in a tiny, miserable way; I could see her wet, dark eyelashes shivering fast from tears. And though I was most curious to know what she would tell me next, yet, since she was so pained, I made quick, urgent protest that enough was told, and that rather should she speak of whether she could give me some pardon.

But she whispered, of her tale, 'I shall tell you! I shall tell you!' And, keeping her face toward the grasses, she whispered it with persistence, steadily save for her breathed sobs. 'My lord vowed you would not stir; and I did believe him. . . . And then my lord looked on a newspaper that was beside him ('twas at his house in London); and he cried of a sudden 'twould be easy enough to prove you, by having a false lie printed in a newspaper, which my lord could have done with no trouble. . . . But 'twas not worth setting the snare, my lord said, for 'twould never take you, who would value yourself above me. . . . And I did believe; yet I did most instantly entreat . . . and beg my lord to lay the snare—because I had loved Michael . . . and

because, against all belief, you might come, and so pay hard for Michael. . . . But my lord said no, 'twas not nice for his honour to do it—though you deserved no better. But anon my lord spake of it, and of my begging, to some other lords—they of the Queen's Council; and they were all for it . . . because some thought you mischievous, and some were angered that you killed Michael. . . . And 'twas done, and a newspaper sent to you. . . . *And you are come!*'

Her face went lower; her fingers bent some of the grasses, breaking them. 'I would liefer be in prison . . . in a blackest prison,' she whispered, 'than I had set my lords to cheat you hither.'

My own voice was not much above a whisper when I answered her; for her whispering did somehow lead me to speak so. 'You did not set them,' I said. 'Twas my lord's device, and 'twas all done by him and the others . . . Nay, what counted your begging?' I said, on her whispering again of that. 'Those lords that thought me mischievous were fain to catch me for their own ends; they would have followed the plan when 'twas shown them, whether you had begged or no.'

She shook her head, keeping it very bowed, so that I could discern scarce anything of her face.

'Besides,' I whispered lightly, 'what harm is done? I stand here safe, with none threatening me—' I glanced at the road, seeing it void of any man, then looked again at her. 'And I am glad indeed to be here.'

From the veering of my voice she had known of my glance to the road. She lifted her head an inch and looked thither—lifted one of her hands to press it back-handed to her tears, then kept the hand at her brow, shading her eyes. 'You do *know* that you . . . are in death danger . . . here in England,' she whispered.

'Twas as though she reproached me for my lightness; but, to hearten her, I spoke lightly again. 'Nay, nay, nay,' I said; 'there is nought worth calling danger to-day. I shall go no farther into England than this—and there is no whit of danger to be seen here.'

I glanced anew at the road; glanced carefully all round me, being far less confident than my words sounded (since potent fingers had set the snare, and I had flaunted my French hat in Hastings), but feeling very steady of courage.

Then my eyes returned to her. Her face was quite hid—by her hood and by the hand shading her eyes. The hand was trembling against her hood-edge, and its little, slim back, which was not much sun-browned, was all streaked with the wet of tears she had pressed it to. I knew the tears were as much for my having been brought to England, as for memory of Michael, and verily was I hard put to at this instant not to whip out my own hand and

take that poor little streaked hand and hold it gently tight—this being apart from all thoughts of how pretty she was.

And then, her hand still up, she whispered, 'Where—when—came you to shore?'

'At Hastings, about seven to-day,' I answered.

'No man spoke closely to you—or seemed to follow you?' Her breath of a voice quivered.

'Not even a custom-house man came to me,' I said.

'One of the lords hath sent some men to these parts—against you should come—to watch, and take you before you find out the lie. . . . 'Tis a great mercy that you came through them, a great mercy and strangeness that you rode here to me, who shall send you back. . . . Yet how shall you best get to sea with most security? I know not.'

'Why, madame,' I answered, 'twill be easy from Hastings presently, where the fisherman who landed me is. Those men do not look to find me in Hastings town in broad day, 'tis very plain—else I had been taken this morning.' I glanced around me, musing of my chances. 'And I think they have not told any Hastings folk of me,' I said—'perhaps because there are a few guineas offered for me, which they would earn for themselves. . . . So 'twill be the easiest thing from Hastings, madame; and the wind will be good about noon hour.'

'Noon hour?' she said quickly, her voice become a little stronger. 'Nay, be to sea before then—before then! Go now; ride for Hastings now! . . . Oh, I have done most wrong—to let you stay here for these minutes. But I was all thoughtless, all distressed!' She took her hand from her eyes, showed me her face—wet-eyed, wet-cheeked, full of insistence that I should go. And she put her hand a little way toward me, as though she meditated to touch me to start me on my way.

Both my hands, which were holding the edge of my hat, gripped more firmly upon it; for 'twas hard to restrain them from going out to meet, to touch, that small hand of hers; and I had no excuse in the world for touching it. 'Pray do not bid me go, madame,' I said. 'I cannot think a half-hour will peril me—if you would speak with me for that?'

She shook her head swiftly, her eyes urgent. 'Go!' she said. Her eyes went to the road, then returned to me. 'Go!' she said again, with deep entreaty.

Yet for a space I held my ground. Verily I could not force myself to do otherwise. For she, in this brief while, with her prettiness, with all of herself, was so binding me to her that now there could be no more thought of any French mademoiselle for my wife.

'You will forgive me a little one day, madame—for Michael?' I asked.

She looked for an instant on the field about us; then, with her hand which had been toward

me sinking down, she looked back to me. 'Twas to save your life you took Michael,' she said, her voice a whisper again. 'I was wicked to hinder you from him—but I loved him. . . . I do quite forgive you—now. I do know I do.'

'Know?' I could not forbear to ask, for she had said it strangely.

She looked at the field again. 'This was Michael his field,' she whispered. 'I had it hedge-planted to mark it as his. I had thought to see him so happy in the grass when 'twas this high. . . . I will not suffer my father to cut the grass for other horses. For 'twas Michael his grass. . . . I can look on it and say I forgive. So I do know I forgive.' She took a quiet, great breath, with fresh tears sprung in her eyes.

And her little simple words, and these tears, so smote me that I knew there were near to being tears in mine own eyes for the second time this morning.

'Madame,' I said, very honestly, 'I believe you will put me to crying, in all my happiness, if you speak more thus.'

'All your happiness?' she asked, with a sob.

'Ay,' I said; 'happiness that you are safe, that you forgive, and for something else that, by your leave, I will tell you.'

I fell silent for a moment or two, shaping what I would say—she yet looking at the field.

'On *that* morning,' I said, 'I was out of my senses with fear, blind with fear—I cannot tell why. I did not see you in any real manner. But to-day I see you clearly—and I am made very happy by seeing you, madame.'

New colour was surprised into her cheeks; whereon I stared down at the grass before me, so that (if she noted) I might seem to lessen my boldness. I was driven to much boldness from knowing that, after to-day, months were like to pass ere I spoke with her again—except I ventured into England at a hazard that might make a final end of my speaking with her. In a few months—I trusted—my lord and his friends would have lost interest in me.

'There are great woods at St Germain-en-Laye, where I live, madame,' I said. 'I am happy to know that when I walk in the woods I shall seem to see you, standing clear in sunshine, before me in the dimness of the woods. I shall be meditating of how and when I shall be able to see your very self again. . . . I greatly wished to tell you this, madame—with one thing more.' I drooped my head somewhat, but with no thought of further seeming to lessen my boldness. With one hand I touched at the tall grass beside me.

'On *that* morning I was a coward wretch,' I said—'base to you, careless of you. . . . I know well by now that I could never more be a coward when near you, or be cruel to you. . . . Why, *I know well* that I would cast away my life before I would give you such grief again.

I am firmly sure—or I would not have spoke in the way I have.'

I looked up. I discovered her sweet face bathed, yea bathed, in deepest flush from my words. I saw her eyes, marvellously blue against the flush, fixed on me. But as I looked she swiftly turned her face and gazed toward the road; and then she spoke, her voice unsteady, but stronger again.

'I think you do try to cast away your life now,' she said, 'by tarrying to say such—such most strange sayings. I do beg you go—and . . . and have some care.'

'If your face could seem to smile in St Germain woods, madame——' I said. 'Bethink you, I have never seen it smile——'

'Nay, you shall *not* delay thus!' she said; and then, for the briefest moment, she looked at me; and though no curve of smile was about her lips, yet methought a littlest something of a smile was there; methought that in her eyes, still wet, a littlest gleam of laughing smile showed.

But now her face was roadward again. 'You will not go!' she said. 'And I am so afraid—so afraid that I shall see men coming to take you! . . . How can I win you to go? Shall I walk with you to your horse? Will you promise me to go then forthwith?'

Her voice had trembled very unhappily midway, so that, despite the hint of brightness that had come into our converse in the last seconds, I could not but discern that her fear was hurting her grievously, and that I was little kind to prolong it. Wherefore I answered very instantly, 'I promise to go then, madame.'

We walked side by side toward the road—silent for some steps, there being no sound save the swish of her gown and of my boots through the grass, with now and again the snap of stalks that were caught by my spurs—she gazing downward, with her cheek high flushed, as I could discern past her hood.

Then, unexpectedly, she asked, 'Do you forgive me that I did beg my lord?'

'Madame, madame,' I said, lifting my chin and laughing in a quiet, tender way, 'there is nothing to forgive. Yet if you deem there is, why I forgive ten thousand times.' Then, sinking my chin, bending my head a thought near her hood, I said, 'Perhaps, to keep very safe from these lords, I were best not come into England for some months hence.'

'Months!' she said quickly. 'You must not come for years. You must not come *ever*, except all is safe for you—if that can be. I pray you do not think to come—for years!'

'Months or years,' I answered, 'there is a thing I have in mind, and greatly wish. 'Tis that you will sometimes care to receive a letter from me, and to write me a letter in return. . . . There is a busy letter-post between St Germain and England—I was a letter postboy till I

spoiled myself for it that morning.—You have heard of our letter-post, madame?

'Yes,' she replied.

'Will you ask your father if he deems 'twould be a danger to you if I sent you letters by the discreetest persons, who would bring yours to me? I cannot think you would be endangered by private letters. So many pass—and nothing is said. Will you ask—and write to me, if he doth consent?'

For a moment she answered not; her head so held that I could not see her face. Then she answered, 'Yes.' And then we passed through the plantlings, and were on the road; and she, going a step beyond me and glancing each way, said, 'I bid you go now.'

I unfastened and turned my horse, and took the cloak from the saddle and covered my court clothes. Then I faced her to make my farewell, discovering a little sweet smile on her lips, and

the light of smiles in her eyes, so blue against her flushed cheeks, and wet still.

'Write to tell me that you are safely come to France,' she said. 'Write that forthwith.'

She held her hand for me to kiss. I kissed it—then turned and swung up into the saddle, and rode for Hastings, rode away very fast, since 'twould please her to see that.

I wrote to her next evening from Fescamp—Collins taking the letter. And sixteen days after, at St Germain, I received the first letter written to me by her who now is my dear, loved wife. For in the December after we stood in the field I slipped into England to speak with her, and in the February following, and then in May—and she was married to me in our chapel at St Germain in July—three years ago this coming month.

THE END.

ALTA VELA.

By HENRY MAXWELL SAVAGE.

I.

SOME years ago, the world's supplies of phosphatic rocks for manufacturing artificial manures were becoming scarce, and it was necessary to seek fresh deposits. This, added to the enormous demand of the German and Central European agriculturists for the supply of fertilisers for their beet fields, made a very acute question, so that European fertiliser manufacturers were eager bidders for any new source of supply of phosphatic rock which could be easily got and transported. It was, therefore, a race between the European countries for the richest deposits, and it is to the credit of Great Britain that in this race she held her own.

Phosphate of alumina, likewise used in the manufacture of artificial manures, was also required, and it was reported that in the West Indies certain deposits were believed to exist, which might become valuable as future supplies for the fertiliser trade.

It was in the month of November 19—, when I was in Russia and Poland, that I received an urgent telegram from London requesting my immediate return, and on reaching the offices of my principals I was naturally eager to know the reason of my so sudden recall. It appeared that during my absence information had been received that a deposit of phosphatic rock existed on an island in the Caribbean Sea known as Alta Vela.

On looking at the map, it may be seen that the island of Hispaniola is divided between two Republics, viz. Hayti and San Domingo, and on the southern side of the island, exactly

where the frontier line of the two countries is shown, a small speck on the map may be seen. This is Alta Vela.

My principals informed me that they wished to have a thorough investigation made of the reported phosphatic beds on that island, but were faced with this difficulty that, although perfectly well known to navigators, Alta Vela was reputed to be unapproachable; moreover, as the governments of both Hayti and San Domingo claimed this island, neither was wishful that investigations should take place upon it, fearing that annexation to one side or the other was the real end in view, although as a matter of fact it is useless to either.

I consulted the best authorities on the subject, and found nothing as to its geological formation. Even the Consul-General for San Domingo, a most enlightened gentleman who knew more about it than anyone else, informed me that only once previously was the island reported to have been visited, and that nothing was known of the place itself except that it was a terror to shipmasters; that for ten months in the year it was covered with blinding spray to a height of 1000 feet, practically blotting it out; that it was surrounded by uncharted dangerous shoals and reefs, with enormous breakers, and that it was considered unapproachable for any human being. The prospects, therefore, were not very encouraging for exploring this place. However, the chance was offered to me of making the attempt, and I agreed to try.

I left London in due course, and, when on board the Royal Mail steamer on the way out, explained to the captain what I intended doing. He showed me his charts, assuring me

that I was on a fool's errand, and that if I ever did reach the island, I should probably never leave it.

II.

After remaining some time in Barbados I found myself at the port of Jacmel in Hayti. A French inter-colonial steamer then ran at odd times from Port-au-Prince on the southern side of the island to Santo Domingo City, and it would be at this latter port that the most reliable information could be obtained as to whether Alta Vela could be reached, it being at a distance of about one hundred and twenty miles away.

I crossed the Haytian mountains on horseback from Jacmel to Port-au-Prince, and caught the French inter-colonial steamer bound for San Domingo, but meanwhile, trouble had arisen between the French Government and the President of San Domingo. It appeared that the President, being in want of money, had commandeered the cash and securities lying in the safes of the bank, the property of the French Government—the cash was being reserved to meet payment of coupons of the loan in Paris. When the French Government heard of the outrage, an ultimatum was cabled to the President, to return the cash at once and deliver up the keys of the bank, failing which a French naval squadron would, within forty-eight hours, leave Martinique to enforce the French demands. The President, however, refused to accede to the French demands, and defied the French Government. The inhabitants, therefore, were anything but pleased to see a French steamer entering the port, not knowing whether it was to be followed by the French Squadron, which they expected was in the offing.

Knowing that there was a passenger (myself) on board for Santo Domingo City, the captain requested me not to land, but I replied that, being a Britisher, I should be unmolested, and insisted on being put on shore. This, after further remonstrance, was done. The crowd on the quayside were decidedly hostile; they hooted and hissed me, but I held out my passport to prove my nationality, and was eventually allowed to pass into the town unmolested, and was soon located in the best hotel.

It was a fairly large red brick building, built after the Spanish style of architecture, cool and roomy. The other visitors were two or three Catholic priests, two American butterfly-hunters for the New York Museum, some Spanish travellers, and a gentleman of German nationality, a long, lantern-jawed, emaciated individual, out at elbows, who had seen better days, and was suffering every now and then from attacks of malarial fever caught on the Mosquito Coast. He was a hard drinker, and liberally helped himself to my bottle of wine, without asking permission. He was, in fact, a 'hanger-on,' but withal an educated man and a very sociable one.

We soon became friends, especially when he found I knew German, and he offered to put himself at my disposal for anything I wanted in the island. He seemed to be eminently the kind of individual who would prove most useful, as he spoke Spanish perfectly, had lived in the country, and knew all the ropes.

After some delay, we found that the only way to reach Alta Vela was by chartering a small trading schooner, and by means of bribes inducing the captain to venture the voyage across to the island. We approached several captains, but they all refused. Eventually we found a half-breed Spaniard who seemed inclined to make the venture, provided it was made worth his while; so, after considerable bargaining, he agreed to allow me to charter his vessel for two months, the understanding being that he was to be able to carry a small freight on his own account as far as the port of Azua, about one hundred and twenty miles from Santo Domingo City, and after having discharged this small cargo, the vessel was to be for my account and at my risk.

The German and myself started provisioning the schooner with the necessary food—that is to say, I paid the bills for the provisions in advance, but up to the last moment they were not shipped. The parties from whom they had been purchased disappeared and could not be found—this, however, was a mere detail. The trouble with the French Government had now become acute, and the recalcitrant President issued a decree that any vessel found leaving the harbour was to be fired upon. This upset all our plans, but we resolved to run the risk, slip our moorings, and get out to sea on the first dark night.

III.

After waiting two days our opportunity came. A terrific tropical storm started with blinding flashes of lightning and deafening thunder, during which I made my way to the German's room to rouse him, to find him sodden with drink. However, there was no time to lose, so dragging him out of bed, I got him to understand that it was a case of 'now or never.' Somehow or other, we groped our way down the hotel stairs, and found ourselves in the street, buffeted by a perfect hurricane of wind and rain. After losing our way several times, we found the schooner and knocked up the captain and crew, and with trouble persuaded them to start working the vessel into mid-stream; we were, however, already observed. The drums at the forts beat to quarters, and we could just discern the gun-crews going to their stations. We kept on, however, and in a few minutes gained the harbour mouth, where we crammed on all sail and made for the open sea, followed by yells and shouts on shore.

Daylight found us scudding along with a

twenty-knot breeze behind us, the schooner tearing through the waters like a racing yacht. I now inspected the schooner and found a large hencoop lashed on deck. This I commandeered as my cabin, and it served the purpose admirably, being dry and having the additional advantage that from inside I could see all that was happening on board.

At dusk we reached the port of Azua, where the cargo was landed, and from that time the vessel was at my disposal. At this place most of the crew deserted when they heard of our destination, and it took the whole of the next day to pick up a scratch crew from any natives we could find. After some difficulty we got them all on board, half a dozen of them, and at last our voyage across the Caribbean Sea to the dreaded island commenced.

IV.

The first day passed without any incident worth recording, but in the evening we brought up at a small island called Beata, and found safe anchorage in a lovely bay. I was sitting smoking and looking over the bulwarks towards the island, when about midnight I thought I discerned something moving on the water, and called the attention of my German friend and the captain. We made out about four or five rough dug-outs paddling towards the schooner. We hailed them, asking their business. They seemingly understood neither Spanish, French, Creole, nor German, but when I hailed them in English, a voice answered in the stillness of the night: 'Have you any rum? We are friends!' I told them to come near, and parleyed with them alongside. They said they were turtle-catchers from Martinique and were stranded on the island, living on turtles' eggs and the cooked flesh of iguana lizards. They seemed a harmless set of fellows, and from them we obtained information that they thought *Alta Vela* could be approached at one point only, but that the navigation was extremely hazardous, owing to sunken reefs and heavy seas, and they warned us that if, by any chance, anyone was on the island and the wind shifted to off-shore, it might be months before any vessel could approach again to take him off. We supplied them with several bottles of rum and they gave us some dried fish.

As we were, however, suspicious of these men, we did not sleep that night, but at daylight we set sail, and soon lessened the distance between us and *Alta Vela* by some fifty miles. About four o'clock the island came fully into view.

V.

Alta Vela is about a mile in circumference at the base, and rises from the depths of the ocean in one perpendicular gigantic mass of rock, 2000 feet high, seemingly inaccessible, its

form being that of a sugar-cone. The place appeared to be surrounded with green rocks, but the terrible seas which were dashing on them sent up clouds of fine spray to an enormous height, so that the island looked as if it were undergoing a constant bombardment from some unknown warship. We shortened sail and placed look-out men on both quarters. I climbed up the forestay, the better to observe the reefs which every now and then we passed, some of them even grating the bottom of the schooner.

As we got nearer, *Alta Vela's* dreadful aspect seemed intensified, and in addition to the gigantic breakers, muffled peals of submarine thunder came from under the sea, with every now and then a sharp, hissing sound as of escaping steam from some broken pipe. These dreadful noises increased until we were within 500 yards of the shore, when we observed to our intense delight a small inlet with moderately smooth water.

It was getting dark, and as the situation was dangerous, we took in all sail and made the crew tow us in the boat, by the anchor chain, into smooth water. We were now only about twenty-five yards from shore, the wind light and puffy, which enabled us to approach some rocks standing out of the water, around which we passed the anchor chain. In this way we tied up and awaited events.

At midnight the wind suddenly rose, the sea became rough, and we were soon straining at our chain in the midst of a whirlpool of terrible waters breaking over the vessel and covering us with spray.

At this moment the German must needs get an attack of fever, and lay shivering and helpless on deck in abject terror. The captain sat with me at the stern, moaning and crying like a baby, and wringing his hands, while the crew in the bows, with terror on their faces, were swearing and cursing, threatening me with death, and incapable of doing anything. In fact, everyone was panic-stricken, myself included.

As if to add to the horror of the scene, the night was inky-black, and the schooner was surrounded with thousands of huge black cormorants, flying round us so near that some almost touched our faces, whilst every now and then they would drop suddenly with a splash into the boiling sea. It was as if all the devils of hell were let loose.

VI.

For three hours we just held on, our teeth chattering with cold, no one speaking, when I observed that the vessel was labouring heavily, and crept forward to examine the chain. To my horror, I found that one of the links was almost worn through—half-an-inch of rusty iron was keeping us from destruction.

I came back and reported this to the captain, and told him that the chain would break before morning, when we should be dashed on the rocks, and all drowned. I asked for a second chain, but he informed me that he had no second chain. There was, however, a piece of rope in the hold which, if it could be got at, could be used to strengthen the worn link. After some difficulty we found the rope, but it was rotten, having lain in the bilge water for weeks.

By dint of a great deal of persuasion I managed to get the crew to climb along the bowsprit and strengthen the chain by passing the rope through the links. This was done. The men were no sooner on deck when there was a report like a gun, and the chain snapped!

We were now riding attached to the rock only by a portion of the broken chain and the rotten rope. In this awful predicament we sat huddled together speechless, waiting for daylight, expecting every moment to be our last, when, to our joy, the wind dropped and the sea became quieter.

I made hurried preparations to land, taking with me three men with bags and pick-axes for the purpose of obtaining samples of the rock, and to ascertain whether indeed any phosphatic deposit actually existed. Every second was precious, so, on reaching shore, I started climbing the mountain with three sailors, and after three long hours of desperate scrambling up the perpendicular face of the rock, covered here and there with scrub, cactus, and indigenous cotton, to which we held on, we eventually managed to reach a spot about a hundred yards from the summit, where I found a large cave. I entered and explored it. Some huge bats flew out, and after digging some rock I wrote a record on a sheet of paper and attached it to the far end of the cave, and there it probably is to this day. It did not take long to do all this, and after filling the sacks, we rolled them down the mountain to the water's edge. To descend the mountain, we had to lie on our backs, sliding down, and in this way ultimately reached the little bay. As the weather was calm, and there were still two hours of daylight left, I started to explore the base of this island, a ledge of slimy green rock standing about a hundred feet above the sea. As I proceeded, I heard directly underneath me the loud peals of submarine thunder—it is evident that the island here is full of submarine caverns or tunnels, along which the enormous billows of the Caribbean Sea were driving, forcing spray, compressed by the driven air, through fissures and holes in the rock to an extraordinary height. No sign of life anywhere, nothing but terrible desolation amidst boiling seas. Retracing my footsteps, I scrambled landwards over some terrible scrub, with enormous spines, which even penetrated the thick leather of my seaman's boots and

broke off in my flesh—so I was covered with blood on reaching the ship.

VII.

I had been quite long enough on the island to realise that this was no place for mortal man, and as the captain was getting impatient, I rejoined the ship, and just in time we cut our rope and were able to get safely out of the bay and make for the open sea, when we steered for the island of Hayti.

The captain now vouchsafed the information that he had no compass or sounding line, nor any nautical instruments of any kind on board, so that we had to risk our way through the reefs. He also informed me that he would not do the journey again for a thousand tons of pure gold.

On reaching the open sea, the crew and captain again got so drunk that I had to take the tiller myself, and by sheer good luck we managed to reach Jacmel with my precious cargo of rock. On landing, I went to the small hotel on the beach, and having had no sleep for three nights, went to bed, expecting to be allowed to rest undisturbed. This was, however, not to be, for about three in the morning I was awakened by hearing voices underneath my room. On peeping over the verandah and looking out, I saw the crew landing packages from the schooner, carrying them up the beach and depositing them somewhere near my bedroom. This seemed strange, as there was not supposed to be anything on board. However, I said nothing then.

Next morning I informed the British Consul of this, when we resolved to make a search of the basement of the hotel. We discovered there was a secret storeroom, where kegs of rum, bundles of native tobacco, sugar, hoop iron, and other produce had been stealthily placed. This evidently was a freight which had been smuggled on board at Azua without my knowledge, and was to be sold privately, the captain, crew and hotel-keeper being in the deal. When it came to settling up for the schooner, I surprised the captain by informing him that I knew of this contraband cargo, on which naturally I would claim freight. Immediately there was a great disturbance. I was threatened by both the hotel-keeper and the captain. Finding myself alone, and powerless to enforce my claim, I sent for the British Consul, and returned to the saloon, to find that the captain and crew, with the exception of a young man, were on their way down to the schooner. I seized this gentleman, pushed him into a chair, and held him as a hostage until my account was settled, while the British Consul was threatening to call in the police. The captain, observing that one of his crew was missing, came back, and finding that discretion was the better part of valour, after some terrible

wordy warfare, we eventually came to an understanding, accounts were settled up, and I had the satisfaction of seeing the last of the captain and his crew of rascals.

My companion, the German, I heard afterwards, had several bouts of fever, and with that exception was none the worse for having

accompanied me, and was in pocket by a good many silver dollars.

Unfortunately the results of my voyage were practically nil, as analysis of the rock in London proved that it had no value for commercial purposes. Should anyone desire to visit Alta Vela my narrative may possibly be of service!

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER XII.—*continued.*

ALREADY the mist had gone from the foreground, and the hills were clear to half-way up the rocks of Sgurr Mór and Sgurr Dearg. Archie had his glass on the Beallach, in the throat of which a stray sun-gleam made a sudden patch of amethyst.

'I see some one,' Janet cried. 'On the edge of the pass. Have you got it?—on the left-hand side of that spout of stones.'

Archie found the place. 'Got him. . . . By Jove, it's Wattie! . . . And—and—yes, by all the gods, I believe he's pullin' a stag down. . . . Wait a second. . . . Yes, he's haulin' it into the burn. . . . Well done, our side! But where on earth is Charles?'

The two lay with their eyes glued to the patch of hill, now lit everywhere by the emerging sun. They saw the little figure dip into a hollow, appear again, and then go out of sight in the upper part of a long narrow scaur which held the headwaters of a stream—they could see the foam of the little falls farther down. Before it disappeared, Archie had made out a stag's head against a background of green moss. 'That's that,' he said. 'Charles must be somewhere behind protectin' the rear. I suppose Wattie knows what he's doin', and is certain he can't be seen by the navvies. Anyhow, he's well hidden at present in the burn, but he'll come into view lower down when the ravine opens out. He's a tough old bird to move a beast at that pace. . . . The question now is, Where is old John? It's time he was gettin' busy.'

Janet, whose glass made up in width of range what it lacked in power, suddenly cried out. 'I see him. Look! up at the edge of the rocks—three hundred yards west of the Beallach. He's moving downhill. I think it's Mr Palliser-Yeates—he's the part of John Macnab I know best.'

Archie found the spot. 'It's John, right enough, and he's doin' his best to make himself conspicuous. Those yellow breeks of his are like a flag. We've got a seat in the stalls, and the curtain is goin' up. Now for some fun.'

There followed for the better part of an hour a drama of almost indecent sensation. Wattie and his stag were forgotten in watching the efforts of an eminent banker to play hare to the hounds of four gentlemen accustomed to labour rather

with their hands than with their feet. It was the navy whose post was almost directly opposite Janet and Archie who first caught sight of the figure on the hillside. He blew a whistle and began to move up-hill, evidently with the intention of cutting off the intruder's retreat to the east and driving him towards Haripol. But the quarry showed no wish to go east, for it was towards Haripol that he seemed to be making, by a long slant down the slopes.

'I've got Number Two,' Janet whispered. 'There—above the patch of scrub—close to the three boulders. . . . Oh, and there's Number Three. Mr Palliser-Yeates is walking straight towards him. Do you think he sees him?'

'Trust old John. He's the wiliest of God's creatures, and he hasn't lost much pace since he played outside three-quarter for England. Wait till he starts to run.'

But Mr Palliser-Yeates continued at a brisk walk, apparently oblivious of his foes, who were whistling like curlews, till he was very near the embraces of Number Three. Then he went through a very creditable piece of acting. Suddenly he seemed to be stricken with terror, looked wildly around to all the points of the compass, noted his pursuers, and, as if in a panic, ran blindly for the gap between Numbers Two and Three. Number Four had appeared by this time, and Number Four was a strategist; he did not join in the pursuit, but moved rapidly down the glen towards Haripol to cut off the fugitive should he outstrip the hunters.

Palliser-Yeates managed to get through the gap, and now appeared running strongly for the Doran, which at that point of its course—about half-a-mile down stream from Janet and Archie—flowed in a deep-cut but not precipitous channel, much choked with birch and rowan. Numbers Two and Three followed, and also Number One, who had by now decided that there was no need of a rearguard. For a little all four disappeared from sight, and Janet and Archie looked anxiously at each other. Cries, excited cries, were coming up-stream, but there was no sign of human beings.

'John can't have been such a fool as to get caught,' Archie grumbled. 'He has easily the pace of those heavy-footed chaps. Wish he'd show himself.'

Presently first one, then a second, then a third navvy appeared on the high bank of the Doran, moving aimlessly, like hounds at fault.

'They've lost him,' Archie cried. 'Where d'you suppose the leery old fox has got to? He can't have gone to earth.'

That was not revealed for about twenty minutes. Then a cry from one of the navvies called the attention of the others to something moving high up on the hillside.

'It's John,' Archie muttered. 'He must have crawled up one of the side burns. Lord, that's pretty work.'

The navvies began heavily to follow, though they had a thousand feet of lee-way to make up. But it was no part of Palliser-Yeates's plan to discourage them, since he had to draw them clean away from the danger-zone. Already this was almost achieved, for Wattie and his stag, even if he had left the ravine, were completely hidden from their view by a shoulder of hill. He pretended to be labouring hard, stumbling often, and now and then throwing himself on the heather in an attitude of utter fatigue, which was visible to the pursuit below.

'It's a dashed shame,' murmured Archie. 'Those poor fellows haven't a chance with John. I only hope Claybody is payin' them well for this stunt.'

The hare let the hounds get within a hundred yards of him. Then he appeared to realise their presence and to struggle to increase his pace, but instead of ascending he moved horizontally along the slope, slipping and sprawling in what looked like a desperate final effort. Hope revived in the navvies' hearts. Their voices could be heard. 'You bet they're usin' shockin' language,' said Archie, and Number One, who seemed the freshest, put on a creditable spurt. Palliser-Yeates waited till the man was almost up on him, and then suddenly turned down hill. He ran straight for Number Two, dodged him with that famous swerve which long ago on the football-field had set forty thousand people shouting, and went down the hill like a rolling stone. Once past the navvy line, he seemed to slide a dozen yards and roll over, and when he got up he limped.

'Oh, he has hurt himself,' Janet cried.

'Not a bit of it,' said Archie. 'It's the old bird's cunning. He's simply playin' with the poor fellows. Oh, it's wicked!'

The navvies followed with difficulty, for they had no gift of speed on a steep hill-face. Palliser-Yeates waited again till they were very near him, and, then, like a hen partridge dragging its wing, trotted down the more level ground by the stream side. The pursuit was badly cooked, but it lumbered gallantly along, Number Four now making the running. A quarter of a mile ahead was the beginning of the big Haripol woods, which clothed the western skirts of Stob Ban and stretched to the demesne itself.

Suddenly Palliser-Yeates increased his pace, with no sign of a limp, and, when he passed out of sight of the two on the rock, was going strongly.

Archie shut up his glass. 'That's a workmanlike bit of business, if you like. He'll tangle them up in the woods, and slip out at his leisure and come home. I knew old John was abso-lute-ly safe. If he doesn't run slap into Macnicol—'

He broke off and stared in front of him. A figure like some ancient earth-dweller had appeared on the opposite bank. Hair, face, and beard were grimed with peat, sweat made furrows in the grime, and two fierce eyes glowered under shaggy eyebrows. Bumping against its knees were the antlers of a noble stag.

'Wattie!' the two exclaimed with one voice.

'You old sportsman!' cried Archie. 'Did you pull that great brute all the way yourself? Where is Lord Lamancha?'

The stalker strode into the water, dragging the stag behind him, and did not halt till he had it high on the bank and close to the car. Then he turned his eyes on the two and wrung the moisture from his beard.

'You needn't worry,' Archie told him. 'Mr Palliser-Yeates has all the navvies in the Haripol woods.'

'So I was thinkin'. I got a glisk of him up the burn. Yon's the soople one. But we've no time to loss. Help me to sling the beast into the cawr. This is a fine hidy-hole.'

'Gad, what a stag!'

'It's the auld beast we've seen for the last five years. Ye mind me tellin' you that he was at our stacks last winter? Come on quick, for I'll no' be easy till he's in the Crask larder.'

'But Lord Lamancha?'

'Never heed him. He's somewhere up the hill. It matters little if he waits till the darkenin' afore he comes hame. The thing is, we've got the stag. Are ye ready?'

Archie started the car, which had already been turned in the right direction. Coats and wraps and heather were piled on the freight, and Wattie seated himself atop like an ancient raven.

'Now, tak a spy afore ye start. Is the place clear?'

Archie, from the rock, reported that the hillside was empty.

'What about the Beallach?'

Archie spied long and carefully. 'I see nothing there, but of course I only see the south end. There's a rock which hides the top.'

'No sign o' his lordship?'

'Not a sign.'

'Never heed. He can look after himsel' braw and weel. Push on wi' the cawr, sir, for it's time we were ower the hill.'

Archie obeyed, and presently they were climbing the long ziz-zag to the Crask pass. Wattie, on the back seat, kept an anxious lookout,

issuing frequent bulletins, and Janet swept the glen with her glass. But no sign of life appeared in the wide sunlit place, except a buzzard high in the heavens and a weasel slipping into a cairn. Once the watershed had been crossed Wattie's heart lightened. 'Weel done, John Macnab!' he cried. 'Dod, ye're the great lad. Ye've beaten a hunner navvies and Macnicol and a', and ye've gotten the best heid in the countryside.—Hae ye a match for my pipe, Sir Erchie? Mine's been in ower mony bogholes to kindle.'

It was a clear, rain-washed world on which they looked, and the sky to the south was all an unbroken blue. The air was not sticky and oppressive like yesterday, but pure and balmy and crystalline. When Crask was reached the stag was decanted with expedition, and Archie addressed Janet with a new authority. 'I'm goin' to take you straight home in the Hispana. You're drippin' wet and ought to change at once.'

'Can't I change here?' the girl asked. 'I told them to send over dry things, for I was sure it would be a fine afternoon. You see, I think we ought to go to Haripol.'

'Whatever for?'

'To be in at the finish—and also to give Lady Claybody back her dog. Wee Roguie is rather on my conscience.'

'That's a good notion,' Archie assented. So Janet was handed over to Mrs Lithgow, who admitted that a suit-case had indeed arrived from Glenraden. Archie repaired to the upper bathroom, which Lamancha had aforetime likened to a drain-pipe, and having bathed rapidly, habited himself in a suit of a reasonable newness and took special pains with his toilet. And all the while he whistled and sang, and generally comported himself like a madman. Janet was under his roof—Janet would soon always be there—the most miraculous of fates was his! Somebody must be told, so when he was ready he went out to seek the Bluidy Mackenzie, and made that serious-minded beast the receptacle of his confidences.

He returned to find a neat and smiling young woman conversing with Fish Benjie, whose task had been that of comforter and friend to Roguie. It appeared that the small dog had been having the morning of his life with the Crask rats and rabbits. 'He's no' a bad wee dog,' Benjie reported, 'if they'd let him alane. They break his temper keepin' him indoors and feedin' him ower high.'

'Benjie must come too,' Janet announced; 'it would be a shame to keep him back. You understand, Benjie found Roguie in the woods—which is true, and handed him over to me—which is also true. I don't like unnecessary fibbing.'

'Right-o! Let's have the whole bag of tricks. But, I say, you've got to stage-manage

this show. Benjie and I put ourselves in your hands, for I'm hanged if I know what to say to Lady Claybody.'

'It's quite simple. We're just three nice, clean people—well, two clean people—who go to Haripol on an errand of mercy. Get out the Hispana, Archie dear, for I feel that something tremendous may be happening there.'

As they started—Benjie and Roguie on the back seat—the Bluidy Mackenzie came into view, hungrily eyeing an expedition from which he seemed to be barred.

'D'you mind if we take Mackenzie?' Archie begged. 'We'll go very slow and he can trollop behind. The poor old fellow has been havin' a lonely time of it, and there's likely to be such a mix-up at Haripol that an extra hound won't signify.'

Janet approved, and they swung down the hill and on to the highway, as respectable an outfit as the heart could wish, except for the waterproof-caped urchin on the back seat. The casual wayfarer would have noted only a very pretty girl and a well-appointed young man driving an expensive car at a most blameless pace. He could not guess what a cargo of dog-thieves and deer-thieves was behind the shining metal and spruce enamel. . . . Benjie talked to Wee Roguie in his own tongue, and what Janet and Archie said in whispers to each other is no concern of this chronicle. The sea at Inverlarrig was molten silver running to the translucent blue of the horizon, the shore woods gleamed with a thousand jewels, the abundant waters plashing in every hollow were channels of living light. The world sang in streams and soft winds, in the cries of plover and the pipe of shore birds, and Archie's heart sang above them all.

Close to Haripol gates a tall figure rose from the milestone as the car slowed down.

'Well, John, my aged sportsman, you did your part like a man. We saw it all.'

'How are things going?'

'Famously.'

'The stag?'

'In the Crask larder.'

'And Charles?'

'Lost. Believed to be still lurkin' in the hills. Look here, John, get in beside Benjie. We are goin' to call at Haripol and restore the pup. You'll be a tower of strength to us, and old Claybody will be tremendously bucked to meet a brother magnate. . . . Really, I mean it.'

'I'm scarcely presentable,' said Palliser-Yeates, taking off an old cap and looking at it meditatively.

'Rot! You're as tidy as you'll ever be. Rather dandified for you. In you get, and don't tread on the hound.—Bloody, you brute, don't you know a pal when you see him?'

(Continued on page 406.)

PINK PINAFORES.

A KERB-SIDE STUDY.

By Lieut.-Colonel C. P. HAWKES.

I.

A SOUR November day in Twynning Street, North Kensington. Outside the 'Victoria and Albert' public-house stands a tattered nondescript, whose chest is decorated with two war-medals and a cardboard placard announcing that he is an 'Ex-Service man badly shell-shocked,' and whose drink-sodden eyes are fast fixed on the swing-doors of the tavern, while he leans against a small hand-barrow, from which a battered gramophone with a badly-dented horn grinds out a ragtime inanity of the music-halls:

My dear old home way down in ole Virginny,
Dat's whar I played as a l'il piccaninny,
Dere's whar dey live, my Mummy an' my Dad,
I long to be back dere, an' it makes me sad!

On the flagstones between the ex-warrior and the well-trodden threshold two little girls, apparently of about ten years of age, dance to this wheezy cacophony. Both of them grubby and touzle-haired—the one dark, with a pale and precociously-intelligent face, the other fairer, with a broad and unwashed but rosy countenance; they turn and twist, their eyes sparkling, their lips parted in ecstasy, their bodies bending responsive to the rasping lilt, their feet, in pathetically worn-out boots, tapping the pavement in time to the raucous mechanical rhythm.

Up and down, back and forth, hands on hips, tongues extruded in rapturous abandonment, they hop and skip across the sidewalk; their grimy pink pinafores, obviously cut from the same faded material, splashing the London gray with a touch of faint and incongruous colour.

II.

My dear old home way down in ole Virginny,
Dat's whar I played as a l'il piccaninny . . .

babbles the gramophone in a querulously nasal falsetto. Twynning Street, North Kensington, is an interminable double row of fallow-complexioned brick-built houses, which shuffles its way north westward in the inauspicious direction of Wormwood Scrubbs Prison. The verb is used advisedly, because it best describes the indeterminate meanderings of this squalid *cul-de-sac*; from the comparative respectability of its beginnings off the tram-choked thoroughfare of the Sibthorpe Road, along the seedy deterioration of its half-mile course of twists and turns and crossings, until it terminates with a sort of jerry-built dejection on the edge of some waste ground, across which looms the sullen ominous mass of the prison. The street seems to have shambled along there in a slipshod

fashion, uncertain as to which direction it should take, its indecisive halts marked at every crossing by a public-house, until it last it stops, with a sort of boozy misgiving, in sight of the gaol. Its end is blocked by the decrepit skeleton of a vast hoarding, bespattered with mouldering posters, and riddled by yawning gaps, whence long ago the planking has been filched to fill the cheerless cast-iron fireplaces of the slovenly houses. Along its forbidding perspective slatternly matrons, with wispy hair screwed up in metal curlers, seem to spend all day and half the night in whispering mouth-to-ear on unscrubbed doorsteps, or in bawling blasphemies and highly-seasoned scandal across the roadway, on which a clutter of shrill-voiced urchins disport themselves amid the garbage.

III.

Dere's whar dey live, my Mummy an' my Dad . . .

whines the gramophone with husky reiteration. Over the doorway of Number 237, midway between the 'Victoria and Albert' and the 'Load of Hay,' is nailed a notice-board, on which in tremulous lettering is emblazoned the following legend:

ADOLFUS JEALES CHIMNYS SWEPT
UNBAKABLE OVENS CURED.

Here, in the uncleanly tenement thus adorned, live Mr and Mrs Jeales, their twin daughters, 'Dawriss' and Ann,—our two pink dancers,—and half-a-dozen lodgers and sub-tenants, who maintain a precarious existence on the upper floors, while their landlord and his family occupy the ground-floor and basement.

Mr Jeales is a chimney-sweep and 'general odd-jobs man,' whose work on weekdays begins at 3 A.M. and ends about 3 P.M., when he retires, sooty and somnolent, to the only bed of which the establishment can boast, whereon he snores till awakened about 6 P.M. by the newsboy crying the '7 o'clock Star.' He then essays a meretricious toilet and sallies forth to the 'Victoria and Albert,' where he remains until, surly and incoherent, he is ejected at closing-time.

On Sundays Mr Jeales stays in bed all day, absorbing current history—as recorded in the divorce and police-court reports and the racing and football news, which fill the columns of his favourite *Reynolds's*—until the time arrives for his vesper visit to the 'Load of Hay.' For Mr Jeales is open-minded on the subject of beer, and distributes his patronage evenly between the two malodorous hostelryes.

His marital and paternal duties sit lightly

upon him, and he seldom speaks to his wife, except to put up a full-flavoured but unavailing defence in the ceaseless wrangle that is their married life. 'Carn't get a — word in edge- wyse!' he will complain. His children he never addresses, except with such occasional and endearing admonitions as 'clear aht of it, — yer!' or 'stop yer — row!'

This perpetual warfare between the authors of their unwelcomed existence is regarded by 'Dawriss' and Ann with a sort of impartial but malevolent neutrality. It means but little difference to them whether victory smile on the brute force of the husband or on the shrill vituperation of the wife. If at all, their sympathies incline, in loyalty to their sex, slightly towards their mother's side. But filial affection is foreign to them, constantly reminded as they are that they are only '— little nuisances,' and that their presence at home is merely tolerated until they shall be old enough to earn their own keep and to contribute something to the support of their parents' declining years. Meanwhile, the 'Welfare-centre' and the school authorities look after their health, and the taxpayers provide them with a sketchy education and one good meal a day, the others mainly consisting of the remains of the 'fish and chips' brought home of evenings by Mrs Jeales from the fried-fish shop round the corner, and the lower layers from the salmon-tins, whose triumphant advent signalises Mr Jeales's infrequent victories over the street bookmaker outside the 'Load of Hay.'

As for Mrs Jeales, no one has ever seen her at home without a small cloth 'cricket-cap' pinned insecurely on to her straggly hair. She probably removes it at night, and presumably resumes it again in the early morning; but such operations invariably take place in the dark, for most of her coppers find their way into the till of the 'Victoria and Albert' or that of the gaudy picture-palace in the Sibthorpe Road, rather than into the slot of the gas-meter. Mrs Jeales is always busy, always *en négligé*, with permanently dirty apron and permanently rolled-up sleeves. She perpetually complains that she never has time to finish her 'work,' with which, in her own phrase, she never seems able to 'kitch up.' The completion of her household duties forever eludes her, continually interrupted as they are by ceaseless colloquies, amicable and otherwise, with her friends and neighbours—terms which, in her case, are by no means synonymous.

Her part in these procrastinating and breathless conversations consists of a dramatic narration in *oratio recta* of enigmatical dialogues between herself and a mysterious 'she,' in which that shadowy female invariably suffers monotonous discomfiture.

'So I sez to 'er, quite quiet-like, I sez, "Wot the 'ell 's it got to do with you?" I sez. "Oh,"

she sez, "for the matter o' that," she sez, "an' if that's the wy you tyke it, Mrs Jeales," she sez, "it's *my* biz'ness an' not yours," she sez. "An' *that's* a lie," I sez; "an' wot's more," I sez, "I've somefin' better to do than to stan' 'ere listenin' to a *woman* like you," I sez,—and so on, *da capo*.

Mrs Jeales's thwarted devotion to her household duties leaves her but little leisure for attention to the niceties of fashion. When she attends a funeral or 'the pictures'—her favourite diversions—she pins a bedraggled 'picture-hat' on to her unkempt *coiffure*, and slips over her 'working'-dress an opulent but sporadically mangy fur coat, made, apparently, by stripping from some uncatalogued specimen of the larger carnivora its apricot-coloured pelt. And thus attired, she becomes at once a model worthy of George Belcher or Phil May.

IV.

Dat's whar I played as a l'il piccaninny . . .

gasps the gramophone of the ex-warrior, with wheezy and appropriate insistence, and round and round whirl the two pink pinafores outside the unsavoury threshold of the public-house. 'Dawriss' and Ann attend the Council school in the Colquhoun Road. They spend their days there and on the roadway in Twynning Street, and their nights on a flock mattress beneath the kitchen-table at Number 237.

'Dawriss,' the elder by some fifteen minutes, is pretty, pert, and precocious, and, at ten years old, already excels in the art of protective 'back-chat' that is the defensive armour of the London slum-child. Malnutrition, neglect, and the usual infantile disorders seem to have had no other effect upon her than to sharpen her shallow, quick intelligence, and to keep her body thin and wiry. Her nose, however, is already developing a sneering tilt, and the little snarling lines have already graven themselves at the wings of her nostrils, while her upper lip is beginning to curl downwards, so that you can almost hear the scurrile Cockney whine before she speaks. Her brilliant eyes already tend to narrow meanly at the corners, and seem to glint with a contemptuous, calculating gleam; suspicious, challenging. She has a shock of pretty, dark-brown hair, in which, bobbed though it is, she seems to take a pride: and the whole effect of her small, pale face is intriguing and vivacious, though its cheeks too often betray a hereditary partiality for soot.

The boys of Twynning Street have learnt to respect her stinging palm and still more stinging repartee; for she can hold her own with her companions, and even with her elders, by her assertive independence and shrill readiness of tongue. With her insatiable appetite for the thrilling animation of the streets, she is essentially a London type; her individuality is redolent of the glamour of crowded pavements,

the noisy excitation of traffic, the rabid howl of newsboys.

Already a contest has arisen between 'Dawriss' and her mother as to what calling the girl shall follow after leaving school. Mrs Jeales, with an eye to her share in larger profits, has already suggested 'the drypery'; a proposal scornfully rejected by 'Dawriss,' who sees herself in some six years' time a haughty, white-aproned waitress in a 'kaffy,' a cloud-cuckoo-land of frilly frocks and open-work silk stockings, wherein she shall disdainfully dispense, at her convenience, cocoa and buttered eggs to a worshipping crowd of fag-sucking adorers. 'None of yer stuffy drypery-shops fer me!' she screams, 'with livin'-in, an' all, an' me fingers worn ter the bone ten hours a dye with sewin'! I'm goin' where I can be a *lydy* after hours, I am! I want a job where there's fun ter be 'ad. Drypery! *Slyvery*, I calls it!' and she snorts and shifts the bullseye which bulges her scornful cheek.

An intrinsic difference from her sister in type and character distinguishes Ann, who seems to have thrown back to some eternal housewifely original. Ann's face is broad and honest, and utterly expressionless, with small dull eyes set wide apart over prominent cheek-bones. Her mouth is large and unsmiling; her arms are muscular, with big, capable hands; her expression docile and unintelligent; and she has thick, lank, yellow hair, like the wig made by some inexpert *perruquier* for an ancient Briton in some minor provincial pageant.

Slow of speech and mind, Ann takes life pretty much as she finds it, and she bears with stolid unresentment the discipline of claps which falls to her lot as the junior member of the Jeales household. At school, in her painful pilgrimage through the standards, she can never compete with 'Dawriss'; but she has many friends among the quieter children, and her chief interest seems to lie in the execution of much unauthorised and unacknowledged housework, rather than in any emulation of her sister's predominance in the social life of their gutter-playground.

Slow-moving, but with a tireless energy, Ann soars no higher than housework, which with her, however, is an absorbing passion. She will develop later into the sort of woman whose prototype tidied his cave for some neolithic hunter, smoked his venison for some medieval franklin, or scoured the brass of one of Franz Hals's burghers. Suggestive of the immemorial hearthside of the human family, her like persists in every land and in every age; a type too fundamental ever to be vulgar—the eternal peasant-woman. 'Ann?' her mother confides to a doorstep crony. 'Ow, *she's* ony fit fer *Service*, she is! As I sez to 'er the other dye, "Me gurl," I sez, "soon as ever I can git yer awye from school, inter *Service you* goes," I sez. "Yer can't 'elp bein' a *fool*," I sez, "but if yer

lets me dalin an' loses yer plice, Gawd forgive yer'," I sez, "fer it's more than yer mother will!"'

V.

I long to be back dere, an' it makes me sad!

buzzes the gramophone with unmusical irony, as the two pink pinafores gambol and gyrate over the greasy flagstones.

Such is the environment of their wearers' present. What of the future? All things considered, they are comparatively happy now; far happier, indeed, than most philanthropists would imagine possible. For the London poor, especially in early youth, are true philosophers; and a little street music, an occasional glint of sunshine, and now and again a penn'orth of sticky sweets, will often drive from the doors of their memory such werewolves as semi-starvation, cold, and cruel ill-usage. Their joys are simple; their sorrows accepted as the common lot; and for them, at any rate, life is seldom dull. Inured to squalor, they regard it from an angle imperceptible to tender-hearted observers bred in softer surroundings. Thousands of lads, brought up in circumstances like those of Ann and 'Dawriss,' were schooled in this way to laugh at hell in the Salient's trenches, to play mouth-organs, and joke about the stretcher-parties, while the very sky rained death on the filthy rat-infested dug-outs which at any moment might prove to be their tomb.

So 'Dawriss' will probably be as happy in her tea-shop as she is at present, playing hop-scotch, or dancing on the pavement in Twynning Street. And Ann will find in Service the congenial work that her instinct well fits her to do; and after a protracted courtship on the area steps, and a series of saturnine 'walkings-out,' will probably plight her troth to some stolid young butcher. For each of the girls has thus early nailed to her mast colours which epitomise a totally distinct ideal and outlook. And while 'Dawriss' is ready to cross the bar of youth and to brave the wind and tide of circumstance in search of a 'good time,' the haven of Ann's quest is a good home.

Though tinged with a few regrets, such memories of Twynning Street as they may retain will not be altogether unhappy. For the poor live mainly in the present, and waste as little time in retrospection as they do on forethought.

And Mr and Mrs Jeales? Well, they belong to a generation which has almost ceased to matter. For them are old-age pensions, the poor law, and the continued, though more carefully state-regulated, consolations of the pint-pot.

Meanwhile, the gramophone stops, and the two pink-pinafores dancers sink, panting and radiant, upon a neighbouring doorstep; while the thirsty veteran, leaving his barrow and instrument in their charge, sidles at last within the portals of his paradise.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

JUNE for London, still as for ages past. And certain conditions have arisen in the town calling for contemplation, with a measure of anxiety. How strangely this matchless city changes! The famous and pompous Samuel Johnson, who so arrogantly laid down the law upon the good of London, the bad of Scotland, and the varying quality of much else on earth, left as imperishable dicta a number of declarations upon this city that became accepted as major principles. 'Sir,' he said to the admiring Boswell, 'when a man is tired of London he is tired of life, for there is in London all that life can afford.' This idea afterwards became established in the minds of settled Londoners, and they feared to confess to friends that they wearied of existence in town and would leave it, for then behind their backs there would be a shaking of heads, and sympathy upon the senile decline of such poor bodies as would retreat from the heart of civilisation, from the centre of enlightenment. Indeed, I should have been afraid to admit to myself that I tired of London, since by that I should be making a surrender to time that for the sake of life and action must be deferred till days for sticks to lean on, with grunts and gasps. And for pride's sake no confession of mental and spiritual fatigue by London was made to the country people or the foreigners. But these are days when we take down the old gods from their pedestals, and examine them closely to see of what they consist. One begins to doubt, indeed, if it is not easy and good for the true lover of London to absent himself from it for long periods, and enjoy it in short and intensive spells, as indeed, in this way, I still delight in London. The case is now that no city in the world is easier to leave, and none so attractive for the return. A friend, a true London man, has lately changed his place of abode from here to a spot some eighty miles away, saying that the sincerest and oldest lovers of London can no longer find it in their hearts to live in it, and see the dire changes that are happening therein.

* * *

In this idea is much truth. Others are feeling it. In Johnson's time, as even in my own
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early period in London, the town was delightful for its social circles, sparkling in intellectual quality, but they have been scattered by circumstance and a somewhat vulgar cosmopolitan intrusion, and the new substitutes lack much of the ancient charm. One returns to London partly to seek these friends, and hear what they cleverly say, what they ingeniously think, and marvellously do, to visit the good and essential shops, and, for the rest, maybe to enjoy a spell of solitude, for, as against the losses, the delights of absolute and perfect solitude may now be practised in London as at no other time or place. Any of Johnson's friends to escape him could not have done it as now; nor could I when first I knew London at the end of the Victorian era, nor now but for experience. The insistent friends would have interfered. Friends, the most intimate, in any grade or class of London society, no longer call too early in the morning, such an intrusion really being of the essence of human sympathy; nor on returning at night to our own retreat do we find them, uninvited, curled up in slumber there. The spirit of such intimacies has departed, and when they are practised now, they may be regarded with disfavour. Londoners are warping; machinery and materialism and the crowds that come crushing in are withering their social soul. The old insistent friends no longer call, but use the telephone instead. This instrument has been a foremost agent in the social destruction of London, having much reduced the habit of the personal visit. Our friend telephones to discover if we be at home ere he ventures further, and perhaps finds that even so the visit may be unnecessary. The rush of London now is greatly adverse to the ancient pleasures of personal calls, made in the way of a stroll about the town. How sweetly mellow were those happy tranquil days, picking up a hansom here and there as fancy willed! Now we rush and rattle. We have greater regard for our personal abode, as we must when surrounded by a whirling mob of strangers. Thus enters the scheme of solitude. At the true centre of social London, abiding in a pleasant flat, one can enjoy a larger and completer measure of absolute and more soothing solitude than in any other place, with all the advantages of a desert island,

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and none of the inconveniences, such as liability to discovery. As one who has dwelt in the Sahara desert, deep in it, at the oases and away from them, I say that more positive solitude can be gained in London, but only by old townsmen, and not in the way and sense of strangers who are gloomily warned that they can be lonelier in London than elsewhere. Loneliness and solitude are different states. The solitude of a thinking man in London, whose atmosphere is so intensely charged with human effort and achievement, may be a splendid stimulation; but loneliness is death. A friend, in some things like myself, and dwelling at the social centre, in good health and spirits, has the record for himself of living happily and well, and in the best intellectual and spiritual enjoyment, for a period of eleven days without having seen a single human being. And this man is clever, with strong human interests, a keen fellow for talk at table, and even something of a social butterfly. Conditions that make possible such solitude would not have suited Johnson, who so much loved to hear his own dictatorial voice, and selected the places for practising it.

* * *

What are two hundred years when the scientists now say that it has taken a thousand million or thereabouts for London, as we see it, to evolve from the rawest, newest state of the earth on which we live? And think that two hundred years ago a person might shoot a woodcock in the country where traffic now swirls and stops at Regent Circus! And now the old Regent Street—Nash's wonderful, graceful Regent Street itself—has passed through a full term from beginning to end, and, after scarce more than one hundred years, has been demolished. Ladies and gentlemen coming to London for delights of its summer season will find much of Regent Street, along which they walk—as they are sure to walk no other—a mass of builder's ruins. Recently, our senior London lady, Miss Elizabeth Underwood Lisle, who, eighty years ago, was presented at the Court of the youthful Victoria, and to whom Dickens and Browning took their books for her to read aloud, so sweet was her youthful voice, was celebrating her hundred and fourth birthday at a house in Portman Square, when she said, 'I should like to see London once before I go. They say that poor Regent Street is being entirely pulled down. The pity of it! You young people will leave nothing as it was!' And Miss Lisle spoke wisely and with truthful point. Yet, for brief seasons, rather than for regular and uninterrupted lodging, London retains its lure, a changed lure as it may be. Johnson said that 'a county gentleman should bring his lady to visit London as soon as he

can, that they may have agreeable topics for conversation when they are by themselves.' The twain come for the season in a thousand times the numbers that Samuel Johnson ever dreamt of; and they are wise, for London in June, for its show of life, is fascinating and matchless still, though it is the lady who leads the way, and not to gather topics of conversation, which are provided by the aerals at home, but that she may walk up Bond Street and study things and fashions, and have agreeable costumes for wearing when they are by themselves and others visit them. June for London, yet I wish it had fewer people then. Numbers spoil London now; too many mad creatures rushing and crushing and disturbing the old-timers' comfort. They feel that the Wembley show, which was meant to bring folks along to town from all parts of the earth and start a new London vogue, was wrong for the overcrowding that it made, and the numbers who have refused to go home again, staying beyond their welcome and, indeed, conducting themselves as if London were theirs instead of ours. To the minds who grapple with it the London traffic problem seems insoluble; and these experts in order and arrangement wring hands when contemplating this strange welter of wheels and humanity. They perceive the lumbering mass of a brewer's lorry with two fat horses resting in the middle, waiting its turn for dragging casks of stout along Piccadilly, while statesmen, bishops, dukes, and my lowly self and friends make slow procession in the rear. All the time London increases. Wembley revives and calls for more, and we read that in one street in Kensington as many as 2500 people are living in 140 houses. And yet, again, London has its lure, its changed lure. It is so smart. Here, for the delight of the children and our country friends, the news of the world, quick upon the happening, may be read in moving flaming letters on the tops of high buildings in the west end. And it is the retreat where an old Londoner like myself, one who wanders far, likes to be in June for a quality of peace and quietness only discoverable here, and only by such as we are.

* * *

Having surveyed the ruins of a part of Regent Street, each pair who come to town may reflect upon the disappearance of poor Eros from Piccadilly Circus. The blank will catch them instantly. The change, small in material importance as it may be, is more conspicuous to visitors, as indeed to us, than any other of recent times. The people of London are not persuaded of its necessity. Progress, it is said, demands it, and by progress is meant London traffic, and underground at that. I am tiring of this god Progress, and no longer reverence him, for he is a destructive Moloch into whose voraci-

ous jaws the mellow features of our old tranquil life are pitched for sacrifice. Allowing their advantages, I preferred the sight of winged Eros on his fountain pedestal, the flower-women encircling it at the base, to a complete network of railways below the ground. Besides, it appears to me, using such simple imagination as many of the worshippers of this Moloch seem not to own, that these gigantic constructions underground, long draughty holes for little tubes of trains, are too late; for development and invention being quick as they are, and all thoughts being for the air, is it not sure that this traffic problem will solve itself, and the London streets become calm again, because of vehicles taking to the air? As sure as that we live and die is this, and the time is not distant. The new spell of intensive burrowing under the earth for railway-making, while air-cars dart above it, seems to me like a mistake in time, a defiance of discovery. It reminds me of the Moslem student, the *tolba*, with whom I talked one afternoon in his small lone cell in the college at Fez, who murmured that the best doctrine of his own religious world at the present time is to turn back the mind and heart towards Mahomet, to endeavour to recapture the atmosphere, the spirit, the actions and full simplicity, steamless and unelectrified, of the prophet's time, for in that grand retrogression were they convinced that all progress towards happiness lay. Small heed, perhaps, was paid to Eros, standing tiptoe on his fountain, and being like the centre spot of London life, until the tragedy was enacted, and the bronze figure, with its seven feet span of wings, was lowered by the workmen inconsiderately down, as if some common travelling show were being dismantled, and lay upon the ground like a stricken bird. It was the most vulgar official thing that has been seen in London for long past; the pictures of it in the papers were distressing. The people then realised that if they had seldom definitely and consciously observed this pleasant Eros, god of Love, they had always felt its presence, and that it had perfectly and harmoniously landmarked a favoured spot. The Eros of this tragedy was a great inspiration. A monument to the good philanthropist, Lord Shaftesbury, was desired. Boehm, fashionable sculptor of the Victorian time, passed on the commission to his pupil Gilbert, who, seized with a hot fancy to shape a beautiful symbol rather than set up a Shaftesbury in frock-coat and trousers, made the first clay model in a single afternoon. In a few months the work was completed, but the creation of this lightsome Eros, and of the fountain on which he poised, was not an untroubled business. Authority was mean. Old guns were promised for the bronze, but were undelivered, and the fountain had to be six feet lower than proposed, while many intended jets of

water would have been too expensive for the ratepayers! Yet, if the whole idea was not consummated, what appeared was good. 'As to the figure surmounting the whole,' said Gilbert some time later, 'if I must confess to a meaning or a *raison d'être* for its being there, I confess to have been actuated by a desire to symbolise the work of Lord Shaftesbury, the blindfolded Love sending forth indiscriminately, yet with purpose, his missile of kindness.' Now Piccadilly Circus is a desolation without it. Some time it shall come back, it is said, but the statement is only half believed. The flower-sellers at the base, women in brown shawls and black straw hats, have been moved on to some other place. Quaint looking little bodies they were, sitting on the fountain steps, selling the pretty posies arranged in their baskets, yet they were civil and honest, and brought a certain sincerity to their work. Something in the business, bringing these sweet and simple touches of nature in her lovely colour to the core of Babylon, seems to exalt those who practise it and to warrant the sympathy of the passers-by. They are an institution of a kind that cities should preserve. When we visit Rome how pleasantly and with what sympathy we look upon the flower-sellers on the steps of the Piazza di Spagna; and what should we say of Rome were its controllers to banish them from those steps and clear away the adjacent fountain with its boat, that room might be made for a new contraption of this mechanical age?

* * *

The case of St Paul's Cathedral is a more overwhelming and national sadness. Strangers who, on coming to town, have been accustomed to assume St Paul's, rather than journey east to see it, may never now have the opportunity to comprehend by vision its beauties and glories in normal conditions and circumstances, since years must pass ere it is fully restored again. Great architects seem occasionally to blunder into some of their best effects, and Wren, perhaps, scarcely knew what he was achieving in a feature that has always appeared to me as one of the chief beauties of the interior, the gentle golden light that softly falls from the windows beneath the dome upon the choir and altar, while the rest of the cathedral is set in varied shades of gray. And here we have a sense of smooth and polished order as not in the Abbey, and the visibility—to use a word of more frequent use now than once—is good, and so are the effects of light and shade. It often seems to the common mind that the architectural aim to a heavenly solemnity is made through gloom, because, perhaps, it is the easy way. The supreme example of much light and high visibility in a great ecclesiastical work is St Peter's at Rome. In different years I loitered in St Peter's again and again, wondering why

this tremendous work did not stir me as it ought, and as I wished it. It never did. Piece by piece, artistically, architecturally, historically and in other senses, it seemed magnificent, its spaces noble, but at each time of leaving I experienced a sense of failure and something missed. In such matters as these, having no expert knowledge and trusting largely to the integrity of my emotions, I am properly inclined to condemn myself for ignorance and search for greater knowledge forthwith, but here after all I hesitated, for my senses had been tested on many architectural masterpieces, and had acquitted themselves fairly well. Take the case of the cathedral at Seville. I do not forget the overwhelming awe that fell upon me as I crept into the full magnificence of this incomparable interior, whose columns seem of themselves to grasp the soul of the beholder and swing it through mists above to heights beyond. I had scarcely considered this cathedral in advance, by reading or otherwise, and the effect upon me would have been the same had I been carried blindfold to Seville, and there, not knowing my whereabouts, had my sight restored. Two years ago in Rome the idea flashed upon me that it was weakness in light and shade that I marked, a too prevailing flatness, a lack of brilliancy here and profound depth of darkness there. Then I discovered, or seemed to discover, that everywhere about the cathedral there was confirmation of my fancy, and for my own mental and emotional case at all events I was satisfied. This may be like nonsense to others more learned than myself in such matters, but there it is. The lighting effects of our St Paul's Cathedral seem to me more effective than those of the gorgeous church of Rome, and, pursuing my own fancy, I have found them solemnly delightful.

* * *

Being in the city and somewhat retired from the general sight-seeing track, the historical interest of the relics of St Paul's has not been appreciated by the common people as it should have been. To a simple and faithful patriotic mind this crypt is more fascinating and impressive than the Abbey tombs. Here the statesmen, whose works are sometimes meretricious and least enduring, are less exalted; here are the graves of those who spread delight around. Some great painters, like Lawrence and Landseer, are here; and Turner, dying, pleaded that he might be buried as near to Sir Joshua Reynolds in St Paul's as might be, and so it was. Here musicians rest; the most popular of the moderns, Arthur Sullivan, is one of them. And some who were once our own special friends have their memorials; the journalists who have fallen in great causes, here, if not elsewhere,

being given their due. Some warriors add the martial tone; yes, warriors! Nelson and Wellington, the two of them, are near each other. The funeral chariot of the victor of Waterloo is a rare and grand contrivance. The often-quoted declaration of Nelson at the battle of the Nile: 'a peerage or Westminster Abbey,' contained a touch of vulgarity that makes it less pleasant for remembrance than other famous sayings of the hero, even though peerages of that period were not the same titular stuff as those which have been marketed in recent times; but here is Nelson at St Paul's, and not at Westminster. Collingwood lies beside this happy hero. Great is the glory of St Paul's, and great the love of it. Every man or woman who, when young, comes wonderingly from some other place to live in London feels at once some sense of a new possessive intimacy with this great cathedral. Shrine it is of the matchless city, as could be no other. Before the Abbey we stand in profound and respectful awe; but London loves its cathedral, and showed its love when quarter of a million pounds asked for its repair were yielded instantly. When first I came to London, back in Victoria's ending years, it was the spring, it was May, and I had printer's ink to smell all through Saturday nights, and then walk to my lodging along streets strangely still and wonderful, at about five o'clock in the morning. And the splendid vision remains in memory as clear and beautiful now as then of the dome of St Paul's glowing in the loveliness of the Sunday morning's sun above the smooth slope of Ludgate Hill. Even in those days people talked of danger; and perhaps I first, having inquired of deans and architects, made some public report upon it in the popular newspapers. Though I believe not in omens and signs, and superstitions do not catch me, yet if St Paul's were to crumble, as some have prophesied, I should tremble for the people and the empire, for, were this no sign, there could never be a sign to men. The friendliness of the cathedral here in the heart of business London is grateful to the spirit of its people. In serene tranquillity it stands, while the traffic of the town swirls round its Yard. For its near neighbours it has the Bank, the Royal Exchange, the Guildhall, Mansion House, and Post Office. And at four in the afternoon of all the business days, just when the work is done, when the banks are closed, there is a service in the cathedral. The *Nunc Dimittis* and *Magnificat*, with choir and organ, Stainer in E, or Travers in B minor—the end of the City day. The speed and noise outside are quickening as the home-going hour approaches; here within are stillness and a soft solemnity. It is the City's daily harvest festival. No other city in the world contains a monument that is of its own tissue, its very soul, as this.

THE PASSING OF THE FLEET.

By 'TAFFRAIL,' Author of *Pincher Martin, O.D.*; *The Little Ship*, &c.

'The night, clear and starlit, is dark, with no moon.'

TO one looking down from the hill-top behind the town the great expanse of the anchorage is blotted with the deeper shadows which represent ships—battleships and light cruisers, an auxiliary or two, and close inshore two flotillas of destroyers. Their hulls are picked out in tier upon tier of shining pin-points of light cast from many scuttles, while here and there the brilliant constellation is punctuated by the bluish-white glare of an arc-lamp. Masts, funnels, and heavy upperworks are all but invisible against the sombre background of sea.

It is calm and windless; but from a height the glassy water does, not reflect the light shoreward. Instead, each vessel seems to float squat and ponderous in a separate, scintillating radiance of her own making.

The ships talk incessantly one to the other. Hardly a minute passes without the frenzied winking of a signal-lamp stabbing the darkness with the longs and shorts of the Morse code. Sometimes, when the flagship herself becomes communicative in three different directions at once, the conversation becomes general and the lights flicker in and out, out and in, all over the bay.

Spangles of diamond and ruby and emerald, with semi-luminous trails of disturbed water and breaking ripples stretching far behind them, move ceaselessly from ship to ship and ship to shore. They are the drifters and steamboats and motor-boats about their business, and so still is the air that the swishing sound of their movement travels even to the hill-top, a full mile away. Occasionally the harsh chatter from the exhaust of a refractory motor-boat disturbs the peace with a staccato popping like the fire of a distant machine-gun.

In the flagship, the large vessel nearest the shore, a band is playing. The tune is indistinguishable and the music very faint; but the thrumming of instruments comes travelling softly across the water. The admiral has a dinner-party.

Sometimes there comes the sudden blare of a bugle, sometimes the shrill twitter of a boat-swain's pipe and the sound of distant orders as a boat is hoisted. And every half hour is marked by the bells, some deep-throated and mellow, some shrill, as ship after ship takes up the tale and the sound goes rolling round the bay to fade away in the distance.

There comes a golden flash and a cloud of smoke from the flagship—the nine o'clock gun. The sharp report reverberates in and out among the cliffs, to set the gulls chattering. The echoes

have not died away before the long, drawn-out wail of the 'Last Post' is sounding from every ship, the fanfare of bugles, harmonious in the distance, seeming to travel on and on in interminable waves of sound, mournful but very beautiful. Then silence.

All day long the little town has been full of men on leave—chief petty-officers resplendent in peaked caps and brass buttons, bluejackets and marines. Some, for the sake of the exercise, have gone for sober and economical walks in the country. Others, the care-free bachelors, have spent their money with seaman-like prodigality, and restaurants, houses of refreshment, cinemas, and picture-postcard shops have all done a thriving trade.

The fleet has been at anchor only for three days; but the attraction of the uniform is fatal, and its wearers are not slow in making friends. Many a male civilian has had his nose temporarily put out of joint by those fascinating trousers, cut loose over the ankles, and the picturesque jumpers with their flapping collars and black silk handkerchiefs knotted in front. Many a sailor and a girl have spent the afternoon together coyly talking—perhaps, after dark, linking arms or clasping waists with their heads very close together. Numbers of the men, returning to catch the last boats, have been accompanied to the landing-place by other people's sisters.

For three afternoons the golf-links have been invaded by officers, and the roads filled with motor-bicyclists new to the district. Garages have done good business, and provision shops have been well-nigh gutted by stewards, mess-men, and canteen managers. There is hardly an egg in the town.

The fleet is very welcome.

Four bells—ten o'clock—chimes out from ship after ship. The last drifters and liberty-boats leave the shore, and again there comes the chirping of boatswain's pipes as the men are 'piped down' to their hammocks on the crowded mess-decks. The band no longer plays. The music ceased some time ago in a faintly-heard National Anthem.

Five bells. Soon, round the flagship's brilliantly illuminated accommodation-ladder, there appears a little cluster of lights, red and green and gold, as the boats come and go. The dinner-party is over. The admiral's guests are leaving. And before long the lights in the scuttles start gradually to fade away. The outlines of the ships become more clearly visible against their background of deep indigo. Steamboats no longer pass to and fro. Everything is still. A floating town of nearly fifteen thousand inhabitants—

admirals and able seamen, callow striplings and veterans of the war, officers and men of every different trade and calling, is temporarily at rest.

But the navy never really sleeps. Watch is being kept, and occasionally a ship flickers into life as her winking lamp spells out a message. There are men awake on deck, on the bridges, in wireless offices, boiler-rooms and engine-rooms—men whose duty it is to watch while their ship-mates slumber. The tang of burning oil-fuel in the air and a smudge of black smoke obscuring the stars show that ships are raising steam for the work of the morrow.

Eight bells—midnight. The watchers are relieved, and go yawning to their cabins and hammocks.

The dawn comes slowly out of the east in a glow of misty pink and citron. The calm water of the bay reflects the pale colouring like a sheet

of burnished steel. It is early; but already the air is full of the clanking murmur of cables slowly coming home.

There comes a flutter of flags and a winking light from a destroyer leader, and the flotillas, the first to move, turn fussily on their heels and steam rapidly seaward. They are followed by a squadron of shapely light cruisers—the cavalry of the sea—then by the battleships, their huge hulls sliding through the water with hardly a ripple, and the musical cry of the leadsmen in their chains echoing across the water.

‘And a ha-a-a-alf ten!’

Within an hour, before the majority of folk ashore are out of bed, the anchorage is deserted save by a solitary destroyer depot-shop. A little later, and the fleet is nearly out of sight—nothing but a blur of masts and funnels overtopping the clear horizon under the risen sun.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER XIII.—HARIPOL—AUXILIARY TROOPS.

HALF-WAY down the avenue Archie drew up sharp. ‘I forgot about Mackenzie. We can’t have him here—he’ll play the fool somehow.—Benjie, out you get. You’re one of the few that can manage him. Here’s his lead—you tie him up somewhere and watch for us, and we’ll pick you up outside the gates when we start home. Don’t get into trouble on your own account. I advise you to cut round to the bothies and try to find out what is happenin’.’

On the massive doorstep of Haripol stood Lady Claybody, parasol in one hand and the now useless dog-whip in the other. She made a motion as if to retreat, but thought better of it. Her face was flushed, and her air had abated something of its serenity. The sight of Janet—for she looked at Archie without recognition—seemed to awake her to the duties of hospitality, and she advanced with outstretched hand. Then a yelp from the side of Palliser-Yeates wrung from her an answering cry. In a trice Wee Roguie was in her arms.

‘Yes,’ Janet explained sweetly, ‘it’s Roguie, quite safe and well. There’s a boy who sells fish at Strathlarrig—Benjie they call him—he found him in the woods and brought him to me. I hope you haven’t been worried.’

But Lady Claybody was not listening. She had set the dog on his feet and was wagging her forefinger at him, a procedure which seemed to rouse all the latent epilepsy of his nature. ‘Oh, you naughty, naughty Roguie! Cruel, cruel doggie! You loved freedom better than your happy home. Master and mistress have been so anxious about Wee Roguie.’

It was an invocation which lasted for two and a half minutes, till the invoker realised

the presence of the men. She graciously shook hands with Sir Archie.

‘I drove Miss Janet over,’ said the young man, nervously explaining the obvious. ‘And I took the liberty of bringin’ a friend who is staying with me—Mr Palliser-Yeates. I thought Lord Claybody might like to meet him, for I expect he knows all about him.’

The lady beamed on both. ‘This is a very great pleasure, Mr Palliser-Yeates, and I’m sure Claybody will be delighted. He ought to be in for tea very soon.’ As it chanced, Lady Claybody had an excellent memory and a receptive ear for talk, and she was aware that in her husband’s conversation the name of Palliser-Yeates occurred often, and always in dignified connections.

She led the way through the hall to a vast new drawing-room, which commanded a wide stretch of lawns and flower-beds as far as the woods which muffled the mouth of the Reascuill glen. When the party were seated, and butler and footman had brought the materials for tea, Lady Claybody—Roguie on a cushion by her side—became confidential.

‘We’ve had such a wearing day, my dear,’ she turned to Janet. ‘First, the ruffian who calls himself John Macnab is probably trying to poach the forest. The rain yesterday kept him off, but we have good reason to believe that he will come to-day. Poor John-son has been on the hill since breakfast. Then there was the anxiety about Roguie. I’ve had our people searching the woods and shrubberies, for the little darling might have been caught in a trap. . . . Macnicol says there are no traps, but you never can tell. . . . And then, on the

top of it all, we've been besieged since quite early in the morning by insolent journalists. No. They hadn't the good manners to come to the house—I should have sent them packing—but they have been all over the grounds, and button-holing our servants. They want to hear about John Macnab, but we can't tell them anything, for as yet we know nothing ourselves. I gave orders that they should be turned out of the place—no violence, of course, for it doesn't do to offend the Press, but quite firmly, for they were trespassing. Would you believe it, my dear, they wouldn't go! So our people had simply to drive them out, and it has taken nearly all day, and they may be coming back any moment!—Something should really be done, Mr Palliser-Yeates, to restrain the license of the modern Press, with its horrid, vulgar sensationalism and its invasion of all the sanctities of private life.'

Palliser-Yeates cordially agreed. The lady had not looked to Archie for assent, and her manner towards him was a trifle cold. Perhaps it was the memory of her visit, a fortnight before, when he was sickening for smallpox; perhaps it was her husband's emphatic condemnation of his Muirtown speech.

At this point Lord Claybody entered, magnificent in a kilt of fawn-coloured tweed and a ferocious sporran made of the mask of a dog otter. The garments, which were aggressively new, did not become his short, square figure.

'I don't think you have met my husband, Miss Raden,' said his wife. Then to Claybody, 'You know Sir Archibald Roylance. And this is Mr Palliser-Yeates, who has been so kind as to come over to see us.'

Palliser-Yeates was greeted with enthusiasm. 'I heard you were in the North. Delighted to meet you, sir. Funny that we've had so much to do with each other indirectly and have never met. . . . You've been having a long walk? Well, I know what you need. Cold tea for you. We'll leave the ladies to their gossip and have a whisky-and-soda in the library. I've just had a letter from Dickinson on which I'd like your views. Busy folk like you and me can never make a clean cut of their holiday. There's always something clawing us back to the mill.'

The two men were led off to the library, and Janet was left to entertain her hostess. That lady was in an expansive mood, which may have been due to the restoration of Roguie, but also owed something to the visit of Palliser-Yeates. 'My heart is buried here,' she told the girl. 'Every day I love Haripol more—its beauty and its poetry and its—its wonderful traditions. My dream is to make it a centre for all the nicest people to come and rest. Everybody comes to the Highlands now, and we have so much to offer them here. . . . Claybody, I may as well admit, is apt to be restless when we are alone. He is not enough of a sportsman to

be happy shooting and fishing all day and every day. He has a wonderful mind, my dear, and he wants a chance of exercising it. He needs to be stimulated. Look how his eye brightened when he saw Mr Palliser-Yeates. . . . And then there are the girls. . . . I'm sure you see what I mean.'

Janet saw, and set herself to cherish the innocent ambition of her hostess. In view of what might befall at any moment it was most needful to have the Claybodys in a good humour. Then Lady Claybody, one of whose virtues was a love of fresh air, proposed that they should walk in the gardens. Janet would have preferred to remain in the house, had she been able to think of any kind of excuse, for the out-of-doors at the moment was filled with the most explosive material—Benjie, Mackenzie, an assortment of fugitive journalists, and Leithen and Lamancha somewhere in the hinterland. But she assented with a good grace, and, accompanied by Roguie, who, after a morning of liberty, had cast the part of lap-dog contemptuously behind him, they sauntered into the trim parterres.

The head gardener at Haripol was a man of the old school. He loved fantastically-shaped beds and geometrical patterns, and geraniums and lobelias and calceolarias were still dear to his antiquated soul. On the lawns he had been given his head, but Lady Claybody, who had accepted new fashions in horticulture as in other things, had constructed a pleasure of her own, which with crazy-paving and sundials and broad borders was a very fair imitation of an old-English garden. She had a lily pond, and a rosery, and many pergolas, and what promised in twenty years to be a fine yew walk. The primitive walled garden, planted in the Scots fashion a long way from the house, was now relegated to fruit and vegetables.

Lady Claybody was an inaccurate enthusiast. She poured into Janet's ears a flood of botanical information and mispronounced Latin names. Each innovation was modelled on what she had seen or heard of in some famous country-house. The girl approved, for in that glen the environment of hill and wood was so masterful that the artifices of man were instantly absorbed. The gardens exhausted, they wandered through the rhododendron thickets, which in early summer were towers of flame, crossed the turbid Reascuill by a rustic bridge, and found themselves in a walk which skirted the stream through a pleasant wilderness. Here an expert from Kew had been turned loose, and had made a wonderful wild garden, in which patches of red-hot poker and godetia and *Hyacinthus candicans* shone against the darker carpet of the heather. Roguie led the way, and where Roguie's yelps beckoned his mistress followed. Soon the two were nearly a mile from the house, approaching the portals of the Reascuill glen.

(Continued on page 428.)

NATIVE LABOUR IN THE MALAY STATES.

I.

THE prosperity of the Malay States, for, in spite of the present depression of the rubber industry and fluctuation of tin, this country is one of the most prosperous in the world, is founded upon the enterprise and energy of two races, the British and the Chinese. The Malay, though a wholly charming individual, is a negligible quantity in the worlds of industry and finance. Two other races play a great part in the commerce of these States, the Tamil, or Southern Indian, whose importance in the field of labour is daily increasing, and the Javanese. The latter is gradually disappearing from the more progressive estates. It is upon these three races, Chinese, Tamil, and Javanese, that the European relies to get his work done.

Sir Frank Swettenham once said very truly, that if a statue were to be erected to the pioneer of industry in Malaya, it ought to represent John Chinaman, with his big straw hat and long-handled hoe or *chungkol*. He is undoubtedly a very remarkable figure, and one to be found in every street, village, field, estate, or mine, in some capacity or other. In nine cases out of ten, he makes your clothes and washes them, makes your boots and brushes them, sells you your food, cooks and serves it to you, provides your vegetables and fruit, makes the bungalow you live in, and repairs the car you drive. He penetrates everywhere. You will find Chinese on the Federal and Municipal Councils, in the Chambers of Commerce, and in subordinate Government positions. In every business house of any importance, in every bank, wherever positions of trust are to be filled, the Chinese is usually preferred to any other Asiatic. He is a strange anomaly, both progressive and conservative, devoid of ambition, yet *intensely ambitious*: infinitely cunning, yet square and honest in business.

An outstanding example of the achievement of a Chinese coolie was the case of the late Mr Loke Yew, who died recently at Kuala Lumpur. He started in the Straits as a ricksha puller, earning a dollar or two a day. He had no education, as we understand it, yet Towkay Loke Yew left to his trustees a fortune of some nine million sterling, in land, tin, house property, and rubber. Twice during his career he was broken and bankrupt, yet every cent of his debts was paid in full on each occasion. The industry, ability, and business insight necessary to compile such a fortune, the courage needed to go on in spite of failure, call for the most profound admiration.

The Chinese to most Europeans is a mystery. Language is the great bar to a completer

understanding. He speaks the most difficult language in the world, one in which the dialects vary so much that a Hokkien Chinese cannot understand a Cantonese, or a Cantonese a Hylam.

It is a curious fact that the European who can speak Chinese well is four times out of five usually a little 'queer' in the head. So it comes about that the language of intercourse between Chinese and European is invariably Bazaar Malay. This is an easy language to learn and speak, one that covers the ordinary needs of every day, but not adequate to the more interesting matters of philosophy, customs, and religion.

So, to the vast majority of British in the East, John is a smiling, pleasant enigma. His common-sense and money-sense are his two most outstanding characteristics, the next his industry. He is a creature of surprises. The manager of a large rubber plantation once contracted with a Chinese to eradicate some four hundred acres ofalang grass on his estate. It was a big contract and ran to about \$14,000 in all. Not till the contract had been satisfactorily carried out did he discover that the contractor was merely the sub-agent of a principal, who turned out to be his own house-boy, a domestic servant to whom he paid some \$30 a month.

The Chinese has no administrative ambition. He is content to allow anyone to run the country so long as he can go on accumulating wealth undisturbed, and, though he arrived in Malaya centuries before the British, is happy and contented under their rule. Lower class Chinese provide the bulk of the labour for mining purposes, and about one-half of the labour on rubber estates. They are worked chiefly on the N.C.O. system. A European has no dealing with the coolie direct; his orders are given to the mandor, or overseer, who is usually also a contractor. Contract labour suits the Chinese best, and nearly all their employers adopt this system—which eliminates any personal contact with the individual coolie.

In certain respects the Chinese seem to us extraordinarily callous. They have little regard for human life—except their own. A crowd of Chinese, though some of them were excellent swimmers, have been known to stand on the bank of a river and allow two of their number to drown without making any attempt to rescue the unfortunates. Indeed, their struggles seemed to cause more amusement than anything else. A domestic servant, when washing clothes in the morning, fell into a hole and was drowned. The first intimation given to his master came from the cook at dinner-time. Thus: 'Sir! the water-carrier has fallen into the river—shall I go and get another?—he's dead!'

The honesty of the merchant does not extend to the servant class. They will cheerfully rob and swindle as best they may. If discovered, they accept punishment with perfect equanimity, and think all the more of the person who finds them out. There is no moral sense perceptible among this class—each for himself. Watch your own interests.

Two other sides of the Chinese character deserve attention, the passion for gambling, and the craving for opium. The former is universal. Chinese of every class are ready to gamble within their means. They begin at a very early age, and will bet on anything, but preferably on their own games, *mein po*, *fan-tan*, and others. The craving for opium forms a favourite gambit of some of our sensational novelists. It is exaggerated out of all proportion to reality. Opium smoked in moderation seems to be as harmless as tobacco. Generally speaking, the smoker is a more reliable workman than the non-smoker. Of course, extreme cases are to be found—but they are the exception, not the rule. John wants his opium, and usually gets it legally and easily. There is no more romance or mystery about a Chandu shop than there is about the public-house where the British workman buys his glass of beer.

II.

The Tamil is a widely different individual, but, like the Chinese, has made himself indispensable to the European in Malaya. The higher caste, Jaffna Tamils, are largely found in Government offices, as doctors, dressers, clerks, and minor railway officials. Their commercial activities are very small, and usually confined to the Tulakan, or Mohammedan Tamil, who is often a shopkeeper in a small way. This class of Tamil invariably speaks English of a sort, and copies English manners, wears European clothes, and apes the European. It is a responsible and, to a certain extent, reliable class—but, on the whole, vain and childish.

Its love for things European leads it into strange errors of speech and correspondence. There is a classic story of the meeting of two Tamil clerks, one of whom had just returned from a holiday in India. 'Well, well, Mr Cumarasamy, how well you are looking! Your holiday has made you the new man, you are looking so rosy!' Or, again, the following letter to the manager of an estate from his dresser:

'GRACIOUS SIR,—I beg your permission to forthwith chase my absent wife, who has this four months been monkey tricking up her sleeve with your second clerk. Both have absconded.

Your obedient Servant,

R. PILLAI.

P.S.—I am most hellish fed up.'

As a whole they are plodders, lacking initiative, and absolutely devoid of the larger vision of the

Chinese, but content with their lot and faithful according to their lights. But the great bulk of this race are employed on rubber estates as labourers, where, at a daily wage of forty cents for men and thirty for women, they can live well and save money for their families in India. The tie of family is, to them, a very strong one, and their relationships are known and worked out to the most distant cousins possible, even further than those of an ardent Scottish genealogist! They are a simple folk, and, as long as they are treated as such, will produce excellent results. But to obtain these results, exactly the same close personal supervision is required as a master gives his form at a public school. A mixture of chaff and severity is the best recipe. Like the school-boy, the Tamil watches his master closely, and immediately takes advantage of any signs of weakness.

With Tamil labour it is not enough to issue orders to overseers, as it is with Chinese. It is always necessary to see to it in person that orders are carried out. This, naturally, entails learning their language—which is not an easy one. Patience, however, brings its own reward. Once the confidence of a Tamil labour force has been definitely won, it remains with its possessor to an almost embarrassing extent. Advice on every sort of subject is sought. Every kind of dispute is brought to the European for settlement, and a curious, semi-affectionate relationship is established. The low caste Tamil is not truthful, but is devoid of the Chinaman's cunning; and although he will lie, blatantly and valiantly, he invariably contradicts himself and gives the show away. He has none of the Chinese love of personal cleanliness—he smears his black skin with evil smelling coco-nut oil instead of using soap and water. Physically he is much inferior—yet he is a more human and lovable creature by far.

By religion he is a Hindu, very superstitious, and believing in every kind of devil and demon. He will never stir outside after dark without lights, and much shouting and singing to keep the devils away. It is no uncommon thing for a Tamil coolie to refuse to work in a certain field, because it is inhabited by a devil who beats him—the true reason being that a branch of a tree has, at some time or other, fallen on his head. Drink is his principal vice, but even that he indulges in but twice a year. Given understanding and encouragement, a Tamil is an excellent workman—but for those who take neither time nor trouble over him (and there are too many such Europeans in the East) he will do nothing.

The Javanese are the least satisfactory form of labour. They are akin to the Malay, and individually a most pleasant race, spotlessly clean in person, and of engaging manners. But

they have a passion for getting into debt—and have queer migratory fits. They do not care to settle too long in any given place, which makes them unsatisfactory from the employer's point of view.

In Java, where the Labour Laws of the Dutch are such that the employer can count on every assistance from Government, they provide practically all the labour on coffee, tobacco, and rubber estates, and give excellent results. This makes it probable that the best type of Javanese remains in his own country and does not emigrate. Consequently the Javanese is dis-

appearing from the Malay Peninsula. At one time, before the State-aided recruiting of Tamil labour from Madras was inaugurated, he had things much his own way; but the lower scale of wages demanded by the Tamil, combined with the reasons stated above, have restricted his sphere of employment, and he is no longer the important factor that he was some years ago. Rubber estate managers are looking more to Madras and less to China and Java than of old, but the Chinese grip on the tin industry is alone sufficient to assure his position in the future of Malaya.

REVERSION TO TYPE.

PART II.

III.

EXACTLY a year has passed since the incident in Lady Bunty's boudoir in London. The scene has changed. The three who took part in it are far removed from London. 'Sandy' and 'Polly' are back in their own country, and the fates have willed that Lady Bunty should all unwittingly have followed them, her father having been posted as British Minister to Peking.

It is once again a hot summer evening in July, and to travel in July in North China is something to avoid if possible. In spite of the intense heat, however, a small party of Europeans, guarded by Chinese soldiers, has just arrived outside the massive walls of Hai-hsi-tou, the centuries-old capital of the province.

For some months there had been serious disturbances in China. These had culminated in an attack by brigands upon English and American travellers, ladies as well as men having been carried off up into the mountains. So serious was this outrage considered that a special mission, headed by the British Minister in person, had gone to investigate. As the journey included a visit to the provincial capital, situated in a very wild and unfrequented portion of the province, and as, moreover, it promised excitement, Lady Bunty—unofficially, of course—decided to accompany her father.

For five days the little party had braved the broiling heat, travelling partly by canal and boat, partly on horse-back. No railroad had as yet touched Hai-hsi-tou. Riding wearily through the sparsely-inhabited uplands, still more depopulated by the depredations of the many brigand bands, the members of the Mission looked eagerly forward to reaching their destination that evening. Even though the rays of the sun slowly lost their intensity and the evening breeze began to sweep the hills, it was with intense relief that the party saw in the valley below the crenellated walls of the hoary

old capital, ancient when London first became the abode of men.

Picking their way down the stony hillside, the guard of the Mission began to pull themselves together for an imposing entry—Chinese fashion—under the huge stone archways which, blocked by iron-studded wooden gates, gave access to the city. Upon the ramparts were loopholed, brightly-painted wooden towers of considerable strength, which added to the picturesque effect.

As the leading soldiers of the guard rode up to the huge stone gateway they were met by grave and sedate-looking individuals garbed in the usual long Chinese robes. One of these venerable-looking underlings accepted from the hands of the captain of the guard a two-feet long red official envelope. Custom in China ordains that this envelope with enclosures shall be borne as a means of introduction by any mission, or in front of any single individual of importance. These picturesque aids to identification and self-glory contain the style and titles of all important personages. The less-important the personage, be it said, the larger, more often than not, the red envelope. Gravely waving the escort inside the archway, the venerable officials mounted their mules, then turned to show the way through narrow, picturesque, stone-flagged streets. A short ride past lines of open shops offering wares of all kinds brought the Mission to the precincts of the impressive-looking Yamen. Here the crowds were even more tightly packed, for though, as a rule, in Chinese cities no notice is taken of Europeans, at Hai-hsi-tou this was the first occasion upon which many of the inhabitants had seen a white face.

Though pressing close upon the Mission, and eaten up with curiosity as the Chinese lower orders always are, the crowds were orderly, due, as the captain of the guard was careful to inform the Minister, to the wonderful reputation of the new Governor as a strong man and fearless enforcer of law and order. Rumours had already reached the Mission of the doings of this com-

paratively young official. Of the wonderful 'clean up' he had already made. Also, and not quite so enthusiastically from the mouths of the gossips, of his drastic methods of suppressing disorder; for the profession of bandit in China had until lately retained all the halo surrounding modern Robin Hoods. The Governor had failed as yet, so rumour ran, to effect the capture of the chief bandit, to whose daring and resourcefulness had been due the capture of the Europeans and the subsequent payment of a heavy ransom.

Dismounting in the inner court of the Yamen, the official residence and office combined of the Senior Magistrate, the members of the Mission were ushered with all due ceremony through various picturesque court-yards, stone-flagged, into an inner holy of holies. In passing through circular stone or marble archways from court to court, Lady Buntly had time to take in and admire the vast extent and romantic aspects of the ancient Yamen. Each of the inner courts had its garden among the flags, and some their fountains containing gold and silver fish. As the party passed, more retainers stood lining the verandahs of the courts—soldiers in modern equipment saluting, long-robed clerks and minor officials gravely bowing.

While the members of the party waited in the reception room the Secretary of the Governor did the honours. Tea was served in European fashion, the ante-room itself being furnished entirely in European style. The Minister was solemnly informed that the Governor was 'hastening to meet him'; also that he 'regretted not at once being able to prostrate himself.'

Tired and travel-stained, the members of the party sat waiting. Lady Buntly had selected a quiet corner. Suddenly, by some unseen hand, a heavy yellow curtain was drawn aside at one end of the reception room. Through the arched doorway stepped the slight, upright figure of a man dressed in well-fitting khaki uniform. Instead of the familiar red staff tabs, Lady Buntly noticed he wore tabs of the old Imperial Chinese Yellow. The low talk of the company instinctively ceased as the young Governor—for it was this much-belauded official himself—walked straight up to the Minister with outstretched hand.

'Good-day, Excellency,' he said in perfect English. 'I am highly honoured by your visit. May this auspicious event settle all differences between our respective nations. Am I to have the honour of being presented to your suite?' Said by an European, these high-flown compliments might have sounded overdone. Spoken by a Chinese official, in perfect English, they seemed quite natural. From the corner where she had ensconced herself unseen, Lady Buntly had watched the entry of the Governor. It required the self-control and training of a lifetime to pull herself together for the meeting she

knew must be faced. Her first thought had been one of sheer wonder. Could this be 'Sandy' Ling? Yet there was no mistaking the figure, the pose, that voice. Lady Buntly's thoughts flew back to the scene in her boudoir in London. She remembered the animal-like face with its ruthless, cruel expression. But the girl knew she must face the music. As her father turned to present her she wondered if he, too, recalled the former Secretary of Legation; then she set her teeth. To give him his due, it was 'Sandy' who first recovered himself. With a bow, and the hard smile Lady Buntly had seen before, he held out his hand.

'A most unexpected pleasure, Lady Buntly,' he said, as if there had been no such scene just a year ago. 'Who would have thought that we should meet again in China?' Lady Buntly bent her head in acknowledgment, but did not speak, and the presentation was got through in due form.

When tea was over the Governor remained a few minutes in conversation with the Minister. He seemed perfectly at ease as he told in barest outline of the state of the countryside. 'But,' Lady Buntly heard him say, 'you will be very pleased to hear that the chief offender has at last been caught; in fact he was brought into the city this morning. He is a well-known brigand and a brave one. He fought hard before being taken. But your Excellency has had a hard day, and the Mission will doubtless be glad to rest. To-morrow we meet officially in the Great Hall of Audience, and I shall have much pleasure in showing you the offender who planned and carried out the latest outrage on your compatriots.'

IV.

Tired as she was, Lady Buntly's sleep that night was not her usual dreamless repose. Vague shadowy figures floated before her closed eyes—evil-looking men with human bodies and the heads of tigers, fierce, weird figures who seemed to be chasing her through dim forests. At other times disembodied lifeless spirits appeared, which she found herself endeavouring to avoid while she danced on the arm of a pale-faced, corpse-like figure. Suddenly she woke with a start, cold and chilled in spite of the heat of the night. As the girl lay listening she fancied she heard the smothered sounds of human voices. Cries as though men were being tortured. Appeals for mercy in tones she thought she recognised, but in a language she did not understand.

As the gray dawn of the July morning began to creep into the verandah of the inner courtyard on to which her room gave, Lady Buntly's thoughts swept her back to that parting scene in London. For the past year she had done her best to forget her own 'mid-summer madness.'

By ten o'clock the Mission had been ushered

with all due ceremony into the Great Hall of Audience. The Minister himself and his two Secretaries of Legation were conducted to seats on a slightly-raised dais. The rest of the party occupied a prominent position immediately in front of and almost touching the dais. The Great Hall was densely crowded with a very picturesque and orderly assemblage, carefully controlled by a strong detachment of smart-looking Chinese troops.

After a pause of a few minutes the heavy yellow curtains, suspended from massive beams brilliantly painted in dull gold, were slowly drawn apart. Preceded by a small guard of soldiers and several secretaries, the young Governor walked quietly and with dignity up to the central seat upon the dais. The soldiers lined up behind the Governor. Upon his left hand sat His Excellency the Minister, upon the Governor's right his deputy and two other officials of the old type in long silk robes. A low, heavily-carved, handsome blackwood table stood in front of the seats upon the dais.

Speaking in his own language, the Governor addressed the assembled audience at some length, his remarks being translated by an interpreter for the benefit of members of the Mission. After a reply by the Minister the Governor again spoke. For a moment as he began—almost by chance it seemed—he glanced towards Lady Bunty. Their eyes met.

'I will now,' the Governor continued, 'prove to all concerned the good faith of the Chinese Government, in that they have by strenuous undertaking already captured the instigator of the recent attack on the Europeans. He will be brought before this honourable Mission.'

Again, it seemed to Lady Bunty, the eyes of the Governor sought hers. There was a stir throughout the vast hall. Phlegmatic as the Chinese are, the appearance of such a notorious character as the bandit chief moved even their cold-blooded natures. The Governor bent towards the Minister, speaking in low tones. The huge assembly waited in dead silence.

From behind the yellow curtains an usher suddenly appeared, carrying a small square wooden box carefully sealed with large red seals. This he passed to one of the secretaries. Dropping upon one knee, the official handed the box to the Governor. Taking it, the latter stood erect, spoke a few words in Chinese, held up the box to the assembly, then placed it on a low table facing the vast hall.

Lady Bunty had been listening indolently to the harangue in Chinese, far more interested in the momentarily expected arrival in person of the brigand chief. As the box was brought in she wondered casually what it contained. As it was placed on the table she noticed the box had a glass front a foot square. As she bent forward idly to examine it, the girl was horror-struck to see the gory newly severed head of a man whose

glazed sightless eyes seemed to seek hers from a few feet away. A cruel, jagged sword-cut ran obliquely across the pale, bloodless face from one temple to the tip of the other ear. The congealed blood had run in dark streaks down each cheek.

For one dreadful moment the girl gazed at the awful spectacle facing her on the table, then, for the shock was too much for even Lady Bunty's courage, she fainted dead away.

It was 'Polly's' head—and 'Sandy's' revenge.

Both had reverted to type.

THE END.

CONNEMARA.

O FOR the sound of the great salt sea!
O for the smell of the sweet brown peat,
Fresh cut and stacked, or lying a-free,
Making a carpet for sunburnt feet—
For mine and others—asthore, machree,
Out where the green and the rainbow meet.

O for a sight of the speedwells blue,
And the quiet pools, and the tumblin' rills,
The foxglove openin' to catch the dew
In its little mouth that a raindrop fills;
And the trees your eyes go a-peepin' through,
And the cattle away on a thousand hills.

Bog-cotton bobbin' along the moor
And clusterin' white in feathery piles,
Flowers in the hedges to cheer God's poor,
And never a cottage for miles and miles;
The slant o' the sun the only lure
To the cottar's home, where the baby smiles.

There's a fuchsia hedge by a crumblin' wall,
And a beetlin' rock where the red fox cow'rs,
And colt's-foot ruddy, and hemlocks tall,
And spreads of wild convolvulus flowers;
God or the Fairies planted them all,
For never a seed or a spade was ours.

Lake and mountain, ye are my friends—
The shoeless foot has no tread for town.
I trudge the road where the river bends
And washes the stepping-stones so brown;
And finches flit where the hill descends,
And stop to peck at the thistle-down.

The homing instinct of all my kind
Strains at the heart that is worn and old,
And eyes with tears in them look behind,
When the door is shut and the kine are sold;
God, of Thy mercy temper the wind,
For the flock is shorn, and the fields are cold.

Heart o' my heart! I feel your ache,
I know your hunger, I hear your beat,
For strange is the road I soon must take,
And no one guidin' my stumblin' feet!
And never again my home I'll make,
Where the Irish green and the rainbow meet.
NANNIE POWER O'DONOGHUE.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A LONG-TERM PARAFFIN LAMP.

THERE is no reason, except the charring of the wick, why a paraffin lamp should not burn for any length of time, provided that the oil container is big enough. If a fresh surface is continuously presented to the burner as the wick becomes charred, a lamp will burn so long as oil reaches the wick. Special lamps have been made with wicks in the form of endless bands which are rotated very slowly by clockwork, bringing a new portion into contact with the burner as the wick chars. These lamps, which were at one time used for unattended coast lights, will burn for long periods. A small domestic lamp for places where only a dim light is required has been brought out recently, in which fresh wick is passed under the burner in a different way. A wide, flat wick is contained within a tube which swings edgewise on pivots just inside a big top cover to the container. Stout wires fixed to this wick tube carry a cork float at one side. The upper end of the wick tube is curved so as to form part of a circle having as its centre the centre of the pivots. It is covered by an inverted curved trough, having a rectangular hole that exposes a small part of the wick. This trough is hinged at one end, and rests on the wick tube, but, being very light, it allows the tube to move freely as the cork float rises or falls. On the top of the trough is a clip ring for a small opal glass chimney. When the container, which holds a quart, is full, the cork float is at the top, and has swung the wick tube over so that burning begins at one side. As the oil is consumed the float falls, and gradually presents fresh wick to the hole in the trough until the other side of the wick is reached, which happens when the float rests on the bottom. If kept alight continuously, the lamp will burn for fourteen days. Used during the hours of darkness only, it will burn from one to two months according to the time of year. The lamp is made entirely of polished brass.

A CONCEALED-BED SETTEE.

In these days, when most of us have to make shift with less house-room than that to which we have been accustomed, any devices which will economise space are valuable. An interesting invention of this type is a settee which can be opened out into a bed for an extra guest. It presents the usual appearance, and no one unfamiliar with it would imagine there was a bed inside, with room for the storage of bed-clothes. To open out the bed, the back of the settee is raised, when a loop appears at the rear of the seat. A pull on this loop

opens out the bed, while the seat turns over and is supported by metal feet. The bed consists of a steel frame, hinged to double up under the seat, and provided with a spring mattress and a wool overlay. It measures 6 ft. in length by 4 ft. in width. These settee beds are made up in a variety of shapes and designs.

A COMBINED COAL AND GAS COOKER.

Few housewives have a good word to say for the old-fashioned kitchen, at any rate for use in small houses in which economy has to be closely studied. Under the liberal stoking of the average servant a coal-range consumes an extravagant amount of coal for the results achieved in hot water, cooked foods, and heat. Again, the coal fire is not wanted in the summer if gas is available for cooking; consequently two separate systems are often installed for heating and cooking respectively, coal being used in the one, and gas in the other. A combined hot-water boiler and gas cooker, which has obvious advantages, was to be seen at the recent Ideal Home Exhibition. The coal- or coke-burning hot-water boiler is a separate entity from the gas-cooker, although the two are placed side by side, and are so connected that the hot gases from the coal-fire can be passed round the oven of the gas-cooker and under a hot-plate at the top. Constructed in the form of a square pillar which stands in a tray, the stove burns as an open fire when a door in front (having the usual mica panel) is let down. If closed, slow combustion takes place, and the fire will keep in all night. A shaking-grate, worked by a handle, for shaking the ashes out into the ash-drawer, is provided, together with an adjustment for minutely regulating the draught, as is usual in slow-combustion stoves. A flue at the side leads the hot gases to the space round the oven of the gas-cooker. In this way the oven is heated to a temperature sufficient for many purposes; but if a greater degree of heat is necessary, the gas may be lighted for a few minutes until this is reached, when the gas may be turned off, and the heat *maintained* by the hot gases from the fire. The cooker is very similar to the ordinary type, except for the flue round the oven, which terminates in a pipe at the back for connection to the chimney. Another special feature is the hinging of the top, which carries the gas-rings and griller, so that it can be turned up out of the way, leaving clear the hot-plate heated by the hot-water boiler. At the back of the boiler are the 'flow' and 'return' water connections. Either anthracite, coke, or coalite may be burnt in the stove. According to one user, 'the stove keeps the house going in hot water for the kitchen, the lavatory, and the

baths, and does all the cooking, besides heating one or two rooms; it is in use day and night, and consumes from 2 cwt. of anthracite a week upwards.'

SOMETHING NEW IN IRONING-BOARDS.

An ironing-board that grips firmly with a plier-like action the edge of any table without screws, clamps, or other fastening is one of the latest domestic novelties. The board itself, which is 4 feet long, is made in two widths of 10 inches and 14 inches respectively. The top is well padded and covered with strong calico. A slot is cut in the end that grips the table. Through this slot projects the end of a leg, which is pivoted under the board and slopes down to the floor. The edge of the table is gripped between the end of the board and the top of the leg, which is notched to take it. The arrangement, as already suggested, is similar in principle to a pair of pliers, the board representing one handle, pressure on which tends to close the nipping ends on the table edge. To suit different heights of the table and thicknesses of top the leg is made quickly adjustable for length. Both board and leg are made of well-seasoned hard wood.

A HOME BUTTER-MAKER.

Novelty is not claimed for the general design of a home butter-maker which has been lately invented, but the rotating agitator is new in form and in principle. The complete machine consists of the usual glass jar with a rotary agitator mounted on a vertical shaft, which is worked by a handle through the medium of multiplying gear. The gear is of the friction type, in which a rubber pinion is driven by a metal disc. The gear, with the handle, is supported on a metal pillar, which is screwed to a wood base having a recess for the glass jar. Two steel plates, horizontally fixed at the end of a tubular spindle, form the agitator. These plates are made from square pieces with the corners turned over at a right angle, so that they become octagonal. Each corner has a round depression punched into it. If the two plates are placed facing each other, the corners of one can be sprung over the corners of the other, the depressions interlocking and holding the plates firmly the one to the other about half-an-inch apart. The upper plate is fixed permanently to the spindle, but the lower one may be pulled off for cleaning. On the spindle, just above the jar, are two air-scoops, through which air can pass into the spindle to escape between the plates. When the machine is worked the cream between the plates is thrown out by centrifugal force, and air passes down the spindle, the device working like a centrifugal fan, with the result that the cream is continually aerated as well as agitated. We timed a demonstra-

tion of this machine, when butter was formed in $1\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. Moreover, the cream was just out of cold store, a very unfavourable condition for butter-making. All the metal parts of the machine are first copper-plated and then thickly coated with nickel.

A MEASURING TEA-CADDY.

The advantages of a tea-caddy that measures the tea in spoonfuls are obvious. A very simple canister which does this is now obtainable. Outwardly it is a cylinder with a cone-shaped lid having the apex cut off to leave a hole. Inside, with a space between the two, is a similar cylinder, but inverted, so that its cone-shaped end is close to the bottom of the outer cylinder. The top of this inner cylinder is fitted with a flat lid, which is exposed when the cone-shaped lid of the outer cylinder is removed. The inner cylinder can then be filled with tea, of which it holds comfortably a quarter of a pound. A spoonful of the tea runs through the hole in the cone-shaped bottom of the inner cylinder, and rests on the bottom of the outer cylinder. When the canister is turned over the spoonful passes down between the two cylinders, and pours out at the cone-shaped end. By turning the caddy upright, and then reversing it once more, another measured spoonful is poured out, and so on. These measuring caddies are well finished in English gold lacquer with black lettering.

A NON-SPILLING ACCUMULATOR.

In these days, when batteries are used in so many homes for the listening-in set, an accumulator that, even if it is knocked over, cannot spill acid on the tablecloth or other article of furniture, has undeniable advantages. Non-spilling accumulators have been with us for years, but this immunity from damage when they are upset has hitherto been obtained by considerably increasing the height of the case. Devices have been invented lately which prevent the escape of the electrolyte without any alteration to the dimensions. These consist of two narrow compartments fitted with baffles, the one under, the other above, the top of the case. That below extends from end to end of the cell. It is about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide by $\frac{5}{8}$ inch deep. A slot at one end communicates with the inside of the case, from which the bottom of the compartment slants upwards to the other end, where another slot communicates with a chamber above, also with a slanting floor. A hole in the middle of the top of the upper chamber leads into the compartment on the top of the case. This is placed at right angles to the lower compartment, and extends to the full width. It is fitted with two slanting baffles on similar principles to those in the lower compartment, the final vent-hole being in the middle

of the top of the upper chamber and very small. The result of these baffles is that the accumulator may be knocked over in any direction with impunity so far as any risk of spilling is concerned. As a matter of fact, the case can be turned upside down without spilling any of the acid, unless the case is shaken or squeezed. In this connection it is interesting to note that a special type for aeroplanes is made in which the vent is automatically closed by a tiny valve when the machine loops the loop. Another very useful result accruing from these baffles is an entire absence of creeping of the acid when the accumulator is being charged at the maximum rate. Under these conditions the acid in the ordinary accumulator creeps out of the vent and extends over the top of the case, the result being corrosion of the terminals. The small vent with the baffle path to the inside of the case also checks evaporation to such an extent that it is almost non-existent, and making up with distilled water is not needed. These accumulators, the invention of Mr Rowland Edwards, are especially suitable for motor cycles, as well as for aeroplanes and listening-in sets. They have been favourably reported on by the Faraday House testing laboratories and by Mr John Henderson, D.Sc., F.R.S.E., M.I.M.E.

A BRITISH-MADE WICKLESS OIL-STOVE.

Users of wickless oil-stoves have been accustomed to foreign makes for so long that they have ceased to wonder at the absence of British competition in this field. As a matter of fact, British wickless stoves have been on the market for many years, but they are not so well known as their merits warrant. As with many other goods, the wickless stoves produced at home are of more substantial construction than their foreign rivals, and one of them, at least, which has recently been brought to our notice, also possesses several important features that are not to be found in the cheaper imported types. It is of what is known as the 'silent' pattern, only a very slight buzzing sound being audible when it is burning. The container, which is of thick brass, and is capable of withstanding high pressures, holds much more oil than that of other wickless stoves, being about twice the usual depth. This feature allows of mounting the air-pump, which is housed in the container, at a steep inclination, so that pushing down the plunger does not tend to move the stove. Another good point is that the complete pump is removable along with the valve. In addition to the pump, the container is fitted with an air release-valve and a simple indicator which shows when the normal working pressure has been reached. Instead of being soldered to the sides of the container, the three legs that support the top plate are removable, being merely pushed into sockets in a casting

under the burner. The vaporiser is a straight tube of steel with a cup brazed to it about two-thirds of the way up. At the top of the vaporiser is the usual fine jet. In the ordinary burner this jet is a constant source of trouble, particles of carbon, which are deposited in all paraffin vaporisers, becoming detached, and blocking it up. Hitherto such stoppages have been overcome by pushing a very fine wire, known as a pricker, down the jet from the outside. Naturally this process forces the carbon particle back into the vaporiser, where it is liable to give further trouble. In the stove we are describing there is a needle valve inside the jet and vaporiser which also serves the purpose of a 'pricker'; but instead of forcing the carbon back into the jet it pushes it upwards and outwards. This combined valve and pricker is supplied with the vaporiser. It is pushed up by turning a knob at one side of the spigot into which the vaporiser is screwed, a cam on the knob spindle, surmounted by a tiny ball, performing the actual operation. After about four hundred hours of use the vaporiser becomes choked with carbon and must be renewed. But the cost is small, and the renewal can be effected with the fingers, no spanner being required. Outside the vaporiser is a perforated iron casting surrounded by a steel shield, and surmounted by a perforated brass cap. The vapour from the jet impinges on the underside of the cap, which is blank, to be deflected through the holes round the side, outside of which it forms an intensely hot blue flame. A small portion of the vapour is projected downwards through holes in the iron casting and on to the upper part of the vaporiser above the cup. The cup serves to concentrate the flame on the tube, and to support the iron casting and shield. The only part liable to oxidation is the cap, but this is loose, and can be renewed at a trifling cost, as opposed to the perforated part, solid with the complete burner, in the foreign stoves. A draught shield is provided for outdoor use.

A CHAIR MUSIC-STOOL.

As a seat a music-stool affords little comfort. When not in use, therefore, it is merely an encumbrance. A new form of music-stool, which is almost instantaneously convertible into a chair or an occasional table, has, however, recently made its advent. This device consists of a somewhat low chair, of which the four legs are extended upwards well above the seat. Between these extensions at each side are four horizontal bars. The seat, which is upholstered, rests upon a box having a considerable capacity for pieces of music; the chair is completed by an upholstered back. When required for a music-stool, the seat is slid out from its position over the music-box, and slid back between any two bars at the sides according to the height required. To convert the contrivance into a

table, the seat is turned over and slid into place on the top bars, the bottom of the seat, which is polished, forming the table top. These music-stool chairs, of British manufacture and handsome in finish, are made of several different woods, are upholstered in various materials, and present considerable variety of design in the turning of the legs.

WATER CLEANING BRUSHES.

That the cleaning of a muddy car is a dirty job no one will deny who has tried it. Moreover, with the usual sponge and bucket of water, it is exceedingly difficult to perform the operation without scratching the glossy surface. A brush with a water jet in the middle of it bids fair to revolutionise the cleaning of road vehicles. One form of this device consists of a ring of ten sets of bristles, mounted in a hollow aluminium casting to which water is supplied by a hose. The water issues from a ring of holes inside the various sets of bristles. A tubular handle with a black wooden grip has, at the top, a hollow spigot for the hose. This handle is connected with an extension that projects from the casting at an angle rather bigger than a right angle. The extension has two passages in it—one to the brushes, the other to a plain jet that may be used independently. By turning the extension on the handle, the water may be directed to either. A thick rubber ring round the edge of the casting prevents it from scratching the paint work that is being cleaned. When one of these brushes is being used to clean a car the mud is first soaked by playing water on it through the plain jet, after which the extension is turned on the handle to direct the water to the brushes, when the mud and the dust can be removed quickly without risk of scratching the varnish. A small water brush for spokes is also made. The saving in time effected by the use of these brushes compared with that taken by the older method is very marked.

A WATER-COOLED LARDER.

It is common knowledge that the evaporation of liquids in air has a cooling effect. This effect is intensified by exposing a thin film of liquid over a big surface and by setting the air in motion. Ether will fall far below the freezing point of water if air is blown upon it. Even water assumes quite a low temperature if a thin film is exposed to a current of air. This fact is taken advantage of in a larder which is cooled by drawing air through wet cloths, which serve to filter out dust and germs. The top and the bottom, the back and the shelves, of the larder are of slate, which is hygienic and easily cleaned. Teak is used for the sides and for the folding doors that form the front. A large panel in each side is covered with

gauze. Overlapping the gauze on the outside is a strip of absorbent cloth which is wound on a roller at the top. The end of this cloth is pulled down over the gauze and passed round a roller in a trough of water. A cord attached to it goes over a pulley above the top roller to the inside of the larder, where it passes round another pulley and is fastened to the door. Every time the door is opened, therefore, the cloth is pulled through the trough of water and well soaked, to pass back over the gauze as the door is closed. Over the top of the larder is a tiny electric motor coupled to a centrifugal air exhauster which draws air through the larder, the air entering through the wet cloths. Not only is the larder cooled by these means, but the air discharged from it cools the room in which it is placed—a great advantage in hot weather. The amount of electric current used is exceedingly small. Even if the motor be kept running day and night for a week the cost from power mains at 2d. a unit should not exceed 9d. If desired, the sides can be made of slate instead of teak, and plate glass panels can be fitted to the doors.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

THE ENDING OF THE STORY.

THERE, where the trumpet sounds no longer,
And the voice of war is still,
Springs there a blade of wheat the stronger
For all the blood upon that hill?
There lay a battle-field before ye,
Swept by the cannon's stabbing flame;
Springtime has covered all the glory,
Springtime has covered all the shame.

So, when the mists of darkness blind us,
And our race in life is run,
Little we do remains behind us,
Few were the battles that we won.
This is the ending of the story,
Deep in the earth from which we came;
Springtime shall cover all the glory,
Springtime shall cover all the shame.

A. C. SAWERS.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

For its return in case of ineligibility, a stamped and directed envelope (or postage-stamps) should accompany every manuscript.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE LIVING BRANCH.

By ALAN SULLIVAN, Author of *Man's Work*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

I.

IT had been a successful house-party. Week-end gatherings at the Jennisons always were successful, being composed of an assorted and hand-picked lot, drawn carefully from that larger circle in which Jennison and his wife were admittedly conspicuous figures. The latter never made mistakes, and when, finally, she sent off her notes, she knew to a hair what each guest would contribute. The net effect would be a cheerful *mélange* in which age, sex, temperament, pursuit, predilection, and sport were comfortably balanced. The result was that one felt safe beneath her hospitable roof.

The present occasion was Connie Seymour's second week-end at Marchmont, and, lying slack in a big chair in front of her bedroom fire, she knew that it was probably her last. The past two days had savoured of the dramatic. She smiled rather ruefully at this thought, and drawing up her knees, clasped her hands round them, and stared musingly into the ruddy grate. She was tall, with a long, lank, graceful body and slim round neck. Her bones were large, but she avoided angularity by the sheer freedom and balance of every movement. Men invariably found her attractive, even the worst of them. It may have been the beauty of her face, with reddish-brown eyes that were far apart, and bronze hair that glinted yellow in the light; or perhaps it was something deep, rich, and inexhaustible that she unconsciously expressed, something to feed on and draw on, in which body and spirit were unmistakably blended. At any rate the effect was nearly always the same where men were concerned.

At the moment she was thinking of two men: one who had left Marchmont, recalled by a telegram—she smiled at the transparency of it; the other who had stood at the foot of the great Marchmont staircase when she came up half-an-hour previously. And it was perhaps the one who had gone—George Pirbright—that occupied her thoughts the more. She was under no misapprehension as to what she had put aside there in exchange for something that would raise an incredulous smile amongst her

own intimates. She was too well aware of what money could do to undervalue it. Most of the people she knew had money. And of them all George Pirbright had the most.

This was what she had declined only the day before. It was what money, or his particular use of it, had made of Pirbright that Connie objected to. But she did not feel critical about him, and now, in a sort of wistful retrospect, found herself praying that what she believed to be her principles were sound enough to see her through the decision to which she had abruptly come on the evening of the day when Pirbright left. He had been rather too assured in the way he put it. Yachts, moors, London seasons, and the world as a football—these were not mentioned, there being no need for it; but in the manner of his speaking there had been a tone that she dimly put down as selective, as though she were the prize virgin of her tribe, and might well be proud of the proffered distinction. And there were incipient lines in his good-looking, over-indulged face that clashed prophetically with his thirty years.

At bottom she sensed that he considered her desirable and ornamental to his position, but, in a way, neither absolutely essential, nor, if needs must, entirely irreplaceable. Even at the end of it, when he used the not infrequently effective plea that she could do more for him than any woman alive, she had felt that the argument was put forward as much to justify his proposal as to move her to consider it. Then he had gone off, his sixty thousand a year intact, and hard on his trail had come Merivale.

II.

There had been no finesse in this case, but a large, somewhat uncouth, and perfectly obvious love, with hardly anything to back it up except the honest and almost shamed hesitancy with which it was expressed. That had appealed to Connie's present mood. The girls she knew said quite frankly that they could not afford to take Merivale seriously, or they would fall in love with him—which was beyond their means. Connie, perceiving what he felt about her by the way he had avoided her for months, had

not taken him seriously either till he bobbed up at the Jennisons. Then the look in his eyes had rather hurt. He had six hundred a year, instead of the sixty thousand at her feet, but this pigmy income seemed somehow enlarged to reasonable dimensions when mirrored in the pool of reflection in which Pirbright's departure had left her.

It was a startling but all-sufficient thing to discover that this time she cared, and in some queer fashion Merivale seemed to divine it, but even at that he stammered like a boy when he spoke. He was horribly proud, the sort of painful pride that is measured inversely to money, too proud, in fact, to say much that did not deprecate himself and draw attention to his own scanty income. From what he said there was left out a great deal, and the very omission of this implied on his part an understanding that left Connie not a little surprised. She liked the way his instinct worked in that moment. It assured her amazingly, for she saw that this same instinct would colour the type of his love.

She was lingering over this, and getting from it a definite and heartening comfort, when there came a tap at her door.

'May I come in?'

A girl entered, and, settling in another big chair, opened a tortoiseshell case and passed it to Connie. 'Do smoke, and tell me all about it. I hear Jack Merivale looks as though he'd seen the Holy Grail.'

Connie laughed, and lit a cigarette. 'You're very complimentary. I've promised to marry him.'

'Connie, you can't afford it!'

'I know I can't, but—yes—I think I can.'

'What on earth will you do, and how will you do it?'

'We haven't quite come to that yet.'

Sybil Hope gave her a quick glance, got up, kissed her impulsively, put a cigarette to her own rather carmine lips, then for a moment sat silently. She was not so tall as the other girl, and was more beautifully made. Her eyes, very large and dark, seemed lustrous beneath finely-pencilled brows; her nose was small and very straight. There was a touch of artlessness about her, which those who knew her best perceived to be the quintessence of art. She gave the impression of a highly-bred, sensitive racehorse, in whose repose was the quivering suggestion of blood and speed. Her voice, low-pitched, held an effective note of huskiness.

III.

'Of course,' Sybil went on presently, 'it's a bit surprising. I can't quite picture you Jack's wife—with all it involves.'

'Do you mean all it doesn't involve?'

Sybil nodded. 'Yes, just that.'

Connie made a little moue. 'My dear, do you imagine I haven't been thinking of that?'

Sybil did not answer at once. She was secretly convinced that this affair was, primarily, a terrific waste, and pictured the Mrs Jack Merivale of the future, still lovely, still attractive, but inevitably revealing that wear and tear of life, the very thought of which was repellent. There were so many others of coarser fibre, better designed to take the brunt of things, to whom it would have meant no sacrifice to marry Merivale. She pitched back over the last few years, measuring the bond between them. Connie had always been, in a way, braver than herself, with a sort of faith in the general dispensation of things.

'I think,' Sybil said reflectively, 'that it's awfully easy for a good many girls to be swayed by their impulses and emotions, and afterwards have to try and make their real tastes and desires fit in. Just as often as not they won't fit. Honestly, Connie, what do you expect out of this? I'm frightfully interested, and of course you two are going to be inseparable, because your kind sticks to a man—I know that—and it's all rather splendid, and Jack's a dear—but what else?'

Connie nodded. 'That's just what I can't exactly tell you. I think it's the promise of things that one believes in at the back of one's head. It's promise rather than possession. It will be a bit stiff at first, and perhaps always stiff for both of us, but what helps most now is that I'm not sobered by the fear I've missed something, though I know I'll feel the pinch.'

Sybil regarded her with undisguised interest. The thought really uppermost in her mind was that George Pirbright remained still unappropriated, and this meant to her far more than she was prepared to admit, at least at the moment. She loved Connie as much as she could love any woman, and made no mistake in underestimating the feminine panoply to which so many men had turned so instinctively. Of late it had seemed that Pirbright, the most eligible *parti* she knew, was succumbing to the challenge of the reddish-brown eyes, whose depths were now so calm and wistful. But on this score she breathed more freely.

Her views of marriage were different, because her own impulses marched comfortably with her tastes, of which they were indeed the offspring. She saw herself as a highly-finished twentieth-century product; took a luxurious pleasure in her own refinement, and had no intention of wasting any of her undeniable charms in untempered surroundings. Were it suggested that she had a capacity for ruthlessness or cruelty, she would have been amazed.

IV.

'I rather thought it was going to be George Pirbright,' said Sybil with sudden daring.

Connie shook her head for answer. She knew perfectly well that in Sybil's mind she

had been for some time a serious rival for the Pirbright millions. To tell the whole story now was unnecessary, and to explain her refusal would be more difficult than it had been to make it. Sybil was welcome to Pirbright, if she could get him. At this stoical conclusion Connie pitched her mind forward, because it required further stoicism and was to some extent invigorating. 'We're not going to live here, you know,' she said evenly. 'We're going to Canada.'

Sybil expressed a genuine sympathy. 'How awful! You'll freeze.'

Connie laughed. 'I don't think so. It's British Columbia. Jack has some property out there that needs developing, and——'

'It will be developed at your expense. Oh, my dear, I've heard of that sort of thing—brave young hearts venturing forth, and all the rest of it. Don't you do it, Connie. Live in Italy or Greece, or where you can get along quite well on six hundred a year. Did you see Mary Mostyn when she came back from Canada?'

'No.'

'I wish you had. Her face like leather—and you know how pretty she was; and most frightfully out of it because she'd been away five years and her crowd had all broken up; and distressingly practical, with none of her old allure, which seemed to have worn out rubbing against rocks and trees and things; and dressed, well, like a Colonial, you know. Of course, it's frightfully cheeky of me to speak like this, but you're the only one I can talk to absolutely freely.'

Sybil was feeling a little exalted, and she could afford to. The picture of Connie in British Columbia, becoming seasoned and weathered, for it must have that effect, gave her a novel and luxurious enjoyment in her own smooth and silken beauty. She had always admired this tawny-haired goddess, and now she admired her the more, just as the man old enough by a few months to escape conscription yields unstinting respect to his junior by a year when the latter answers the summons of his country.

'I think it will be rather nice, once the hard part of going is over,' said Connie thoughtfully. 'I was never sure till now what I should get out of marriage, but I think I always knew what I hoped to get. As to the climate, I hear it's wonderful, and there are lots of our sort over there, and for the same reason that we're going.'

'Just where will you live?' Sybil's ideas of geography had always been vague.

'On the coast, above Vancouver. Jack says we can make it as comfortable as—as Marchmont.'

Sybil's expression reflected her doubts. Marchmont for her. 'Will you have to do your own hair—and things?'

'Of course, and especially "things"—at any

rate to begin with.' Connie paused with a laugh that sounded a little uncertain, then went on, 'Don't think for a minute that my eyes aren't wide open, or that I'm doing this as a sort of *faute de mieux*, because really I'm frightfully keen. You see I've been rather afraid of late that I was ceasing to feel things, though I know that if one does stop feeling it amounts to a sort of protection; but I don't want to be protected. I'm ready for adventure. I can count on Jack to the limit, and rather expect to make discoveries, principally in myself.'

v.

Sybil nodded sympathetically. Privately she thought Connie a little mad. As for discoveries after marriage, she proposed none for herself that she could avoid if she could be merely conscious of them without actually making them. Should it be George Pirbright, she had a shrewd suspicion as to the character they would take. No! She preferred to explore the ground first so far as one safely could, and take the rest for granted when the die was cast. Discoveries meant emotion, and emotion was too upsetting. And she had by this time explored herself so completely that there was nothing left to unearth. As to ceasing to feel things, she wondered for a moment whether she had ever begun.

'I suppose,' she said slowly, 'that we're too unlike to agree; and you strike me as being a sort of gladiator who gives the royal salute when he goes into the arena. I often wondered why you didn't marry before this, and know how easy it would have been, but I think I see now. We look at happiness differently, because I feel it with all of me at once, body and mind, and my body can make my mind quite comfortable. But you can be happy and forget about your body. Perhaps it's the other way on with me, for I'm a good deal of a sybarite. For instance, if I had all the world offers except love of the right kind, I think I'd be fairly content. You wouldn't. I suppose we're made like that, and can't help it. Here you are now, looking regal and perfectly ravishing, yet you talk about living somewhere near the arctic circle, without turning a hair, while the mere thought of it appals me. You're going to marry a dear good-natured, awkward thing with six hundred a year, while—and this is terribly frank, Connie—I'd jump at the chance of George Pirbright, and in, say, five years match my idea of happiness against yours. I suppose this is all a bit cheapening, but it's a very ordinary thing in the world that produces people like us. That's my world, and was yours if you wanted it, and it's only because you don't that I've cut loose and talked like this. After all, we're neither of us children, and we know perfectly well that when the first flush and excitement is over what we most want is a similarity of taste and

interest. It prevents one from being bored. And,' she concluded a little defiantly, 'that's where George Pirbright comes in.'

Sybil got up, stood for a moment by the fire, then, leaning forward, put her hands on Connie's shoulders and kissed her. She knew that this

would be their last talk for a long time. 'Good-night, you—you Trojan.'

The red-brown eyes looked up at her with complete and friendly understanding. 'Good hunting, Sybil.'

(Continued on page 438.)

STARS AND THEIR WIRELESS MESSAGES.

I.—STELLAR WAVE-LENGTHS AND SIGNALS.

By Professor GEORGE FORBES.

I.

'GOOD evening, everybody!' In such words does the king of 'broadcasters,' in this age of wireless telegraphy, greet the 'listeners-in' at the beginning of his conversations. He himself is in the transmitting or broadcasting station—2 LO—in London, from which place an ingenious electrical apparatus is broadcasting ether-waves, all at the wave-length 365 metres, continuously, in all directions. These waves are not carried through air like sound, but, like light, through the ether which fills all space.

The broadcaster speaks to a microphone, and the microphone modulates the ether-waves so that the speech can be picked up on a telephone by any listener-in, provided his set be tuned to the ether wave-length 365 metres.

The telephone is nothing more than a very valuable accessory required, not for detecting the ether-waves, but only for reproducing the music and speaking. The marvellous part of the invention is that ether-waves of a chosen wave-length can be radiated from the station, and be picked up by a properly-tuned set at a distance of hundreds or thousands of miles.

These ether-waves are the same as the light-waves that come from the sun; and Sirius, Capella, Betelgeuse, and all the stars that we see are signalling to us in the same way. To some of us they almost seem, in their twinkling, to be saying 'Good evening, everybody!' All sentiment aside, however, this is a marvellous truth—that the stars are for ever broadcasting ether-waves of the same kind as 2 LO does, only with a different wave-length.

The retina of our eye is so constructed that it acts as a receiver for these ether-waves and gets from them the sensation of light and colour. The stars, ever since they began to shine, have been broadcasting all kinds of signals by wireless telegraphy. Astronomers are now learning the codes for deciphering some of these signals. It was only sixty-six years ago that the principal key to their signalling code was discovered. Now, every year we are becoming more familiar with their secret signal-codes. The spectroscope is to-day in constant use by astronomers for measuring the different wave-lengths that are

being broadcast by each particular star. After that, the signal-code is used for interpreting the message sent by that star.

Amongst the messages about itself that each star is forever broadcasting, we have already decoded many tales of extraordinary interest. By wireless telegraphy the stars actually tell us stories about the stuff they are made of, and this will be the main subject of the present article. Many astronomers believe that the stars have told us all about their life from infancy, and how they grew up to the full vigour of manhood, while some have passed to old age and even to second childhood. The stars tell stories, too, about their movements and their dances, their wanderings through the depths of space, their revolutions round invisible partners, and their rotations about an axis, like the earth's daily rotation; also weird tales about whirling hurricanes that convulse their atmospheres; and they are proclaiming their dimensions, and the distance they are away from us. They tell us the temperatures that would be measured by a thermometer on their surface, and one of them tells stories even about its north magnetic pole, just like the magnetic pole on our earth that makes a mariner's compass point to the north.

Incredible as it may appear, all these true romances of astronomy, and more, are being continually notified by wireless to all inhabitants of the universe, and the spectroscope has enabled astronomers to register the messages and often to interpret them.

II.

To-day, the newly-acquired art of listening-in brings pleasure to millions of people, old and young. We enjoy seeing the keen schoolboy, wearing his head-phones, in front of his box of tricks. He turns a knob to pass his pointer over a circular scale of wave-lengths, and so he tunes his receiver to the wave-length of Edinburgh, Glasgow, London, or elsewhere.

Every boy knows that Glasgow's wave-length is 420 metres, London's 365, and that of Edinburgh is 326 metres. The stars use very much shorter wave-lengths. Here a metre would be of no use as a unit. For measuring stellar wave-lengths we use a minute, invisible

unit, called an ångström, after a celebrated Swedish experimenter. The ångström is so small that ten thousand million of them are needed to make up one metre.

It is truly a wonderful fact that our rough, clumsy human hands should be able to make instruments for broadcasting ether-waves whose length is measured in metres. But it is only the Creator who could make instruments for broadcasting the minute ether-waves that are measured in ångströms. The human instruments are called *triadic valves*; the Creator's instruments are called *atoms*. There are hydrogen atoms, iron atoms, and distinct atoms for all of the chemical elements. Each sends its own special wave-lengths, just as 2 LO does. It is perfectly astounding to learn, as we do, that the wave-length radiated by a hydrogen atom is found to be the same, whether the atom be in our laboratory, in the sun, in a star, or in a nebula. So with other elements. These are 'manufactured articles' of precisely the same construction in whatever part of the universe they may be found.

Our eyes are delicate receiving instruments that can pick up wave-lengths anywhere between 4000 and 8000 ångströms. Each of the wave-lengths sent to us from any source of light is seen by the eye as a different colour; 4000 ångströms looks violet, 6000 looks yellow, 8000 looks red.

So, when we regard a rainbow with its colours laid out in the definite order—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet—we recognise each wave-length broadcast by the sun as a different colour, all of them that we can see lying between 4000 and 8000 ångströms. Obviously, the eye cannot thus detect minute differences in wave-lengths, for only about seven colours in the spectrum can be surely distinguished from one another. For accurate measurement we use a spectroscope.

Everyone knows that the white light from the sun is a mixture of all these colours that are laid out in a row, according to their wave-lengths, in the rainbow. Instead of using a rainbow, however, we can look at the sun through a three-sided piece of glass called a 'prism.' We then see a band of colours in the same order. We call this coloured band a 'spectrum,' and a wave-length is known by its position on the spectrum.

Prisms can be mounted by an optician to make an instrument called a 'spectroscope' in a form convenient for studying, and even for photographing, the spectrum. The astronomer can apply it to his telescope, and then look through it at the sun or a star and see its spectrum; or, better still, he can photograph the spectrum. So he can measure the wave-lengths that are sent to us from each star, or detect any wave-lengths that are missing from the spectrum. Generally, he sees a spectrum continuous from

violet to red, with gaps appearing as dark lines. These represent missing colours at certain wave-lengths. There are wave-lengths that have been stopped by atoms in the atmosphere of the star. These wave-lengths are nearly always those that we have proved, in the laboratory, to belong to the atoms of chemical substances that are found on our planet.

For example, on looking through a very good spectroscope at an electric spark playing between two bits of iron, we see that the spectrum of iron shines with thousands of bright lines, each of a different colour or wave-length. Next, on pointing the spectroscope to the sun, we find a continuous coloured spectrum with a dark line at each of these iron wave-lengths, thousands of coincidences. Thus we feel sure that iron atoms exist in the sun's atmosphere. So it is with nearly all of the materials found on our planet. They are generally found also in the sun.

Why, then, does iron in the sun show its presence by *dark* lines and not by the *bright* line which we see in the iron electric spark? Here is the answer, and it is the principal key for decoding the wireless signals of sun or stars:

The white-hot body of the sun or a star—whether it be solid, liquid, or gas so much compressed by atmospheric pressure as to be almost liquid—gives off a continuous spectrum from violet to red, for in that case the atoms are so close together that they jostle one another and are not free to vibrate in their own distinctive manner. But the iron or other atoms in a star's upper atmosphere are different, for they are not quite so hot, and they are free, and each of these cooler atoms absorbs the same colours that it would radiate under the electric spark. These colours or wave-lengths are, therefore, so weakened as to look like dark lines in the spectrum.

It comes to this: if we could examine the spectrum of the sun's atmosphere without the bright-coloured background, that is to say, without the continuous spectrum of the sun's body, then we ought to see the lines bright instead of dark.

Now this is actually possible in a total eclipse of the sun. When the dark disc of the moon is passing over the bright disc of the sun, there is a moment when, for a few seconds, the body of the sun is all eclipsed and yet there is a thin line on the border of the sun that gives light, and it comes from the upper parts of the sun's atmosphere that have no background of white light. This 'flash' spectrum consists only of lines that are bright, where at other stages they looked dark on a continuous spectrum.

III.

Now that we know something about broadcasting and about the colour spectrum, let us try to imagine that we can see a man on the moon

who is working with a wireless receiving-set so perfect that he can tune it to detect every possible wave-length, even the most minute. Then we might watch him finding the wave-lengths that are being broadcast as we watched the schoolboy.

First, he would be dealing with our earthly broadcasting. When his pointer is at 2600 metres he exclaims, 'Hello! here is Eiffel Tower!' At 365 metres, 'Hello! London!'; at 326 metres, 'Hello! Edinburgh!' Then, on turning to much shorter wave-lengths, he could catch solar rays. At 5570 ångströms he would shout, 'Hello! here is hydrogen!' Then, in succession, 'Hello! Sodium!' 'Hello! Iron!' as he struck the wave-lengths of these atoms.

This is no joke. It is not used as a mere illustration. It is plain truth that the Creator's atoms are radiating just as are Marconi's valves, only at a different wave-length. Of course, this man on the moon would not be using a telephone, because the sun does not use

speech, and the telephone is not a necessary part of wireless telegraphy.

And now we understand how the spectro-scope has, after much research, enabled us to say positively that the sun contains practically all of the chemical elements that are known to us on our planet. We cannot be on sure ground if we attempt to follow up this discovery too far, because we do not know where the materials that constitute the sun, the earth, and the planets originally came from. Certainly, if they were made out of materials originally existing in the form of meteorites, or comets, or nebulae in the part of space now occupied by the solar system, this would explain why the earth and the sun are made of the same materials, and we should expect to find that a majority of the nearest stars would be similarly constituted, and would show a spectrum resembling that of the sun, where all the metals are conspicuous, and calcium particularly so. Later we shall see that this is probably true.

THE MURDER GANG.

By Lieutenant H. P. CINNAMOND, M.C. (late Frontier Force).

MOUSSA KHAN, Adam Gul, Malik Hosein, Barik Shah, Lala Reza, and Hyder Abbas, each in turn, took the Holy Book, kissing it and pressing it to breast and forehead. After which, with grim, determined faces, all six set out for the British border.¹

But the British border lay sixty miles distant, and, the month being August, the days were very hot; so that the little band did not disdain the shelter offered by wayside hamlets. It must, however, be made plain to the villagers what manner of men they were to have the honour of entertaining; both because the tribesman is naturally a boastful creature, and because the Ahmed Khel Wazirs, who composed the party, are not *personae grates* in the stretch of land lying between their homes at Wana and the Derajat. So at the first village Moussa Khan, the most venerable of the six, held forth. 'Verily,' he began, 'ye will do well to treat us bountifully; for it may be that, if we are pleased, we will speak a word for thee in the ear of our lord Mohammed, upon whom be peace.'

'And what will the word of an Ahmed Khel avail?' asked the village *malik* (headman) unpleasantly. 'Surely it were as well——' But the other interrupted.

'Were it only that we are of the Ahmed Khel it were enough, for such are the salt of the earth,' he replied modestly. 'But there is

more. Know that we are Ghazi; we have taken the oath upon our salt and upon our swords, upon our hair and upon the Book. When we return this way there will be six *gorah-log* [white men] the less; and *afsar-sahibs* [officers] only will we touch.—Is it not so, my brethren?' he appealed to his companions.

'Verily, by the Koran, it is true,' attested the others. 'By the grace of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, it is as thou hast said.'

The villagers looked at the little band of desperados with new interest, the *malik* ordering a lamb stuffed with pistachio nuts to be roasted whole and set before his guests. But he was something of a Job's comforter, for, while enjoining the Ghazis to 'eat, drink, and be merry,' he did not forget the context—namely, 'to-morrow ye die.'

'The *gorah-log*,' he concluded a long harangue, 'are not now so easily befooled as they once were; and yet it is not they who are wise, it is our own people who betray us. They come amongst us as friends and spy upon us; then, retiring, they report all our sayings and doings to the *askari* [police].'

'I would that I might catch one such,' snarled Moussa Khan, his ancient countenance assuming a slightly less venerable appearance. 'His death would not be an easy one.' He glanced at a small group of villagers collected beneath the usual chenar tree. 'Are all these good men?' he inquired abruptly.

The *malik* cast his eyes about. 'There is one I do not know,' he answered, pointing to

¹ Though all the characters in this little sketch are fictional, none of the incidents is at all overdrawn; exactly similar events have occurred, and are occurring, on the North-West Frontier of India.

a tall man, light-coloured, with gray eyes. 'The rest are of mine own people.'

'What!' The man pointed out leapt to his feet, his voice raised to a furious shriek. 'Sayest thou that I am a spy? I, Isa Mohammed of the Ata Khel! Dog! I will pour thy bowels upon the ground.' Drawing a blade which would have done credit to a scythe, he rushed upon the *malik* to make good his threat. But half-a-dozen villagers threw themselves upon him, pinning him to the ground, whence, in bellowing tones, he issued challenges to all and sundry.

This violence was not without effect—it convinced the others of the angry one's good faith; and, with muttered apologies, not too generously accepted, the chief told him so.

After their meal the Ahmed Khel men continued their journey. But, only proceeding until a shoulder of the hill hid them from their late hosts, Moussa Khan halted and addressed the party. 'That *malik* spoke truth,' he began. 'There are many spies amongst us, and I am convinced that that stranger is one. He says that he is an Ata Khel Wazir, and he wears their cummerbund. What of that? Are there not spies among the Ata Khel, as amongst others? Let us be wise; we will here take up position, and slay the man if he passes, as, if he is a spy, he must do, for is not this the path to the Angrezi border?'

'Thy words are the words of wisdom,' agreed another of the party. 'But, bethink thee, it were better that we move a little farther from the village, lest, enraged at our slaying one so lately their guest, the people attack us.'

This suggestion being adopted, the party moved a couple of miles farther down the pass along which their route lay, where, taking up a position, they awaited the coming of the alleged spy.

Nor had they long to wait, for a bare half-hour later Isa Mohammed came swinging down the path. He appeared, however, not to be altogether at ease; and as he walked his eyes roved anxiously, searching the broken hill-sides all about.

But even then it was his luck and not his suspicions that saved the man. He was already almost within the trap, when one of the ambushers drew back a belated bolt, the result being a click, not very loud, yet loud enough to frighten the already nervous Isa Mohammed, who was doubtless well acquainted with the sound. Without wasting any time on unnecessary investigation, he wheeled about and tore back the way he had come. Further concealment being now pointless, six angry Ahmed Khel warriors rose to their feet and emptied the contents of their magazine Lee-Enfield rifles after the flying figure. Then, deeming pursuit unprofitable, they continued their journey towards the border. While this was still some

twenty miles distant the party broke up, each to pursue his object in that way which seemed best to him.

Ghulam Mohammed Khan, *askari*, a tall man, light-coloured and gray-eyed, lurched wearily into a little fort situated high up on the Gomal Pass; he carried one arm in a sling, and blood showed through a bandage improvised from a portion of his puggree.

A dozen Waziristan scouts, under the command of a havildar, held the place; and these greeted the new-comer without enthusiasm. They did not know who the wounded man might be, nor did the wounded man intend that they should. These men were all, no doubt, sufficiently loyal to their salt, but—if one doesn't know one *can't* tell. Therefore, stating that he was an *afsar*-sahib's servant who had been wounded while on leave, he asked permission to use the field-telephone with which such posts are supplied, in order that he might obtain an extension of furlough.

But it was not to an officer—at least not a military officer—that Ghulam Mohammed addressed himself, after being assured that none of those within hearing understood English; it was to the district superintendent of police at Dera Ismail Khan, and to him he spoke but a few words. After which, informing the havildar that his sahib, who, like all sahibs, was a *sheitan* (a devil), would not grant him leave, he lay down and slept for some hours, when, having had his wound tended, he proceeded towards cantonments.

Only a few words had been uttered over the telephone, yet many a thoughtless subaltern doubtless found it in his heart to curse the utterer, for they were portentous words, and they produced the following:

'Station Order, No. 423.—It having been brought to the notice of the General Officer commanding Derajat Brigade that a band of six Ahmed Khel Wazirs have left their country under oath to slay British Officers, the following precautions will be taken until further orders:

'1. All officers proceeding from their quarters after dusk will be accompanied by an armed orderly.

'2. A sentry, with appropriate reliefs, will be appointed to guard each officer while he sleeps.

'3. At dinner a guard will be posted over the mess-house.

'4. No officer will leave cantonments alone under any circumstances.

'5. Officers will carry revolvers at all times, and, where possible, will be accompanied by armed orderlies.

'NOTE.—The commanding officer would impress upon individual officers the necessity, notwithstanding the above precautions, of maintaining extreme vigilance by day and night

until these men have been dealt with. The Ghazis were last seen in the vicinity of the Gomal Pass; the frontier is being watched, and it is hoped that the miscreants, who are personally known to the police, will be arrested before they can carry their criminal purpose into effect.

Yet, in spite of the fact that the frontier was being watched and that the men were personally known . . . well, the Waziri frontier for 120 miles is conterminous with our own; and hillmen are slippery customers at the best of times.

Barracrough of the Royal Engineers surveyed his job with pleasure; he didn't think that even the Indus would make its way through *that* bund. Once Dera Ghazi Khan had suffered, when, by some strange freak, the great river had swung six miles from its course, wiped out half the cantonment, and then swung west again to its old channel. Such a thing should not happen again, thought Barracrough, as, with justifiable pride, he viewed the ten-foot bank with its fifteen-foot base which had grown under his orders. Glancing at his watch, he called to a foreman: 'Hey! Abdullah! You can knock off now—it's six o'clock. Come to my bungalow later—there's one or two things I want to settle.' He turned about and strolled away, the released coolies streaming past him *en route* to their quarters.

As the sapper lounged along it suddenly occurred to him that he would be unable to see his foreman that evening, owing to certain engagements; therefore, with a courtesy not always practised in the East, he turned to revoke his order. Even as he turned the great knife rose, and only a perfectly miraculous spring backwards saved Barracrough from a blow which must have cleft him to the middle. He gave his assailant no opportunity to deliver a second; springing in, he buried his fist to the wrist in the native's most vulnerable spot, the plexus; and, like an empty sack, the latter collapsed.

'It is Adam Gul,' stated Ghulam Mohammed, later, when called south to identify the prisoner; 'and——'

'*Barikallah!* God is all powerful,' said Adam Gul resignedly.

Guest night in the Rajput's mess. *Apéritifs* have been disposed of, and the band is playing 'The Roast Beef of Old England.' Now the officers have trooped into the mess-room, and are awaiting the president's pleasure. A waiter follows them in—a waiter! whence, then, the rifle that swings to his shoulder? A report, and the guest of the evening drops across the table, his shirt-front suddenly stained.

'It is true,' remarked Moussa Khan, as he slowly rose from the floor, 'that I am an old man; yet, *Alhamdilallah!* Thanks be to God,

who has, even in my old age, permitted me to perform that which is pleasing in His sight.'

The hard crack of a rifle: Lieutenant Riordan leaps to his feet, and, drawing a revolver from beneath his pillow, dashes out into the night. 'What's the row, Gurdon Singh?' he demands.

'It is nothing; the sahib should not have arisen,' answers the huge Sikh. 'This *soor* [swine] would have disturbed your honour'—he touched something upon the ground with his foot—'and so I have slain him.'

Thus Malik Hosein paid the penalty which is exacted from those who blunder in the great game.

'See now, if the sahib will but give me ten rupees, I will show a wonder—a wonder which many sahibs would wish to see. Yes, truly, to your honour, who is kind to the very poor, will I show the marvel, and for ten rupees only. Most true, sahib, a very rare thing.'

'I say, Johnston!' Captain Marlin called to a passing subaltern. 'Here's an old fakir who says that he can show us the rope-trick; what d'you think?'

'By jove! can he? Then let him jolly well do it,' replied the other excitedly. 'Everybody talks about the thing, but I've never met any person who has actually seen it done. Trot it out, old scout; if it's all I've heard, I'll give you ten chips myself.'

'Nay,' replied the old man sulkily. 'I will only show my wonder to this sahib, who is a good sahib,' and he pointed to Marlin.

'Ho!' ejaculated the disgruntled subaltern; 'and what sort of a sahib am I?'

To this the man made no reply, other than to repeat his former assertion in muttered tones.

'Why will you not show this sahib your trick?' queried Captain Marlin angrily. 'Come, no nonsense! Let's see your performance, or get out!'

'Very good, sahib, I going,' and the old man, calling to a boy who accompanied him, stalked towards the compound gates.

'I say,' put in the subaltern, 'don't let me spoil the show. If the chap can really show you the rope-trick you're in luck. Call him back; I'll clear off.'

'Well, I'd certainly like to see his effort,' admitted the other. 'But—damn his impudence! However, some of these people are peculiar; and, if you're certain you don't mind, I think I will call him back.'

'Do,' said Johnston. 'See you later and hear all about it.—Go back!' he ordered, as he passed the fakir. 'The *good* sahib will see your show, while the bad sahib bids you farewell.'

Calling his attendant urchin, who had run ahead, the man retraced his steps.

'Not here, sahib!' protested the conjuror.

'All would see. Let it be at the back, where there is privacy. Now, before I proceed to the great wonder, I will show the sahib a small trick, all to be included in the ten rupees. See, the boy will get into this basket, and I will pass my sword through—'

'Oh, bosh! I've seen that trick hundreds of times. Get on to the big one, and don't waste any more time.'

'The sahib is impatient, yet I would crave his attention one breath.' The fakir approached a little closer, confidentially. 'This basket is not as other baskets, nor is this sword,' producing the weapon from beneath his robe, 'like other swords—' He paused in bewilderment, for the sahib had vanished, but only for a second; now he reappeared. Allah! Allah! what was this! In the hand of the good sahib was a long-barrelled Webley revolver, the muzzle of which—if he could believe his eyes—pointed straight at a most sensitive portion of his, the fakir's, person.

'You are right,' acknowledged the good sahib, and his voice was hard. 'The sword is *not* an ordinary one for a juggler, it is a hill weapon; you ought to know that the carrying of such within cantonment limits is a crime.'

'Nay, sahib, I am a poor man; do but look at it—'

'Drop that knife on the ground. That's better; now you come along to the *thana* [police station], and we will see whether the police know you or not.'

'It is, indeed, one of them,' said Ghulam Mohammed Khan. 'Barik Shah, it is. Yes, sahib, a great offence to carry weapons without permit in time of peace! Oh! very nasty, sahib. A crime for which there will be much punishment.'

Lala Reza—who must have been weak in the head—tried to pass some Ghurka sentries who lay between him and his quarry. Now there is no Lala Reza.

Hyder Abbas, a man of no originality in his ideas, yet, perhaps, not altogether a fool, contented himself with lying up in the hills by day; coming down by night to take pot-shots at any incautiously exposed lights in cantonments. In this manner the tribesman easily convinced himself that he had slain at least twenty-five officers; when satisfied, he returned to Wana—alone.

THREE MONTHS IN THE SERTÃO OF BRAZIL.

By ASHMORE RUSSAN.

I.

A YEAR or two back it was the writer's experience to travel by the Bahia Central Railway from São Felix, which is the starting-point of the line, to Machado Portella in the interior of the State of Bahia, and then to ride, day in, day out, on horseback, or muleback, from *fazenda* (farm) to *fazenda* for weeks, sometimes through *Catinga*, which name does not signify perfumes of Araby by any means, but is the Brazilian term for the worst kind of scrub forest imaginable—full of rattlesnakes, cacti of the spiniest, and thorns that can only be matched in some mediæval picture of the crowned Christ; sometimes over vast cattle-plains; but always under the necessity of seeking hospitality at the end of each day, for otherwise there would have been no help for it but to go hungry and thirsty to bed under the stars, with an upturned saddle for a pillow.

Except at the *fazendas*, scarcely any water or food was to be had, so whether the distance from one halting-place to the next were forty, fifty, or more miles—and some of the *fazendas* comprise more than a hundred thousand acres—the journey had to be made. In consequence, we were continually turning up unexpectedly at sundown, or thereabouts, at the houses of *fazendeiros*, to whom we were utter strangers.

Such a jaunt enables one to write of the *Sertanêjos* (inhabitants of the *Sertão*, or wild country), and of their hospitality, with very particular knowledge. In addition to arriving unheralded, our party numbered about a score, so that each visit was an invasion!

Here it should be mentioned that the job we were engaged upon was the inspection of vast areas of Maniçoba Rubber Forests, not a perilous one in the ordinary way; but our guide, who was the principal vendor of the properties, which ran to many square leagues, had got involved in a *Sertão* feud. In a boundary dispute, and in defence of his life, he had been compelled to shoot and kill a *Sertanêjo*, whose family had sworn vengeance upon him, for which reason we were accompanied by a guard of three negro soldiers under a lieutenant, and watched over by two officers of higher rank. The constant surveillance that resulted, if kindly meant, was exceedingly unpleasant at times. Three of us were Europeans, but not one of the three could separate himself from the party more than a few yards without a negro soldier following close behind. The object of the feud, whose life was actually in danger, carried a double-barrelled shot-gun, which never, or very seldom, left his hands when on the road, occupied his hammock, or bed, at night, and stood between his legs at meals. His special guard was the

lieutenant, who was a personal friend, while the writer and an old Scottish botanist, who was of the party, were in the special care of the black soldiers. Strict injunctions we had from the officers—never to sleep in the line of fire from a window; never to wander off into the woods; the reason being that the members of the camarilla, as a clan, had never seen the man whose life they had sworn to take, and would be likely to shoot any European stranger on the maxim of 'Shoot first; questions can be asked afterwards.' At much inconvenience, and, at the cost of many discomforts, the injunctions were obeyed, and the camarilla never had a chance to avenge their dead friend. As nothing untoward happened, the writer is consequently free to devote this brief sketch to the hospitality we met with in the *Sertão* and elsewhere, under the none too favourable circumstances mentioned.

II.

Not once in all those weeks was our welcome anything but hearty. No sooner had we dismounted than our tired animals would be led under shade, watered, and fed, ourselves conducted into cool rooms, and supplied with an abundance of fresh sparkling water just fetched from the 'tank,' often an artificial lagoon of a score of acres, and given foot-baths—full hospitality for the jaded! Then *vagüeiros* (cattlemen) would mount and scurry away; fires would be lighted in the great domed baking ovens, always built a few yards from the houses, for such heat within would be unbearable in the *Sertão*, where the sun blazes from its rising to its setting, and the radiated air dances before one's eyes and blurs the vision most of the day.

Busiest at such times would be the *Senhora*, bustling amongst her ebony maids, for the State of Bahia was once a great cotton country, and the great majority of the *Sertanêjos* are descendants of African slaves, long since freed in Brazil. Nearly all the *fazendeiros*, however, are white, descendants of the cotton planters, whose chief industry was brought to an end when the slaves were set free—not immediately, perhaps, but in course of time. Not willingly does the negro work in countries where a patch of mandioca will yield *farinha* enough for a family, or a maize *milpa* sufficient *tortillas*; or, as in the *Sertão* of the State of Bahia, where meat may be had almost for the asking, and *cachaça* (cane-spirit) in exchange for a tin of rubber milk. *Maniçoba* rubber-trees (*manihots*) grow wild in their thousands in the Bahia *Sertão*, and the thirsty native, craving for something stronger than water, had, at the time of our visit, only to tap a few of the multitude, and barter the milk at the nearest store.

Many were the feasts given in honour of the strangers, but for several reasons the most notable was that at Esmeralda, a long, low,

white building with about a dozen front doors, of which more hereafter. The house stands, or stood, on the highest ground of a vast *fazenda* of about 300,000 acres; and, like all similar residences, it had its own water-supply, spacious corrals, and out-buildings, with many shade trees. It is rather curious that all the reservoirs in the *Sertão* should be called 'tanks,' but so it is.

At the time of our invasion our host at Esmeralda had no wine (*vino vermelho*) and to offer plain water or the native *cachaça* only was to him unthinkable. So in three directions black cattlemen galloped, with orders to buy or borrow, but not to return without *vino* for all. That one or more of them were successful was evident enough, for each guest had a bottle set before him holding about a pint and a half. The table was very long, if not quite so long as the many-doored house, and the row of bottles arrayed upon it was nearly as long as the table. The *fazendeiro* was jubilant at the success of his messengers, and by his orders deft-handed ebony lasses drew the corks.

Alas! the Italian storekeeper who had been appealed to was also out of wine, but he had done his best. A consignment of French absinthe and Italian vermouth had just been received, and he despatched the whole to the *fazenda*. And we were expected to empty those bottles! Somebody explained. We Europeans partook of an *apéritif* or two, and all was well, but what happened to those of our host's many relations who drained their bottles and ours, one does not like to remember. One by one they stole away, but their presence at the long table at every meal explained the house's many doors. The big *fazenda* was held in common, as is frequently the case. All the members of the family—fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts, sisters and brothers, nieces and nephews—dwelt in the long house, and each sub-family appeared to have a separate door. The ownership of the huge *fazenda* was a matter of percentages, for the property had never been divided, and the possessor of the largest percentage was the head of the family and our host.

A large roasted armadillo was the *pièce de résistance*, specially provided as a great delicacy. It tasted something like pork, but some of us had seen the burrows of its kind in the graveyards; and, well, there was more than a sufficiency of beef, venison, goat's flesh, and stewed chickens, flavoured with a variety of very hot peppers in the pod, *farinha*, and fresh rolls of the whitest bread. The table groaned, but not for long, for the house was densely populated, and vacant places were speedily filled.

Almost equally notable was the hospitality we received at the small town of Maracas, near where resided one of our officer guards—a

colonel, by the way—who owned a *fazenda* a few miles distant. As it was necessary for us to remain in the town, he furnished an empty house there of his own, stocked it with supplies from his farm, and placed the whole at our disposal free of charge. Neighbours kept the house clean, and cooked our meals. What we lacked they provided. All the principal townspeople gave parties, and invited the strangers.

Every evening some entertainment or other was afoot, and when we remained at home they serenaded us in mass, brought guitars and sang, and danced the *maxixe* until cock-crow!

Maracas might be in the *Catinga* in the *Sertão*, many leagues from a railway station, and on a road to nowhere in particular, but its people were bent on showing that it was no one-horse village of the wilds. It had to maintain the reputation of Brazil for hospitality heaped up and running over, and it did. But it was everywhere the same in the *Sertão*. Those who had been generous with their possessions; those who had not, lamented their lack, but not on their own account.

III.

Hospitality where one pays to be able to take one's ease—that is, 'at one's inn'—may be looked for as a matter of course, but it is not always ungrudging. There is no Ritz, or Savoy, or Waldorf-Astoria in the *Sertão*, but on its borders flourished, and, it is to be hoped, still flourishes, a 'Hotel of All the Nations'; and, as more than one of the party declared that there his life was saved—for, as may be imagined, the spaces between the *fazendas* were both wide and hungry—'All the Nations' must not be omitted. The hostelry whose sign proclaims that it caters for all the peoples of the earth, or for such of them as are a nation, is situated at Cachoeira (waterfall), the limit of steam-boat navigation up the Rio Paraguassú from Bahia, and opposite São Felix, the terminus of the Central Railway. Returning after our many weeks of most fatiguing travel, it occurred to a wag of the party to order by telegraph a most elaborate dinner at 'All the Nations,' to be ready half-an-hour after the arrival at São Felix of the tri-weekly train from the interior. The telegram, despatched from a station some hundred and fifty miles down the line, specified various *hors d'œuvres*, soups, oysters, lobsters, fish, porterhouse steaks, omelettes, &c. sufficient for six people, and various wines and liqueurs for the same, everything, in short, that its compiler could think of as impossible or unattainable.

It was a screaming joke, of course. But 'All the Nations' rose to the occasion. I believe every item mentioned in the telegram was forthcoming, for on receipt of it our host had taken the boat to Bahia and ransacked the city. So half-a-dozen famished travellers feasted right

royally, but, as our hostess declared, never before had she set such a meal before six ragged *négres* (negroes)—no, not even in the Hotel of All the Nations! The fierce sun of the *Sertão* had burned our faces and hands almost black; the thorns of the *Catinga* had torn our clothes to tatters. But at Bahia, where we arrived next day, renewed respectability was assured.

Within half-an-hour of our reaching the city we received an invitation to breakfast the following morning with a prominent townsman, who, to do us honour, despatched a boat before sunrise across the beautiful Bay of All the Saints to the Rio Paraguassú, there to obtain for our delectation a certain famous freshwater fish, large as a salmon, delicate as a trout, whose name escapes, but whose flavour is a delicious memory. Only in clear, sparkling waters beyond tidal limits is that fish supposed to reach its greatest perfection, and, as our host insisted, nobody ought to leave Bahia without having experienced this epicurean delight. He also had the city scoured for pipless oranges, which, carved in shape of water-lily buds and blooms, and served on a snow-white napkin, were famous in Bahia generations before the American wizard, Luther Burbank, is supposed to have invented them. Guava jelly, and other *dulces* too numerous to record, our host set before us, finally presenting each of us with a box of cigars, grown in the State and made at Cachoeira, of an aroma and flavour that Cuba never surpassed—some say, never equalled. As in Bahia, so, with its small differences, in Rio; so at Santos; so at Pernambuco, where, if he will, the guest may depart garlanded—laden with a king's ransom of blossoms, armfuls of purple and mauve *Cattleya* orchids, and of scented roses such as England's June might match but not excel.

But it is in the *Sertão* that the native hospitality of the Brazilian finds its best expression, for there it is commonly exercised under difficulties. There are no fine shops within a stone's throw in the *Sertão*; no pipless oranges in *Catinga* scrub. Orchids there certainly are on the few trees that stand up from the prickly undergrowth, but, lacking axes or dynamite cartridges to topple down the trees, they are generally unattainable by the hurrying traveller, who, for good reasons, seldom cares to lag in the *Catinga*.

A WAVE AT KYNANCE.

A FLASH as of green on the peacock's sheen,
Or of emerald, wash'd in light;
As vivid as ray of the opal, seen
In a moment's tranced sight.

For an instant poised, with a sunlit dome,
Till the water's agleam with gold;
Then the emerald breaks into fairy foam,
And the jewel-wave's tale is told.

V. M. BROWN.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

By JOHN BUCHAN, Author of *John Burnet of Barns, Greenmantle, &c.*

CHAPTER XIII.—continued.

SIR EDWARD LEITHEN left Crask just as the wet dawn was breaking. He had a very long walk before him, but at that he was not dismayed; what perplexed him was how it was going to end. To the first part, a struggle with wind and rain and many moorland miles, he looked forward with enthusiasm. Long lonely expeditions had always been his habit, for he was the kind of man who could be happy with his own thoughts. Before it became the fashion he had been a pioneer in guideless climbing in the Alps, and the red-letter days in his memory were for the most part solitary days. He was always in hard condition, and his lean figure rarely knew fatigue; weather he minded little, and he had long ago taught himself how to find his road, even in mist, with map and compass.

So it was with sincere enjoyment that his legs covered the rough miles—along the Crask ridge till it curved round at the head of the Doran and led him to the eastern skirts of Sgurr Dearg. He knew from the map that the great eastern precipice of that mountain was towering above him, but he saw only the white wall of fog a dozen yards off. His aim was to make a circuit of the *massif* and bear round to the pass of the Red Burn, which made a road between Haripol and Machray. He would then be nearly due north of the Sanctuary and exactly opposite where Lamancha proposed to make his entrance. . . . A fortnight earlier, when he first came to Crask, he had gone for a walk in far pleasanter weather, and had been acutely bored. Now, with no prospect but a wet blanket of mist, and with no chance of observing bird or plant, he was enjoying every moment of it. More, his thoughts were beginning to turn pleasantly towards the other side of his life—his books and hobbies, the intricacies of politics, the legal practice of which he was a master. He reflected almost with exhilaration on a difficult appeal which would come on in the autumn, when he hoped to induce the House of Lords to upset a famous judgment. He had begun to relish his competence again, even to take a modest pride in his fame; what had been tasteless in his mouth a few weeks ago had now an agreeable flavour. Palliser-Yeates was of the same way of thinking. Had he not declared last night that he wanted to give orders again and be addressed as 'sir,' instead of being chivvied about the countryside. And Lamancha? Leithen seriously doubted if Lamancha had ever suffered from quite the same malady. The trouble with him was that he had a large streak of bandit always in his composition, and must now and then give it play.

That was what made him the bigger man; perhaps Charles might take an almighty toss some day, but if he didn't he would be first at the post, for he rode more gallantly to win.

'I suppose I may regard myself as cured,' Leithen reflected, as he munched a second breakfast of cheese-sandwiches and raisins somewhere under the north-eastern spur of Sgurr Dearg.

His orders had been to get somewhere on the Machray side by eight o'clock, and he saw by his watch that he was well ahead of his time. Once he had turned the corner of Sgurr Dearg the wind was shut off and the mist wrapped him closer. He had acquired long ago a fast but regular pace on the hills, and, judging from the time and the known distance, he knew that he must be very near the Machray march. Presently he had topped a ridge which was clearly a watershed, for the plentiful streams now ran west. Then he began to descend, and soon was brought up by a raging torrent, which seemed to be flowing north-west. This must be the Red Burn, coming down from the gullies of Sgurr Dearg, and it was his business to cross it and work his way westward along the edge of the great trough of the Reascuill. But he must go warily, for he was very near the pass, by which, according to the map, a road could be found from Corrie Easain in the Machray forest to the Haripol Sanctuary—the road which, according to Wattie Lithgow, gave the easiest access and would most assuredly be well watched.

He crossed the stream, not without difficulty, and climbed another ridge, beyond which the ground fell steeply. These must be the screens on the Reascuill side, he concluded, so he bore to the right and found, as he expected, that here there was a re-entrant corrie, and that he was on the very edge of the great trough. It was for him now to keep this edge, but to go circumspectly, for at any moment he might stumble upon some of Claybody's sentries. His business was to occupy their attention, but he did not see what good he could do. The mist was distraction enough—in it no man could see twenty yards ahead of him; but it might clear, and in that event he would have his work cut out. Meanwhile he must avoid a premature collision.

He avoided it only by a hairbreadth. Suddenly that happened which at the moment was perplexing Wattie Lithgow and Lamancha a mile off. Corridors opened in the air—dark corridors of dizzy space and black rock seamed with torrents. Leithen found himself looking into a cauldron of which only the bottom was

still hid, and at the savage splinters of the Pinnacle Ridge. He was looking at something less welcome, for thirty yards off, on the edge of the scarp, was a group of five men.

They had been boiling tea in billies in the lee of a rock, and had been stirred to attention by the sudden clearing of the air. They saw him as soon as he saw them, and in a moment were on their feet and spreading out in his direction. He heard a cry, and then a babble of tongues.

Leithen did the only thing possible. He strode towards them with a masterful air. They were the real navy, the hardest race in the land, sleeping in drain-pipes, always dirty and wet, forgetting their sodden labours now and then in drink, but tough, formidable, and resourceful.

'What the devil are you fellows doing here?' he shouted angrily.

At first they took him for a gillie.

'What the hell's your business?' one of them replied, but the advance had halted. As he came nearer they changed their mind, for Leithen had not the air of a gillie.

'My business is to know what you're doing here—on my land?'

Now Machray forest was not let that season, and this Leithen knew. If any arrangement had been come to with Haripol, it could only have been made between the stalkers. It was for him to play the part of the owner.

The men looked nonplussed, for the navy, working under heavy-handed foremen, is susceptible to the voice of authority.

'We were sent up here to keep a lookout,' one answered.

'Lookout for what? Who sent you?'

'It was Lord Claybody—we took our orders from Mr Macnicol.'

Leithen sat down on a stone and lit his pipe.

'Well—you're trespassing on Machray—my ground. I don't know what on earth Lord Claybody means. I have heard nothing of it.'

'There's a man tryin' to poach, sir. We were telled to wait here and keep a lookout for him.'

Leithen smiled grimly. 'A pretty lookout you can keep in this weather. But that doesn't touch the point that you're in a place where you've no right to be. . . . You poor devils must have been having a rotten time roosting up here.'

He took out his flask. 'Here's something to warm you. There's just enough for a tot apiece.'

The flask was passed round amid murmurs of satisfaction, while Leithen smoked and surveyed the queer party. 'I call it cruelty to animals,' he said, 'to plant you fellows in a place like this. I hope you're well paid for it.'

'We're gettin' a pund a day, and the man that grips the poacher gets a five-pund note. The name o' the poacher is Macnab.'

'Well, I hope one of you will earn the fiver. Now, look here. I can't have you moving a yard north of this. You're on Machray ground as it is, for my march is the edge of the hill. I don't mind you squatting here, and of course it's no business of mine what you do on Haripol, but you don't stir a foot into Machray. With this wind you'll put all the beasts out of these upper corries.'

He rose and strolled away. 'I must be off. See that you mind what I've said. If you move, it must be into Haripol. A poacher! I never heard such rubbish. Better my job than yours, anyway. Still, I hope you get that fiver!'

Leithen departed in an atmosphere of general goodwill, and as soon as possible put a ridge between him and the navvies. It had been a narrow escape, but mercifully no harm was done. He must keep well below the skyline on the Machray side, because there would be watchers elsewhere on the Haripol ground, and he was not ready as yet to play the decoy-duck, for it had occurred to him that he was still too far east for his purpose. Those navvies were watching the pass from the Red Burn, and had no concern with what might be happening in the Sanctuary. Indeed they could not see into it, because of the spur which Sgurr Dearg flung out towards the Reascuill. He must be farther down the stream before he tried to interest those who might interfere with Lamancha; so he mended his pace, and, keeping well on the Machray side, made for the hill called Bheinn Fhada, which faced Sgurr Mor across the Reascuill.

Then the mist came down again, and in driving sleet Leithen scrambled among the matted boulders and screes of Bheinn Fhada's slopes. Here he knew he was safe enough, for he was inside the Machray march and out of any possible prospect of the Reascuill. But it was a useless labour, and the return of the thick weather began to try his temper. The good-humour of the morning had gone, when it was a delight to be abroad in the wilds alone and to pit his strength against storm and distance. He was growing bored with the whole business, and at the same time anxious to play the part which had been set him. As it was, wandering on the skirts of Bheinn Fhada, he was as little use to John Macnab as if he had been reading Sir Walter Scott in the Crask smoking-room.

It took him longer than he expected to pass that weariful mountain, and it was noon before he ate the remnants of the food he had brought in the hollow which lies at the head of the second main Machray corrie, Corrie na Sidhe. Here he observed that sight which at the same moment was confronting Lamancha on the Beallach looking over to Crask. The mist was thinning—not breaking into gloomy corridors, but lightening everywhere with the sun behind

it. The wind too had shifted; it was blowing in his face from the south. Suddenly the top of Stob Coire Easain in front of him stood clear and bright, and its upper crags, jewelled with falling waters, rose out of a rainbow haze. Far out on the right he saw a patch of silver which he knew for the sea; nearer, and well below, was an olive-green splash which must be the Haripol woods. And then, as if under a wizard's wand, the glen beneath him from a pit of vapour became an enamelled cup, with the tawny Reascuill looped in its hollows.

It was time for Leithen to be up and doing. He crawled to a point which gave him cover and a view into the glen, and searched the place long and carefully with his glass. There must be navy posts close at hand, but from where he lay he could not command the sinuosities of the hillside below him. He saw the nest of upper corries which composed the Sanctuary, but not the Beallach, which was hidden by the ridge of Sgurr Mor. . . . He lay there for half-an-hour, uncertain what he should do next. If he descended into the glen it meant certain capture, for he would be cut off by some

lower post. The only plan seemed to be to show himself on the upper slopes and then try to draw the pursuit off towards Machray, but he did not see how such a course was going to help Lamancha in the Sanctuary. The plan of campaign, he decided, had been a great deal too elaborate, and his own part looked like a wash-out.

He made his way along the hillside towards that Machray peak which bears the name of Clonlet, the wide skirts of which make one side of the glen above Haripol, the opposite sentinel to Stob Ban. He had got well on to the slopes of that mountain when he detected something in the glen below: men appeared to be moving down the stream—three at least—and to be moving fast. His sense of duty revived, for here seemed a task to his hand. He showed himself on an out-jutting knoll, and waited. The men below had their eyes about them, because he was almost instantly observed. He heard cries, he saw a hand waved, then he heard a whistle blown. . . . After that he began to run.

(Continued on page 434.)

THE VORACITY OF FISH.

By ERNEST PHILLIPS.

I.

THERE was a certain amount of comment in the papers over a news item illustrating the voracity of fish. An angler had caught a trout measuring $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length. He saw the tail of another protruding from its mouth, and on pulling this trout out discovered that it measured $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. That a fish should attempt to swallow a brother only four inches shorter than itself did seem a somewhat remarkable fact, but all who have any experience of angling know that so far from such an incident being uncommon it can be easily capped by much stranger incidents. Why, as I write these lines I have before me a photograph of a couple of small pike which were found dead on the shore of a river in the south of England. One of them had tried to swallow the other and failed. Unable to rid himself of his 'prize,' he had choked, and they were washed ashore locked together in death. The real point of the story lies in the fact that a baby pike of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. had tried to swallow a larger pike of $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. It was, of course, a physical impossibility; the larger fish could not have been accommodated in the stomach of the smaller one. It was, in the homely words of the old English saying, a true exemplification of the glutton's 'eyes being too big for its belly.'

The fact is that fish are extremely voracious; like most wild creatures, they eat when they can. African hunters tell us of lions that gorge

themselves on a 'kill' to such an extent that they are hardly able to walk away, and thus they fall easy victims to the gun. Fish have much the same disposition. They will eat till the food reaches the top of the gullet and actually protrudes from the mouth, and even then they are known to take an angler's bait. Pike, of course, are the most common examples that can be quoted in proof of this gluttony; and when it is remembered that there is a strong element of savagery in their disposition, and that they will attack any moving or glittering object that comes within their range of vision, it is not surprising that angling records are full of strange tales. The difficulty is to convince the general reader of the truth of many of these stories. It has been a hobby of mine to collect and compile records of out-of-the-way incidents in fishing. I have verified as many as possible. Where it was feasible I have had photographs taken. Thus the stories that follow are offered as genuine, and the reader may be assured in advance that he may take any of them without that grain of salt which is supposed to be indispensable to the digestion of fishermen's yarns.

II.

Let us look first at a few pike stories. The non-angling reader must grasp the idea that the pike is a savage and ruthless enemy of nearly all other kinds of fish. Not for nothing is he called the fresh-water shark. He does not

spare even his own kind, for pike prey one upon another just as readily as they prey upon other species. It is reckoned that a pike eats his own weight of food every week. Thus a 20-lb. fish will require 20 lb. of fish-food per week. He will take toll of salmon, trout, roach, bream, eels, or anything else; if these are not available he will make shift with rats, ducks, pheasants, stoats, or anything that dares to encroach upon his preserves. A 2-lb. pike has been found with another of a pound in his inside. One of 3½ lb. contained a trout of 1¼ lb. A very small pike, only about 1 lb. in weight, had eight roach in his stomach when an angler caught him by using a ninth roach as bait. A *Fishing Gazette* photograph showed a pike of 2½ lb. choked by a young salmon of exactly the same weight, but an inch and a half longer than the pike. Another, 3 lb. 6 oz., was choked by a pound trout. Still another, weighing 27 lb., contained two sea trout, one 3½ lb. and the other 1½ lb. One of 14½ lb. had in him a salmon of 3 lb. Then there is the authenticated case of a 10-lb. pike in a Brighton aquarium, which for weeks lived in amity with a brother of 4 lb. One morning when the keeper arrived he found the smaller one missing, and the distention of the survivor's stomach left no doubt as to his unhappy fate. In further proof that they prey upon their own species, one or two other events may be recorded. A 21-lb. pike was found dead on the Welsh Wye, with another of 6 lb. fast in his gullet. The big one had to be cut open to release the victim, and it was then seen that the smaller fish was itself over two feet long. A similar incident is recorded from Lake Windermere. A pike was observed floating on the surface in a helpless state. When netted it was seen that it had another pike firmly wedged in its gullet. The bigger fish weighed 11 lb., and it had tried to swallow one of 4 lb. In Ireland an angler hooked and was reeling in a pike of 8 lb., when he saw a bigger pike seize it by the tail. The second fish got away, but the first bore several new gashes on his body, and the size of the teeth marks suggested they had been made by a monster fish. An English angler in the Midlands lost a pike this way. He hooked one, about 4 lb., and was reeling it in, when he saw a bigger fish dart from the depths, seize it in his jaws, and wrench it from the hooks.

III.

Now to turn to other victims. Dozens of pike have been caught with rats in their inside, some of them so recently seized that the tail was hanging from the mouth of the fish when the angler made his capture. They will take even that blood-thirsty little creature the stoat. A shepherd's dog once started a stoat out of the flags at a river-side, and it took to the water; but a yard or two away it was seized by a pike,

and a few bubbles on the surface told the tale of its end. Ducklings fall an easy prey, and so do water-hens. Even wild-fowl and pheasants, shot overland, have been seen to collapse over a stream and fall into the water, and instantly a pike has darted up and taken them. On the Irish Shannon shooting men say they lose numbers of wood pigeons the same way. On a Norfolk Broad a keeper shot a wild fowl, which fell into the water, and it was instantly seized by a pike. He shot another, which dropped into the lake, and it too was taken by a pike. But this time the keeper was ready. He shot the pike, and retrieved both it and the bird. It was not the same as the first fish, for no bird was found in its stomach, but it held two ordinary-sized rats!

Many a pike meets its end through its insensate savagery. In Ross-shire an angler was drawing in a 2-lb. trout. A pike attacked it, would not release its hold, and was netted. This is so common an experience that further instances need not be given. But here is something rather different. When coarse-fishing, anglers put small fish into what is called a 'keep net.' They hang this so that it rests in the water, the intention being to release the fish when the day's sport is over. Many a pike, seeing these small fish, has attacked them, and has got his teeth so firmly fixed in the net that it was easy for the angler to lift him on to the bank. In one such case, however, the pike got away. He simply wrenched the net off its staple, and bolted with net and contents. Then again, there are plenty of stories of how one pike has been caught by two fishermen at once. It has seized a bait, and as it was being reeled to the side it has seen the second bait. Despite the rough usage it was receiving, in its anger it has turned on the second bait and grabbed that too, and thus been twice hooked. When this occurs in a fishing match it is a fine point for the judge to decide to which of the two anglers the fish belongs.

Strange things, apart from fish and birds, are found in the inside of pike. I have seen a four-inch meat-hook taken from a pike of only medium size. What became of the butcher? A pike of 32 inches, caught on Barton Broad, contained two roach, two pieces of wire, a steel spanner, and two keys tied together; while the stomach of an Irish pike contained a rosary, a pocket handkerchief, and a rubber purse containing twenty sovereigns. How did they get there? A 24-lb. pike out of Rydal Water, that held a duck, a rat, and a 2½-lb. pike; and one from Staffordshire that had swallowed 274 small bream and roach, are other examples.

There are quite a number of stories of pike attacking human beings. Many of these lack proof, but there are others that appear quite genuine. A correspondent in *Country Life* wrote that as he was bathing in the Leicester-

shire river Soar his hand was bitten by a pike, and the teeth marks were shown in proof. Mr Cholmondeley-Pennell, the angling author, wrote that after he had landed a Thames pike the fish sprang from the ground and bit him on the leg. A Yorkshire angler, fishing the Yore, was trying to land a pike without a net, when it bit him so badly on the hand that he had to have the gash stitched up by a doctor. But the story which best illustrates the savagery of the pike is that of a boy who, after bathing in a stream at Pickering, Yorkshire, sat on the bank and dangled his feet over the side, and though they were some distance above the water-level he maintained that a pike jumped up and bit one of them. Confirmation was supplied by the local doctor, who was sent to the lad, and who deposed that the gashes corresponded exactly with what he believed were wounds made by the teeth of a fish.

IV.

Other fish beside the pike show a similar tendency to voracity. The salmon is not usually credited with this disposition; indeed, scientists tell us that salmon do not feed in fresh water, yet occasionally they are found with rats and frogs in their inside. There is, however, one case of a salmon biting a human being. An angler wrote to the *Fishing Gazette* to say that after he had landed a salmon from a Devonshire river it turned on his gillie and bit him through the thumb. The gillie said that in an experience of thirty years he had never met or heard of such an experience before.

If there are not many instances of salmon voracity there are plenty when we come to consider the case of the trout. On the Devonshire Otter a trout was found dead with an eel half down his throat and the other half round his gills—and I might have quoted more than one similar case in dealing with pike. The fact is that the trout is by way of being somewhat of a glutton. A Leeds angler once took a 1½-lb. trout with a rat sticking out of its gullet. That the dainty trout should eat rats will come as a surprise to many, but the fact is well established. At a fish-breeding establishment with which I was connected the owner recognised this weakness. At threshing-time he gave coppers to the farmers' lads for every live rat they brought. These were liberated at the side of a breeding-pond containing trout up to 8 lb. apiece. The rats started to swim across, but not one in a dozen reached the opposite bank. The trout were waiting. They came up with a rush. There was a squeal, a flurry, and all was over. Trout will eat frogs and toads, and a specimen of 5 lb. was once found choked by a very big frog which he had tried to swallow, but which had got a leg through a gill, and could move neither backward nor forward. Indeed, trout are really very big eaters. Lord Buxton tells of one caught

in the mayfly season which contained 960 mayflies; and he caught another which had 79 minnows neatly packed away in its inside. A trout of ¾ lb. caught in the river Frome, Dorset, contained 46 minnows; and one of 1½ lb., caught in the Herefordshire Wye, yielded up 35 minnows, 1 gudgeon, 3 salmon smolt, and a few eyed ova. Trout will even go for pike, which is turning the tables with a vengeance on their hereditary foe. More than one big trout has been caught with pike in its stomach. This leads to the conclusion that the trout is by no means the timid creature some anglers regard it. As an example, a Scottish angler once hooked a trout. It broke away after a desperate struggle. His bait was still in the water. Instantly the trout, as though thinking it was the cause of its trouble, turned on it and seized it again, and this time the fisherman landed it. There are other instances that show boldness on the part of trout. A Derbyshire angler, on the Derwent, hooked a trout on a minnow. As he played it, the minnow was hanging outside the mouth of the fish. A second trout came up, pecked at the minnow, and finally hooked itself. It rounds the story off to say that the angler landed them both. A Devonshire angler was landing a dace of about nine inches in length. A trout seized it by the head; then a second trout seized it by the tail. They wrenched it from the hook, and the last the angler saw of his dace was the two trout gripping it firmly as they sank out of sight. Like a pike, a trout is attracted by glittering objects. Thus a picnic party, in a boat on a Scottish loch, lost a nine-inch dessert knife overboard. As it descended into the depths, spinning and gleaming, a 5-lb. trout rushed up and took it. Later, the trout was taken, and the knife recovered.

The eel, too, is a very voracious fish, and specimens are often found dead through attempting to swallow fish too large for the throat. Small fish are frightened of eels. An angler caught a small eel, and put it alone in a can with a number of small roach. Instantly they jumped out on to the grass. He put them back, and they jumped out again. Then he threw the eel into the river, and peace was restored. Indeed, there is hardly any British fish which need be absent from this collection. The perch is a very bold biter, and can be frightened away only with difficulty. Many a time have I hooked a perch, marked him before release, and caught him a few minutes later. But the perch story that caps all others is an incident told by a well-known angler. After catching a perch, he was liberating him, when by accident he tore an eye out on his hook. After putting the fish in the water he dropped in his hook again, baited as it was with the eye. In less than a minute he had caught a perch, and lo! it was the one he had just put back. It had taken its own eye as bait!



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

ON THE WATERWAYS OF FRANCE.

By Captain H. T. MUNN, F.R.G.S., Author of *Tales of the Eskimo*.

THE good-looking captain of the river steamer plying from Le Havre to Rouen was very serious when I suggested to him that our canoe should be taken to Rouen. 'But,' he exclaimed, 'a bateau! There is no room for such a thing.' He laughed heartily when he saw our 15½-foot Canadian canoe. 'Pouf!' he said; 'that toy! We will hang it in the saloon as an ornament'—an arrangement later modified by lashing it inside the rail of the steamer.

Soon after 8 A.M. on 15th September we put our little craft in the water in the presence of a small crowd of interested observers. W. W. H.—whom I will call A. for short—had explained to the porter at our hotel the previous evening that we were going to canoe to Paris. 'Ah,' he said, 'it is a little boat with a motor, doubtless?' A. explained carefully that the propelling forces were our paddles and our arms only. 'To Paris, and with the arms!' exclaimed the incredulous porter; 'but, m'sieu, *why?* Is there not the train four times a day?'

Gustave—the assistant—ventured it would be 'good for the biceps,' but the porter shook his head and turned gloomily away. 'These mad Englishmen are going to drown themselves,' he muttered; it was no affair of his. Similar gloomy forecasts were made by the onlookers at our start.

The Seine is tidal to the first lock, about fifteen miles above Rouen, and when it is running out it is a swift and eddying river. A small canoe on the Seine is not for beginners at the game.

A. said he had a faultless French accent, but a small vocabulary; like the curate's egg, it was good in parts only. I think it was at Elbeuf that we made our first déjeuner. A. mentioned that 'soissons' on the menu was obviously a new sort of Swiss cheese (it was in the place 'cheese' would occupy on an English bill-of-fare). When a large dish of haricot beans arrived his 'Menu French' received the first of many jolts.

To canoe leisurely up the Seine—or better, down it—is a wonderful voyage. Such places as Pont de l'Arche—beloved of artists—Les Andelys or Mantes are mediæval towns of surprising beauty, and at Les Andelys Richard Cœur de Lion's noble castle fascinated us. 'Ah,

but she is beautiful, my daughter of a year,' exclaimed Richard; and it is easy to believe the warlike monarch worshipped this impregnable castle, as it must have been in the twelfth century.

Paris and the bridges of the Seine! Anyone making a voyage up or down the river through Paris becomes confused with the number, the beauty, and the variety of these splendid bridges; also from the Seine the finest view of Notre Dame may be obtained. In Paris the Seine water is extremely unattractive; in the eddies at the sides are countless thousands of corks, scores of dead dogs and cats, and other flotsam suggestive and significant; we decided we would not be upset in the Seine hereabouts.

We made Choisy-le-Roi our first evening beyond Paris. Here died Rouget de Lisle, author and composer of that greatest of all war-songs, 'The Marseillaise.' At the inn of that name pretty Marie and Germaine entertained us with accounts of the passing of the American soldiers in the war—they were small school-girls at the time—and repeated many of their queer phrases and slang expressions.

Past the forest of Fontainebleau, and the wireless station on the Seine at Moret, we turned off into our first canal—or canalised river—the Canal du Loing.

Nearly a month on the canals, paddling twenty-five to thirty miles a day, has left us still uncertain where the most beautiful scenery was found. Rather than canals—as we understand the word in England—those of France are gracious tree-embowered waterways, vista after vista of surpassing beauty and varied scene. Bird life, with two exceptions, is conspicuously scarce, one being the magpie and the other the kingfisher. The latter beautiful little birds are in surprising numbers, and I saw some in the heart of Paris itself; they are plentiful on most of the canal-ways we travelled, and always a joy to watch.

Beyond Nemours—a wonderful old mediæval town—we passed the height of land between the Seine and the Loire, and descended to the magnificent aqueduct which spans that river by the Canal de Briare. Once on the left bank of the Loire, we travelled parallel to it by the Canal Latéral through a rich farming and

vineyard country, halting a couple of days at Nevers, and recrossing the Loire at Decize. The Loire was in full flood, and I think we disappointed a small crowd of Sunday fishermen who watched us enter it from the canal lock, to be whirled like a leaf down its course and under the fine old stone bridge. 'They are mad,' I heard an old gentleman affirm; 'and the bodies will not be found for weeks!'

The divide between the Canal du Nivernais and the Yonne river was one of the beauty-spots of the journey. We emerged from a tunnel, the approach to which was so dainty and well-kept we thought we had got on to a private water-way to some château. Inquiry proved we were still on the Canal du Nivernais, and the farther side of the tunnel found us overlooking a beautiful landscape of vineyards and distant hills, the green fields of the valley dotted with the white Nivernais cattle.

Here we descended twenty-five locks within about three miles, portaging them all, this being much quicker than locking through. I think it was the next day I had a conversation with an old peasant woman, who told me that her age was eighty-six; that she had worked all her life, and was now going to her little garden to get up her potatoes. 'The good Lord gave me a good stomach, m'sieu,' she said, 'and that is still very good—but the back and the legs! alas, they are getting old and worn out.' We always found the peasants and the country folk charmingly courteous and anxious to give us advice or assistance.

In due course the Yonne took us once more to the Seine, and our 'promenade' was down the river we had previously ascended.

The Seine fishermen deserve a passing reference. Never have I seen so many people fishing so earnestly and seriously with such meagre results, for a tiny fish the size of a sprat seemed the usual, though infrequent, catch. Once we saw a fisherman land a fish about the size of a herring. His shout of triumph brought his friend (fishing a hundred yards below him) at the run, and as soon as he saw this prodigy he embraced the lucky man with fervour. I suppose a 7 or a 10 lb. pike would be the occasion of a village festival.

The Seine fishermen are a dour and jealous folk. To come round a corner and find one watching his quill float with intense earnestness often elicited an angry '*au large, m'sieu, au large*' (further out, sir, further out), even if he had been driven up the bank a few minutes before by the wash of a speedy motor-boat.

France, as we saw it, is working, and working hard. All the great factories on the Seine, or at any city we passed, are hives of industry. The village blacksmith's hammer was going at six in the morning, and Sunday gave no cessation of work in the fields and the vineyards. The only idle men we saw were the Seine fishermen—and they would fiercely resent the implication if it were suggested to them.

The permit to travel on the French canals—obtained from the Public Works Department—costs nothing, and no charge is made for the use of the locks. The average cost per day to us, including everything, worked out at less than nine shillings each, nor did we stint ourselves in anything.

I know of no more delightful holiday than a canoe trip on these wonderful French waterways.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER XIII.—continued.

AT this point the chronicler must retrace his steps and follow the doings of Mr Johnson Claybody. That young gentleman had taken the threat of John Macnab most seriously to heart; he felt his honour involved, his sense of property outraged; and he saw the pride of the Claybodys lowered if the scoundrel were victorious on Haripol, as he had been at Strathlarrig. Above all, he feared the Press, which was making a holiday feature of this monstrous insolence. He it was who had devised the plan of defence, a plan which did credit to his wits. Not only had he placed his sentries with care, but he had arranged for peripatetic gillies to patrol between the stations and form an intelligence service for headquarters. His *poste de commandement* was at Macnicol's cottage, just beyond the gorge of the Reascuill and some two miles from the house.

All morning his temper had been worsening.

The news of the journalistic invasion of Haripol, brought to him about ten o'clock by a heated garden-boy, had been the first shock. He had sent a message to his father, handing over that problem to him, with the results which we have seen. Also, he was lamentably short of the force he had hoped to muster, owing to his mother's insistence on keeping Macnicol and two of the gillies behind to look for her dog. It was not till close on midday that, after a furious journey to the house in a two-seater car, he was able to recover the services of the head stalker. Macnicol, he felt, should have been on the edge of the Sanctuary at daybreak; instead, he had had to send Macqueen, a surly ruffian whom he had dismissed for insolence, but whose hillcraft he knew to be of the first order. Johnson's plan was that towards midday he himself with a posse should patrol the upper forest, so that if John Macnab should be lurking

there he might drive him north or south against the navy garrison. East, Sgurr Dearg shut the way, and west lay the grounds of Haripol, where escape would be impossible, since every living thing there was on the watch. Johnson's blood was up. If John Macnab had made his venture he wanted to share directly in the chase and to be in at the death.

It was after midday before the flying column started. It was composed of Johnson himself, Macnicol, Cameron the third stalker, two selected gillies, and three of the navvies who were more mobile than their fellows. Macnicol had prophesied that the weather would clear in the afternoon, so, though the mist was thick at the start, they took the road with confidence. Sure enough, it began to lift before they were half a mile up the glen, and Macnicol grunted his satisfaction. 'Macnab cannot escape noways,' he said. 'But I do not think he has come at all, unless he's daft. He would not get in; but if he is in, he will never get out.'

Johnson's one fear now was that the assault should not have been made. It would be a poor ending to his strategy if the pool was dragged and no fish was found in it. But presently he was reassured, for at the foot of Bheim Fhada he met one of the patrolling gillies with tremendous news. A man had been seen that morning by the navvies at the Red Burn. He had passed as the laird of Machray, and had given them whisky. The gillie knew that the laird of Machray was a child of three, dwelling at Bournemouth, and he had demanded a description of the visitor. It was a tall man, they said, lean, and clean-shaven, rather pale, and with his skin very tight over his cheek bones. He had looked like a gentleman and had behaved as such. Now, the only picture of John Macnab known to the gillies was that which had been broadcast in talk by Angus and Jimsie of Strathlarrig, and that agreed most startlingly with the navvies' account. 'A long, lean dog,' Angus had said, 'and whitish in the face.' Wherefore the gillie had hastened with his tidings to headquarters.

The news increased Johnson's pace. John Macnab was veritably in the forest, and at the thought he grew both nervous and wrath. There was something supernatural, he felt, about the impudence of a man who could march quietly up to a post of navvies and bluff them. Were all his subtle plans to be foiled? Then, half a mile on, appeared Macqueen, just descended from his eyrie.

Macqueen had to report that half-an-hour before, when the mist cleared and he could get a view of the corries, he had seen the deer moving. The wind at the same time had shifted to the south, and the beasts in the corrie below the Beallach were frightened. He had seen nothing with his telescope—the beasts had been moved some time before, he thought,

for they were well down the hill. In his opinion, if John Macnab was in the forest, he was on or beyond the Beallach.

Johnson considered furiously. 'The fellow was at the Red Burn just before nine o'clock. He must have gone through the Sanctuary to be at the Beallach half-an-hour ago. Is that possible, Macnicol?'

'I don't ken,' Macnicol scratched his head. 'Macqueen says that only the beasts in the corrie below the Beallach were moved, but if he had gone through the Sanctuary they would have been all rinnin' oot. I'm fair puzzled, sir, unless he cam' down the watter and worked up by Sgurr Mor. Yon Macnab's a fair deevil.'

'We'll get after him,' Johnson said, and then he stopped short. He had a sudden memory of what had happened at Glenraden. Why should not John Macnab have sent a confederate to gull them into the belief that he was busy in the Sanctuary, while he himself killed a stag in the woods around the house? There were plenty of beasts there, and it would be like his infernal insolence to poach one under the very windows of Haripol. It was true that the woodland stags were not easy to stalk, but Macnab had shown himself a mighty artist.

Johnson had a gift of quick decision. He briefly explained to his followers his suspicions. 'The man at the Beallach may not be the man whom the navvies saw at the Red Burn. The Red Burn fellow may have gone down the Machray side, and be now in the woods.—Cameron, you take Andrew and Peter, and get down the glen in double quick time. If you see anybody on Clonlet or in the woods, hunt him like hell. I'll skin you if you let him escape. Drive him right down to the gardens, and send word to the men there to be on the lookout. You'll be a dozen against one.—Macnicol, you come with me; and you, Macqueen, and you three fellows; and we'll make for the Beallach. We'll cut up through the Sanctuary, for it don't matter a damn about the deer if we only catch that swine. He's probably lying up there till he can slip out in the darkness.—And, Cameron, tell them to send a car up the Doran road. I may want a lift home.'

It was Cameron and his posse who spied Leithen on the side of Clonlet. All three were young men, and they had the priceless advantage of acquaintance with the ground, while Leithen knew no more than the generalities of the map. As soon as he saw that he was pursued he turned up hill, with the purpose of making for Machray. He had had a long walk, but he felt fresh enough for another dozen miles or so, and he remembered his instructions to go north, even into Glenaicill if necessary.

But in this he had badly miscalculated, for

the whistle of Cameron had alarmed a post of navvies in a nook of hill behind Leithen and at a greater altitude, who had missed him earlier, for the simple reason that they had been asleep. Roused now to a sudden attention, they fanned out on the slope, and cut him off effectively from any retreat towards Corrie na Sidhe. There were only two courses open to him—to climb the steep face of Clonlet or to go west towards the woods. The first would be hard; he did not even know whether the rock was climbable, and if he stuck there he would be an easy prey. He must go west, and trust to find some way to Machray round the far skirts of the mountain.

Cameron did not hurry, for he knew what would happen. So long as the navvies cut off retreat to the east the victim was safe. Leithen did not realise his danger till he found himself above the woods on a broad, grassy ledge just under the sheer rocks of Clonlet. It was the place called Crapnagower, which ended, not in a hillside by which the butt of Clonlet could be turned, but in a bold promontory of rock which fell almost sheer to the meadows of Haripol. Long before he got to the edge Leithen had an uncomfortable suspicion of what was coming, but when he looked over the brink and saw cattle at grass far below him he had an ugly shock. It looked as if he was cornered, and cornered, too, in a place far from the main scene of action, where his misfortunes could not benefit Lamancha.

He turned and plunged downwards through the woods direct for Haripol. There was still plenty of fight in him, and his pursuers would have a run for their money. Those pursuers were not far off. Andrew had climbed the hill and had been moving fast, parallel to Leithen, but lower down among the trees. Cameron was on the lower road, a grassy aisle among the thickets, and Peter, the swifter, had gone on ahead to watch the farther slopes. It was not long before Leithen was made aware of Andrew, and the sight forced him to his right in a long slant which would certainly have taken him into the arms of Peter.

But at this moment the Fates intervened in the person of Crossby. That eminent correspondent, having inspired his fellow-journalists with the spirit of all mischief, and thereby having sadly broken the peace of Haripol, was now lying up from farther pursuit in the woods, confident that he had done his best for the cause. Suddenly he became aware of the ex-Attorney-General descending the hill in leaps and bounds, and a gillie not fifty yards behind on his trail. Crossby behaved like Sir Philip Sidney and other cavaliers in similar crises. 'Thy need is the greater,' was his motto, and as Leithen passed he shouted hoarsely to him to get into cover. Leithen, whose head was clear enough though his legs were aching, both heard and

saw. He clapped down like a woodcock in a patch of bracken, while Crossby, whose garb and height were much the same as his, became the quarry in his stead.

The chase was not of long duration. The correspondent did not know the ground, nor did he know of the waiting Peter. Left to himself, he might have outdistanced Andrew, but he was watched from below by wily eyes. He reached the grassy path, turned to his right, and rounded a corner, to be embraced firmly and affectionately by the long arms of the gillie. 'That's five pund in our pockets, Andra ma man,' the latter observed when the second gillie arrived. 'If this is no' John Macnab, it's his brither, and anyway, we've done what we were telled.' So, strongly held by the two men, the self-sacrificing Crossby departed into captivity.

Of these doings Leithen knew nothing. He did not believe that Crossby could escape, but the hunt had gone out of his ken. Now it is the nature of man that, once he is in flight, he cannot be content till he finds an indisputable place of refuge. This wood was obviously unhealthy, and he made haste to get out of it. But he must go circumspectly, and the first need was for thicker cover, for this upper part was too open for his comfort. Below he saw denser scrub, and he started to make his way into it.

The trouble was that presently he came into Cameron's view. The stalker had heard the crash of Crossby's pursuit, and had not hurried himself, knowing the strategic value of Peter's position. He proposed to wait in case the fugitive doubled back. But suddenly he caught sight of Leithen farther up the hill, and apparently unfollowed. Had the man given the two gillies the slip? Cameron performed a very creditable piece of stalking. He wormed his way upward till he was above the bushes where Leithen was now sheltering. The next thing that much-enduring gentleman knew was that a large hand had been outstretched to grab his collar.

Like a stag from covert Leithen leaped forth, upsetting Cameron with his sudden bound. He broke through the tangle of hazel and wild raspberries, and stayed not on the order of his going. His pace downhill had always been remarkable, and Cameron's was no match for it. Soon he had gained twenty yards, then fifty, but he had no comfort in his speed, for somewhere ahead were more gillies, and he was being forced straight on Haripol, which was thick with the enemy.

The only plan in his head was to make for the Reascuill, which, as he was aware, flowed at this part of its course in a deep-cut gorge. He had a faint hope that, once there, he might find a place to lie up in till the darkness, for he knew that the Highland gillie is rarely a rock-climber. But the place grew more horrible as

he continued. He was among rhododendrons now and well-tended grass walks. Yes, there was a rustic arbour and what looked like a summer-seat. The beastly place was a garden. In another minute he would be among flowers-pots and vineries, with twenty gardeners at his heels. But the river was below—he could hear its noise—so, like a stag hard-pressed by hounds, he made for the running water. A long slither took him down a steep bank of what had once been foxgloves, and he found his feet on a path. And there, to his horror, were two women.

By this time his admirable wind was considerably touched, and the sweat was blinding his eyes, so that he did not see clearly. But surely one of the two was known to him?

Janet rose to the occasion like a bird. As he stood blinking before her she laughed merrily. 'Sir Edward,' she cried, 'where in the world have you been? You've taken a very rough road.' Then she turned to Lady Claybody.

'This is Sir Edward Leithen. He is staying with us, and went out for an enormous walk this morning. He is always doing it. It was lucky you came this way, Sir Edward, for we can give you a lift home.'

Lady Claybody was delighted, she said, to meet one of whom she had heard so much. He must come back to the house at once and have tea and see her husband. 'I call this a real romance,' she cried. 'First Mr Palliser-Yeates, and then Sir Edward Leithen dropping like a stone from the hillside.'

Leithen was beginning to recover himself. 'I'm afraid I was trespassing,' he murmured. 'I tried a short-cut and got into difficulties. I hope I didn't alarm you coming down the hill like an avalanche. I find that the easiest way.'

The mystified Cameron stood speechless, watching his prey departing in the company of his mistress.

(Continued on page 461.)

STARS AND THEIR WIRELESS MESSAGES.

II.—THE SHAPE OF OUR STELLAR UNIVERSE.

By Professor GEORGE FORBES.

FOLLOWING upon the point considered in our previous article, we may be desirous to form true conclusions, from the signals sent to us by different classes of stars, concerning the materials of which they are composed. To do this it is absolutely essential that we bear in mind much of what has been established by astronomers about the distribution of the stars in space and the form of the stellar universe, for it has been noted that the stars are, for the most part, to be found in certain well-defined and limited regions of space. The stars in these regions are now spoken of by astronomers as forming the 'stellar universe.' And these do not seem to extend to anything like an infinite distance, although, of course, stellar distances are always so great as to be unrealisable by human minds.

The greatest fact about stellar distribution is that by far the greater number of stars are found among those constellations that are traversed by the Milky Way. This belt, often called the Galaxy, shows up in its full glory only on a brilliant moonless night. To the naked eye it looks like a broad wash of white paint on the celestial vault. It is an arch going right across the sky from horizon to horizon. It is continued through the constellations of the southern hemisphere, which are below our horizon, and therefore unseen by us. In fact, it forms a flat ring that envelopes the region of space occupied by the solar system.

We can trace it among constellations well known to us. On a summer evening we see it

starting as a double band from Sagittarius and Ophiuchus. It rises up through Aquila to Cygnus, where the two branches join together. Thence it passes as a single band through Cassiopeia, Auriga, Gemini, and Orion. We then follow its course between Sirius and Procyon towards Puppis and Carina, and it continues its way among the southern constellations, going through the Southern Cross.

What looks to the naked eye like whitewash has its wonderful structure disclosed, even in a very small telescope, as consisting of myriads of stars too feeble to be distinguished by the naked eye. Larger telescopes reveal fainter, more distant, stars. The most distant stars in the Galaxy that our telescopes have hitherto reached are ten thousand million times fainter than some of the first-magnitude stars. In the Milky Way we are thus limited only by the power of our telescopes. In all other directions, except on or near the Milky Way, an increase in power of telescopes does not go on adding prodigiously to the number of these faint stars, for the most distant stars in regions clear of the Milky Way are much closer to us than those in the region of the Milky Way. In fact it is now known that, inside the flat, extended ring of space containing the stars of the Galaxy, there is a nearly globular space (generally described as 'bun-shaped') filled with almost all the stars of our stellar universe that are not in the ring of the Galaxy.

The galactic ring contains probably a thousand million stars for every million in the bun-shaped

space, because it extends to a distance so much greater. These recent discoveries about the form and structure of our stellar universe prove it to be based upon the Milky Way as a foundation, and the further we advance in new discoveries, the more clear becomes the fundamental importance of the Milky Way. The bun-shaped region has its own importance as being the region in which our own star, the sun, with the solar system, is situated.

Following upon the discovery of the shape of our stellar system, our interest is raised almost to the point of enthusiasm when we know that in many constellations there are minute luminous cloud-spots, called 'spiral nebulae,' whose form is identical with that which belongs to our own stellar system. They have a bun-shaped central luminosity, surrounded by a ring of spiral luminosities. Each luminosity is due to myriads of minute stars, too close for us to separate them. The resem-

blance to our own system is perfect, and they may be quite outside of, and disconnected from, our own stellar system. These spiral nebulae might be regarded as 'island universes' like our own stellar universe. Some astronomers go so far as to say that an observer on any planet that may exist in one of these 'island universes' would see our Milky Way and bun-shaped nucleus as a spiral nebula.

The photographs of these spiral nebulae taken with very large telescopes are perfectly beautiful and very suggestive. The finest of them all is the 'whirlpool nebula' in the 'Hunting Dogs,' a constellation south of the Great Bear's Tail. This nebula probably resembles our stellar universe more than any other, for reasons that will be told presently. Its special feature is a second glowing mass, like the central one, forming the outer extremity of one of the spiral arms of luminosity.

THE LIVING BRANCH.

CHAPTER I.—*continued.*

VI.

CONNIE sat for a moment, loath to surrender an evening that was the doorstep to something so different. She was glad now that she had said nothing of George Pirbright, and Sybil had run true to form. Such a match would be the most suitable thing imaginable. As to herself, the picture of Mary Mostyn was rather depressing, and she was wondering how she would stand the wear and tear, when there sounded another tap at the door, and Mrs Jennison came in.

'How good of you,' said the girl. 'Do sit down.'

Mrs Jennison took Sybil's chair, declined a cigarette, and gave her guest a quick, approving smile. 'I just wanted to say something there was no chance of saying downstairs. My dear, I do congratulate you both. It's the sort of thing that warms one's heart.' She patted Connie's hand.

'Then you don't think we're foolish young people who have acted on impulse?'

'No—though, to be quite frank, it's hardly what I expected. I rather thought it would be some one else, but when George Pirbright went off this morning I knew what that meant. It must have been a strange experience for him,' Mrs Jennison added reflectively.

'It was for me,' said Connie.

The other woman's lips took on a sudden curve. 'It's all curiously like my own. When Bob and I married we had hardly anything, and I'd just refused some one with a good deal, but the thing that was *me* felt safer with Bob, and

I've never regretted it. Perhaps it's easy to look back from this distance and be pleased with one's own judgment, but I remember a good many heart-searching hours at the very first, and thought that perhaps—'

'It's awfully decent of you to say that. I never knew, and thought that Mr Jennison was always well off. Sybil was here a minute ago. She didn't want to put me up in the air, but she would have if I wasn't so really happy over it all. You see, I know her so well that it wasn't any use trying to say much. What she couldn't understand was what I was going to get out of it. But it isn't that—it's what I want to put in.'

'Yes, I know. I feel that, too. With us the pinch came almost at once. It was the work without apparent results that was hardest, living on one's belief in the future, and being always confident it would come. When a woman sees her husband toiling without the reward she knows he deserves, it's harder on her than on him. One couldn't say that except to a woman, but the man has the work to carry him through. I don't mean that she hasn't a lot on her shoulders—she has; but it isn't what you would call invitational, and she's constantly disciplining herself so as not to stand in any way between him and his objective. It's so hard to remember that this is the same for them both. The result is, she's bound to feel side-tracked now and again. When it's all over she looks back and laughs, and it's the laugh that she must look forward to, the being able to smile at things that at the moment are rather grave. So when I heard about you and Jack, I knew you had this

in prospect. Is all this like a sermon to young wives?’

‘No, and I like it. It—it fits in awfully well.’

‘I’m glad, because I’m taking advantage of my twenty years’ seniority, and haven’t any girl of my own—worse luck. Which reminds me that when you come to England you’re to head straight for Marchmont whenever you want to get away from over-sympathetic relations.’

Connie’s eyes grew very soft. ‘How sweet of you.’

‘Not a bit. We want you, both, as often as possible. And now that everything’s come off so happily, I rather feel like being congratulated myself.’

‘About us?’ asked Connie, wondering a little.

Mrs Jennison nodded. ‘Yes. As a matter of fact I took a bit of a leap, though it wasn’t quite in the dark. It concerns you both, and it’s a nice thing to be able to say to a girl whom you know is absolutely happy and content in her decision. You see, Bob and I know Jack extremely well—we have for years—and about a month ago he came to see me about you.’

‘About me?’

‘Yes; and, my dear, I could have kissed him for it. I rather think I did. He just said that he had loved you for two years, and that as things stood he couldn’t carry on any longer. He blurted this out, looking as awkward as possible—you know that adorable kind of awkwardness; my Bob had it once, and perhaps it helped him a good deal—then said that he didn’t feel justified in asking you on account of his lack of means, because you were accustomed to so much more than he could give. I told him about George Pirbright, of which he seemed to know very little, and he just blinked at me and got rather white and didn’t say a word. Then I got a brain-wave, and talked to him like a mother, and told him I would ask you three for this week-end. That would make even running for himself and George. But I didn’t give George any reasons, because I couldn’t feel a bit like a mother to him. Jack was frightfully anxious that you shouldn’t have to consider him unless you wanted to, and it touched me tremendously when he said that if you accepted George he would go away and never see you again. You see, he didn’t know whether you took either himself or George at all seriously, but he did feel that the odds in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred were on the other man. However, he agreed to stand by and not say a word, and give George the opportunity to speak. Then, if you refused, I told him he would be justified in speaking himself. It was just you, all the way through.’

Connie was leaning forward, lips parted, and in her eyes a light both magnificent and tender. ‘He hardly looked at me till to-day.’

‘Can’t you see why? The poor boy was

being tortured, and didn’t want you to know; but he looked at me once or twice, and of course I knew. His instinct was to protect you, at whatever cost to himself, and if you had refused, you would never have known how it hurt. You can imagine how I felt all this time, and when George got that telegram I could have embraced him. Even at that Jack came back to me, and I had practically to take my oath that now he would be doing the right thing; and oh, my dear, if you had said “no” to him, I——’

Mrs Jennison, dabbing at her eyes, felt the pressure of strong, young arms.

‘You’re a perfect angel to tell me this,’ whispered the girl. ‘You don’t know how it will help in—in British Columbia.’

‘Well, my dear, it’s lovely to be able to tell you; and, if I may suggest it, I wouldn’t say a word about it to Jack. He won’t mention it—his kind doesn’t. And if you know he doesn’t think you know; and if he doesn’t think—well, anyway, it’s rather jolly for each of you to have a sort of secret mental jam-cupboard to go to where there’s always something sweet on the shelf. But I wouldn’t leave the door open. And, child, I’m frightfully grateful to you both, for it has all put a sort of fresh piquant taste into things. And Bob knows British Columbia, and says it’s the land of promise, and that he would go himself if he were Jack’s age.’ She got up, put her hands on Connie’s shoulders, just as Sybil had done, and looked affectionately into the girl’s face. ‘Hold each other close, child.’

CHAPTER II.

I.

IT was some five years later that a white-hulled yacht moved northward from Vancouver, and set her slim bows toward the Alaskan border. This was Pirbright’s idea. It had been carried by the quick enthusiasm of Mollie Thurston, in spite of the mild opposition of her weaker half, and consented to by Sybil with a certain languid indifference. She and her husband had come to California for the winter with the Thurstons, and it was when they reached San Francisco on the way home that plans were suddenly changed. Then the jar of great cities gave way to utter solitudes.

On one side lifted mountains, marching magnificently seaward, rent with gorges where cataracts raised a soft and mellow thunder, and, fed by melting glaciers, swayed their living silver in the light of the afternoon sun. Close up to them crowded the big timber, vast columnar trunks that covered the earth’s rocky ribs with a mantle of prodigious velvet. Higher, the slopes were bare, and higher still were fields of eternal ice, lost for half the year amid freezing clouds. To the west, the outlines of

islands lay in dark bars across the flaming sky ; and between mountains and islands the yacht cut its liquid way through a mirror of deep flat green. There was no sound but the subdued throb of engines, the faintly-borne riot of water-falls, and the lisp along the vessel's smooth hull.

Of all this Sybil felt gratefully conscious. She was bored with California, bored with the Thurstons, and most of all bored with her husband. Mollie Thurston, with her clear skin, her china-blue eyes that looked so opaquely innocent, the little yellow curls above her ears, and the insolent curve of her perfect mouth ; Thurston, with his faultless clothes, his perennial flow of aristocratic slang, and a complexion that any woman would have envied ; George, a little harder than before, fuller of figure, sharper of glance, the purple shade of indulgence on his cheeks, and a predatory touch in his manner.

Sybil was surveying them dispassionately, there being no further discoveries to be made here, when they were joined by the captain of the yacht. He brought with him a chart, and there ensued a short talk. Then they all turned and came toward her.

'It's about to-night,' explained her husband. 'The captain says we can anchor either in Black Cove or Silver Bay, which is a little nearer.'

'And you can get trout-fishing in either of them, sir,' put in the man.

'None of us care which it is,' went on Pirbright, 'so we leave it to you. Mollie and I are going fishing first thing in the morning, anyway.'

Sybil nodded. 'How energetic,' she said dryly. She was about to add that she didn't care which it was, when suddenly a name flashed back. This was Connie's adopted country—Connie of whom she had heard nothing for years ; but surely the sound of 'Silver Bay' was familiar ? She vaguely remembered having thought it somewhat romantic—at least it would be were it in the tropics. She had not forgotten about Connie, even though life was too stuffed with things to leave room for many memories, and now something whispered that Connie was not far away. At that a strange feeling came over her, as though Connie stood on a near-by point, beckoning. Then she knew that she must find the girl. Yes, surely that was the name ? 'Let us try Silver Bay,' she hazarded.

The captain touched his hat and moved toward the bridge, and the other three, after inviting her to make a four, disappeared into the saloon. Two months ago Thurston would have stayed behind, but that was over now. Sybil, thinking of this, gave a little smile and scanned the purple shore, where wind-twisted cedars sent thick, prehensile roots squirming down over the bare rocks to below high-tide level, gripping the bony earth against winter blasts. The channel was narrow here, and on

each side the yacht's following wave crashed musically as it felt blindly against the adamant of the land. Presently came the first dinner call.

II.

Sybil was rather silent that evening, having somehow acquired a sense of unreality that to her was quite new. At dinner she scanned the luxurious cosiness of the saloon, with its dark panelled walls, lustrous mahogany, and burnished silver. The yacht had been built for a wealthy American, and was complete and perfectly appointed, a miniature world in itself. Now it lay motionless as on a lake of quicksilver. The moon was up, and through the nearest porthole she caught a shimmering trail that cut through the loom of overhanging mountains. Mollie Thurston was talking to George in a tinkling voice, and Thurston sat absorbed in his dinner. Beyond the soft clink of glass and china, Sybil heard the seals plunging in emerald depths outside, and the cry of loons that darted through air and water with the speed of bullets. She did not know whether the seals or Mollie were the more unreal, but was sure of one thing—Connie was somewhere close at hand.

She found the captain afterwards, and questioned him. A mile farther back, and through some narrows where there was hardly passage for the yacht, was a farm, and, yes, it was owned by English people. Their names he did not know. They raised produce, for which there was a ready market at neighbouring pulp mills. Produce was scarce here, most of the land being too rocky for cultivation. But this was one of the few good farms on the coast. Sybil tried to picture Connie and Jack selling cabbages to pulp mills, then went to her cabin, opened the portholes, and lay for hours listening to a myriad of tiny unfamiliar whispers that drifted in.

At eight next morning she heard George and Mollie depart with much subdued laughter. Thurston was not up. She breakfasted alone, commandeered the remaining dinghy, and was rowed by one of the American sailors inland through the narrows. There was a frank, boyish admiration in his eyes that rather pleased her.

A stream with meadow on either side, a long, rambling, one-storey bungalow, over which towered a great Norway pine, acres of vegetables where two Chinamen were working methodically, a group of barns, browsing cattle, all bathed in sun and guarded by sentinel mountains. This is what Sybil found in Silver Bay, and instinctively she knew that Connie was here. Then, suddenly, Connie herself, slim and straight, hatless, her bronze hair piled loosely, looking down from the meadow by the stream's bank with all the beauty of the wilderness in her face. The two stared at each other silently, a little breathless at the strangeness of it, till Connie came down with long graceful strides.

(Continued on page 457.)

THE WEIRDNESS OF WEST AFRICA.

By LAWRENCE G. GREEN.

I.

PINK tints of dawn brightened into the radiance of a new day as I watched the purple mountains of Sierra Leone lifting from an emerald sea. As the steamer's propellers drummed through calm waters the peaks were clipped and a maze of palms stood out against the eastern sky.

Run your finger down the coast of Africa from Cape Verde and you reach a red-painted stretch of country about the size of Scotland, a place that retains the romantic-sounding name given by the old Spanish sea-adventurers, who fared south with their slave-ships so many years ago. Sierra Leone—Lion Mountain! When that purple mass rises from the quivering horizon you see the likeness. It is the one civilised outpost of a grim and savage land, where Death stands chuckling as the black boy hands you the whisky bottle; where the mosquitoes hang in a silver, noisy cloud about the lamps at night, and the cry of a distant leopard comes shrill across the jungle.

The steamer closes in with the shore, and passes the slim white finger of a lighthouse; passes a wreck, with the surf creaming along the rusty sides; red-roofed houses; tin sheds on the waterfront; and crazy native houses built up on piles. Here, then, is Freetown—the so-called 'white man's grave'—sweltering on the mountain slopes that back the shore. To approach it from the sea is beautiful; to live there—we must let the lean sun-tanned men speak of that. Canoes appear, black giants paddling with tireless arms in the race to be first alongside. Narrow-gutted canoes, cunningly shaped from single tree-trunks, and loaded far below the danger-line with tropic fruit and queer leather-covered bottles, monkeys and parrots, mats and brightly-patterned baskets. They shoot quickly into the vision, these salesmen of the jungle, rolling their white eyeballs; screaming to each other in the monkey language; picking up our jettison—broken biscuit and the like—and storing it carefully in their frail canoes. A tug pants out to us. There is a black man on the bridge, smartly dressed in a ludicrous Victorian fashion, and wearing a high white collar. He is in command of the tug, and his appearance conveys to the newcomer an idea of the queer state of affairs ashore. For Sierra Leone is one of those curious places in which negroes set out to copy their white rulers, failing—as they must inevitably fail—grotesquely.

Religion is the mainstay of this pitiful mock-civilisation, and Freetown is more blatantly

Sabbatarian in visible things than any village of Scotland; yet never was there less meaning behind church and chapel-going than in this African town. It is a town of many sects, with the American influence strongly impressed. Black deans in knee-breeches—the very negroes who occasionally preach to wondering congregations in English country churches—walk solemnly among their people; and muscular curates too, wearing horn-rimmed spectacles, and talking earnestly at corners of the tree-lined streets. These grown-up children of freed slaves have even sought to imitate the English public-school system. You see shining black faces beneath straw hats with school ribbons, and little black bodies thrust uncomfortably into blazers and white trousers. Drones of these semi-educated urchins with cricket bats stroll through the town each day, led by smug, elegant negro masters. To a South African like myself, to all who have learned the ways of black races, they form an astounding picture. A problem, too; for the people of Freetown are given much scope for their mimicry. In the courts, barristers and even judges are keen-brained natives; and it is strange to hear Latin phrases and legal jargon from their thick red lips. It is all a nightmare, a shocking phantasmagoria of what we fight against for our very lives in South Africa come true.

II.

I turn for relief to Freetown itself, a jumble of shops when you close your eyes to the ubiquitous missions. Love of barter is no affectation among African peoples; it is the only work they will perform. Even the pot-bellied naked children hawk baskets of fruit, and a boy of six will try to sell you a pair of green squirrels as you walk off the landing-stage. Trade goods from Birmingham and Germany litter every pavement, with negro 'mammies,' splendidly over-dressed, squatting in the shade close by their stalls. A strange array of cheap junk are these street markets—cotton goods and beads, boots, hats and caps, soap and perfumery. Every day bales and cases of them swing up from the lighters to the old wooden jetty, and from the jetty to Freetown, and from Freetown to the unknown jungle. And from the forest depths of the hinterland come palm kernels and kola nuts, palm oil and ginger, all by the most primitive transport, to the ever-hungry cargo boats.

In a town where nearly every house is a store there must be strange shops. I recall one in which the attendants were all very old men, with white turbans round their wrinkled foreheads. A shop where leopard skins lay piled on a mud

floor, and the old men raised their bony claws in frantic entreaty as I looked over their goods; where a ju-ju mask, cast off by some witch-doctor, lolled in a corner so naturally that the twisted face might have belonged to some evil resident of the place. Wonderful cloths, with indelible dyes that are still kept as tribal secrets, hung on the walls; intricately-woven cloths, astonishing squares of brown and yellow colour in wide bands. And much smooth, gray pottery. In the Indian shops—there are only two in Freetown—I saw the curios of the desert, the trinkets of Egypt, and carpets that might have been loaded on camels at the gates of Samarkand. Here were glittering brass trays, silks, and ivory. An oriental touch in a place that is pure Africa. For the cruder African things you go to the native market, a low-roofed, acrid-smelling building on the seafront, where the inevitable negro 'mammies' chaffer across their woven baskets and reed mats. Creoles, the English-speaking negroes of Freetown are called locally, the word being given quite a different meaning from its usage in other parts of the world. And the Creoles twist English too, as you realise when the notice-board outside the Cosmopolitan Bar meets your astonished gaze; for this reeking shanty, where the only drink is vile palm toddy, is labelled 'a home from home.' More truthful, perhaps, is the claim of Alimamy Bungie, the famous 'sympathetic undertaker,' who is mentioned by several authors of West African books. Alimamy Bungie was recovering from the celebration of his fifty-third birthday during my visit; and a local newspaper published his photograph, with this letterpress beneath: 'He preferred presents of good chop and grog than any other gifts.' Other negro traders are more refined than the honest Alimamy; they placard their shops with reminders that they have 'graduated in the U.S.A.,' and urge the native population to 'support a fellow African.' You hear the same cry from mission platforms, and it barely conceals a hatred of all Europeans, born of the impotency to reach real European standards.

III.

Wilberforce Hall! There is history in a name; and there the unhappy second and third generations, victims of slavery still, voice their hopeless aims to-day. There are two governments possible in West Africa. One is by white rulers, and the other by the savage rites that have come down through the centuries and flourish in the hinterland unchecked. But for the educated negro there is no chance of supreme power; he would be kicked into the sea by his 'fellow Africans' of the jungle to-morrow if the white man left—and he knows it.

Little the problems of statesmanship trouble Krootown Road, the main vein of the Creole

quarter. What a garish medley of cotton print dresses around the benzine lamps at night, and how pungent the dried fish smell. Here are fantastic houses; ramshackle, impossible dwellings, with perilously-overhanging balconies, bright roofs of red and green, and luxuriant gardens. Somehow they convey in subtle manner the illusion that they have grown up with the jungle that riots on all sides—and that in spite of their patches of tin and corrugated iron and cracked-glass windows. Dilapidated they may be, but the native, even the topee-wearing monstrosity, usually contrives to build a shack which is essentially part of its tropical surroundings. The shabbiest straw hut is precisely what one would expect to find in such a place as the Krootown Road. These dwellings are so natural that even the European suggestions one sees cannot repel the atmosphere of dark mystery which rightly belongs to the inland forests, and yet is part of this city by the sea; this 'Liverpool of West Africa,' which is guided from Downing Street. Freetown, indeed, leaves quite as vivid an impression of commerce as of frenzied religion and native bartering; and since brains are needed to win the riches of the tropics, young white men sweat their lives away among the dangers of the hinterland.

IV.

One night I met the white traders. In West Africa a newcomer's white face is his passport. The British community is so small that a visitor is sure of welcome and an audience of hungry-eyed, home-sick exiles. I was standing for a moment in the heavy, scented air of night, when a man in white drill came across the dusty street and spoke. 'My name is Brown,' he said, and mentioned the name of a trading company that is famous from Bathurst to the Congo. 'Come up to my rooms and have a drink. Some of the fellows are there, and you may be able to tell us how things are going in England.' So in the high apartment above the store I met other drill-clad men, all traders; and while soft moonlight peered through the jalousies and the monotonous rumble of native voices drifted up from the Krootown Road, they talked. Ice tinkled in the whisky glasses. It appeared that they did not want to hear very much about Leicester Square after all; their own daily round was the most intensely interesting thing in life. They were held by the fascination of trade between two widely separated races. I can see them now, those tense, seamed faces, half in shadow, near the oil-lamp; and even as they spoke the million and a half savages of the hinterland were beating their drums and selling human flesh in open market. Of such things the traders spoke.

They spoke of age-old tongues and codes which no white man may learn; of secret

languages peculiar to each type of craftsmen; and of the unwritten native jungle law, which forbids the names of the things which are daily terrors to be mentioned at all. There was a little hushed conversation about the vice and black magic rites—and other things which the white man cannot explain. Personal experience crept into the talk: the weird story of a trader who found himself growing weaker and weaker among the tribe which had willed him to die. There was the copra buyer's story of a woman sacrificed, her tortured scream, and all to make him leave his hut one night; he told also of the spear that streaked over his head as he doubled up, revolver in hand, to pass through the narrow doorway. But these commercial adventurers cared little for spears. In West Africa it is the unseen things which count. Even the climate seems to be in league with the witch-doctors; for all along 'the coast' white men suffer from wounds which do not heal, and if they are criminal—or blindly affectionate—enough to take their wives into exile with them, they discover something which puzzles the medical profession to-day. No white child is born alive.

I met one of the women exiles of Sierra Leone. A married girl, that is all she was, but the colour had left her cheeks during six months in the steamy tropics. Her bungalow home was at Hill Station, where it is a little cooler than in the town; and from the green mountain heights she could see the yellow funnels of the Elder Dempster liners come and go each week. As we chatted, a vulture, scraggy-necked and revolting, swung down from the sky, to alight with a scratching of talons on a tin roof close by; and the girl shuddered, and told me of her longing to see the rooks in the elms again, to hear the bells of the village church. One of her sad, strangely wise remarks lingers in my memory. 'Africa is grotesque,' she said. 'Everything is twice the size it ought to be, or else incredibly small; and there is nothing permanent except the ghastly spirit of the place.' She meant the exotic Africa of the tropics, of course. And indeed the only Africa she knew uses beauty as a lure, with the most fatal poison never far from the most gorgeous aspect of that beauty.

V.

'Chop' is the universal name of all food in West Africa, from the birthday orgy of Alimamy Bungie to a six-course European dinner; and George's hotel is the best place for 'chop' in Freetown, a restaurant which is quite beyond advertisement. Ships' pursers, a cunning breed of gourmets, tell me there is no other sea-port town along hundreds of miles of West African littoral where such good food is to be obtained. George, who is a Swiss, was prompted by the infallible business acumen of his race to migrate

from Soho to Sierra Leone. He has grown rich, and because he has provided Freetown with an astounding contrast I think he deserves his success. Across the threshold of his hotel you step from the bizarre jumble of life that is Africa into the typical atmosphere of Soho; and though this swift transition is shaken by the fact that the soft-footed waiters are not Swiss, but negroes, the illusion is not destroyed. George, a fat, beaming fellow, heightens the contrast. He advances as you enter, to show you with Soho complaisance to a little table in the corner. You feel at once that for some reason you are a privileged guest, and that something unusual is about to take place in the kitchen purely for your benefit. But do not look out of the window, or Africa will come throbbing back to the senses. Iced soup! You never guessed it until the spoon touched your mouth. Then you realise that on this damp tropical night no other soup would suffice. Fried barracouta next, speared by a native in the bay; with *sauce tartare* it forms delicious comparison with the soft fish from the ship's refrigerator. Then a grill, with potatoes in such slender chips that you wonder at the crispness of them. Meanwhile George has poured out the wine—it came unscathed through the bombardment of Verdun—and the master chef stands gloating in a corner while you drink. There follows a fruit salad in which it is possible to trace the fibrous mango, the bright yellow lime, smooth strips of pineapple, and bananas. That was good. The diner is now in a mood to regard Freetown with a friendly stare. Coffee, with the inevitable condensed milk disguised by a miracle, gives the necessary jolt. The search for excitement and interest may be renewed. George knows the precise moment. 'A native chief of my acquaintance has arranged a dance for to-night,' he murmurs. 'If you gentlemen would care to attend—'

Enough! Already the drums of Africa send their vibrating notes through the heavy air. We took our helmets and followed the guide along mango-bordered lanes until a bamboo fence jutted out of the darkness, with the black loom of huts beyond. The guide whistled, and a little gate swung open. Here the drum-voices boomed loud in their thunderous cycle of primitive notes. Ebony palm-trees formed the wings of this African theatre, with the star-shot night sky as backcloth. The Mendi chief came forward, and we touched hands after the custom of the country. Torches lit the scene, sometimes vividly, often flickering down to pin-points of yellow. Huddled together in a weird, half-seen mass between the huts, the dancers waited for their chief's command; and still the drums throbbed, a hot maelstrom of sound, so that the sticks seemed to kiss the taut skin a thousand times each minute. The very air quivered like

hurt flesh. Ghost-shapes among the huts began to move. From the blackness came six small girls, their shining bodies smeared with white paint. Wide-eyed they stood in the semi-gloom, swaying to the music, like frightened hesitating little animals. More fiercely thudded the drums, and now a dozen calabash pianos, struck with knobs of rubber, joined the tumult of barbaric cadence. Then the six frightened little animals awoke into six little devils. How they spun and whirled and flung themselves into the drama of the dance; how perfect their balance as they flashed before the torches. They had answered the call of the drums, and now they lived the fantastic melody. The drums and calabashes sang on, died, sobbed, and laughed. The very soul of Africa danced under the palms that night.

With dramatic quickness the beating ceased. Again there stood six wide-eyed little girls, not in the least breathless, perhaps a little dazed. It was all magic, making the blood tingle.

VI.

At this point there enters the story—with a bellow of 'O! Boy! bring whisky!'—one whom I shall call Captain Jones. On the shoulder-strap of his khaki tunic are the metal letters that stand for 'Sierra Leone Police.' Sundown in Freetown, and I had been glad to leave the blazing streets for the cool building where every wanderer gets a cordial hand-shake—the Garrison Club. My friend Jones fitted the surroundings, typically West African. Standing on the wide verandah, you look out over umbrella trees and red flowers, across a maze of roofs and huts, to palm-dotted coves and green hills, and yellow sand merging into the blue waters of the bay. Such things make no appeal to Jones. Six years ago he was a rosy-faced youth, laughing on the playing-fields of an English public school. Life was a joke in those days, and even Sierra Leone was 'not such a bad show' when he arrived for the first time. I saw him as he is to-day, pallid beneath the bronze, lines of something more than care under the eyes, head close cropped, fingers trembling as he knocks the ash from his cigarette. A lanky, khaki-clad figure, stretched out in a long cane chair, gazing with half-closed eyes through the open doors to the tropical riot of flowers in the garden, the barrack square beyond, and a lazy native squatting under a tree. And he talked, this square-jawed police officer. His yarns linger. Half-gloom and sluggish water up a West African creek, and untamed men slinking along the banks, watching the little white police-launch, fingering their spears. . . .

The Colonial Office blue-books say little about Ju-Ju, which is West African witchcraft, a real and terrible science. Jones, who knows a great deal more than the Colonial Office, has studied

Ju-Ju. And as the night fell he began his tale, pointing across the bay to the winking lights of Bullom, a native village that sprawls along the water's edge. It is about ten miles from Government House, and in Bullom there is a leopard society, doing its uncanny work by night, and leaving the result for Captain Jones and his men to find in the clear light of day. West African negroes are people of few ideas; and the traditions of their tribe, centuries old, are just as real in their minds as the sea and the jungle. Some of these traditions are cruel blood rites, perpetuated by the leopard societies. Men become leopards (says Jones, his face contorted as with some vividly nauseating memory). The soul of a man goes out, and his body is no longer a human body; and on the corpses of their victims Captain Jones has seen the teeth-marks . . . of leopards!

VII

Lumley Beach! The wizened exiles of Freetown may curse the fate that brought them to West Africa; but the toughest, most cynical of the veterans has a word of praise for the charm of this wide crescent of sand where the Atlantic sweeps in to kiss the wonder of the beach. For three clear miles, from tip to tip of a white, shimmering curve, stretches the sand. I stood in a grove of palms to absorb that fan of radiant colour—the unutterable blue of the sea as the light came through a curling wave; the vivid green of the tangled bush and low-hanging trees; the golden sunpath down the water; the brown village of huts, where salted fish blazed silver as the sun died. Long combers with white ridges hurtled in from the ocean wastes, to collapse in the shallows and break into rainbow spray; break warm and colourful upon the starfish and little pink shells that line high-water mark. There could be no resisting those cool shallows and inviting depths; we stripped, and ran shouting into the foam to jest with the sea-gods of the West African beach. Then a race along the beach to get dry in the off-shore breeze. Even the little gray monkeys in the jungle beyond were excited, and, taking up our cries, they swung from branch to branch in an ecstasy of imitation. Soon afterwards the fishermen passed by. Gaunt people these, with waist-cloths and metal bangles; black figures moving in bold relief against the sunset. The women, marching with easy grace behind their men, carried heavy loads without a sign of weariness. Beach-combers all, happy in their savagery, carrying home the plunder of the sea. Here indeed was Africa, without an alien touch to disturb the mind. Africa as the mysterious continent has always been since time began. So they passed into the creek and the jungle swallowed them up.

In a palm-leaf hut on Lumley Beach you

will find a very old negro, who lounges in the shade all day because he cannot work. The flat-nosed, woolly-headed sons of this old man bring food each day. And sometimes the old man points to his withered arm, and the sons gather round on their haunches, while their father croaks an oft-told tale. . . . A tale of the days when he left Africa in a swift, sinister frigate; sailed as one of a frightened herd to

work in the fields of sugar-cane on a West Indian island. And as the end of the tale draws near, the old man raises his good arm aloft, and brings it down viciously to show how the whip fell on the arm that is withered. The flat-nosed sons of the old man were born in Freetown, under the Union Jack, and they do not understand. But the old man of Lumley Beach remembers.

TALES OF THE GERMAN AIRSHIPS.

I.—THE FIRST AIR-RAID IN SCOTLAND.

By Brigadier-General WALTER B. CADDELL.

I.

ON the morning of 2nd April 1916 Bruce Gower, a middle-aged Scotsman, the head of a well-known Edinburgh business house, seated himself at the breakfast-table with his wife Jenny and his two daughters, and got busy on his porridge. He was in the act of rising to place his empty plate on the side-table, when there was a knock at the door. A servant entered and handed him a telegram. Bruce opened it and read: 'Must discuss most important business with you here to-night.—MACKINTOSH.'

Now Mr Mackintosh was Bruce's partner in London—a cool, level-headed fellow, who would not have sent such a message (especially on a Sunday) unless the matter were urgent.

Bruce handed the telegram to his wife, who at once burst into tears, and his two daughters, on learning the news, joined in the pandemonium. He was entreated, implored, not to leave Scotland; and, to make matters worse, his family became so demonstrative that his button-hole, a frail Marshal Niel rose, born and bred in his greenhouse, was torn from his coat and fell to the floor, where it was trodden underfoot.

For some time Bruce tried to calm his family, and when he eventually succeeded in doing so, was surprised to learn why such an outburst of emotion had been shown by them. He was informed that they had lately read in the papers of the terrible damage caused in London by Zeppelin air-raids, and how much more disastrous in the future raids on that city were likely to be. They feared for his safety there, and again begged him to remain in Edinburgh, which was well out of the track of these monsters.

Bruce was able to bring his family to their senses by pointing out to them how ashamed they would really be of him if he were to shirk what was so clearly his duty by staying in Edinburgh because of a possible air-raid in

London. He reminded them of the men—the millions of men—who had answered the call of duty without a moment's hesitation, and with no thought of the risks likely to be encountered.

He confided in them that the telegram did not refer to private business but to work of national importance, and even went so far as to commence the recitation of a poem that runs, 'Theirs not to reason why. . . .'

In fact, he recited and spoke so well that his family felt proud of him—and incidentally he felt proud of himself. So tears were wiped away and brave faces appeared.

His bag was packed, a taxi ordered for him, and, accompanied by Jenny and his girls, he arrived at Waverley Station in good time for the 11.15 A.M. express to King's Cross.

His family, alas! were not able to maintain their composure, for, as the time of departure drew nigh, their feelings again got the better of them and the tears came back.

Jenny beseeched him not to stay with his brother John in Seymour Street, London, and as the train left, said, 'Bruce dear, do for our sakes sleep somewhere underground if you have to stay the night in London; and remember that our thoughts are with you, as we shall be safe and sleep soundly here when you are in that perilous place.'

II.

Gower arrived in London at 8 P.M., went straight away to his partner's office in Threadneedle Street, and sat there—with refreshments—until 3 A.M. on the morning of the 3rd of April.

He reached his brother John's house at 3.30 A.M., was admitted by a very sleepy butler, and, giving him instructions not to call him until 11 A.M., went to his room and was soon fast asleep. At 11 A.M. his early morning tea was brought in to him, and on the tray was a telegram. Bruce opened it lazily, thinking it was likely to contain some news from his

partner; but the office of origin was Edinburgh, and it read as follows:

Terrible Zeppelin raid here last night. All safe. Envy you in London.—JENNY.

Bruce Gower lay back with a sigh—the outward expression of his thankfulness—but otherwise, except for the slightest suspicion of merriment in his eyes, his features remained impassive and composed. The gods had bestowed on Bruce Gower their greatest boon and comforter—a sense of humour.

At breakfast Bruce was amazed to read in the *Times* that, while he was sitting quietly in his partner's office about midnight, a military airship, either the LZ.88 or the LZ.90, was dropping bombs near Waltham Abbey in Essex. The raid warning in London had fallen on deaf ears, for neither he nor his partner had heard a sound.

III.

As a matter of fact, just about the time that Bruce Gower was eating his porridge on the morning of 2nd April 1916, the four Zeppelin naval airships L.13, L.14, L.16, and L.22 were being prepared for what was known in the British Isles as an air-raid, but in Germany more often than not as a naval reconnaissance.

There are many cases on record where the commanders of naval airships on such duty wirelessly to their director at Nordholz asking for permission to carry out an attack on Harwich, Ipswich, London, or other towns. In such instances, when the director had agreed, a squadron of ships was collected, and these frequently had their rendezvous at a point in the Bay of Heligoland, 20 nautical miles N.W. of Borkum. In the raid in question, however, so far as is known, the four ships previously mentioned came from Nordholz and Hage, in that part of Germany which, on the coast-line, lies between the rivers Ems and Elbe.

The commanders of L.13 and 16 had no part in the tragedy that followed, for their craft never reached Scotland; indeed they may not have been ordered to go there. The commander of L.22 hardly appeared on the scene at all, so that evidently the principal part was played by the commander of L.14. That officer before the war was a ship's captain on the Hamburg-American line, and in that capacity had been to Edinburgh. He knew the geography of the Firth of Forth and the position of Edinburgh as regards Leith, and it may be taken for granted that, when L.14 was over these places, he knew well where she was. The same officer had made himself famous in the air-raid of 31st January 1916, when he reached the most westerly point in England—namely Shrewsbury—ever flown over in the attacks on the British Isles by Zeppelin airships. On the occasion of that raid his ship was actually flown over British soil for ten hours. He was captured on the L.33 in September 1916.

The steersman of L.14, who was also captured with his commander on the L.33, admitted under examination that he had known perfectly well he was over Edinburgh on the night of 2nd April. He was acquainted with the fact that that city was unprotected by anti-aircraft guns, and, knowing he would not be troubled by their fire, purposely brought L.14 down to a height of 2000 feet, to make the dropping of bombs easier and more effective than would have been the case had he kept his craft at a greater altitude.

IV.

It was early on the morning of 2nd April 1916 that the four commanders received their orders to get their ships ready. At that time they did not know their destination, for their final instructions did not reach them until the moment of departure.

Gas-bags were filled up with hydrogen; gallons and gallons of petrol were taken on board; wireless was tested; engines were tuned up to give their maximum horse-power; and bombs of the high explosive and incendiary types were carefully fitted into their carriers. Such work takes a long time, and it was not until about 11 A.M. that the director of airships was informed that the craft were in perfect condition and their crews on board.

A blast on the whistle was the signal for the landing parties to move the craft out of their hangars, and, guided by ropes, the ships slowly emerged, a trumpet-note being sounded when their sterns were clear of the sheds. The ships were then brought into the wind, and there they gently floated, controlled by many strong arms. The ropes were let go, and the hand-rails on the gondolas released on the command, 'Hands off, ease up the guys,' and the ships, after remaining motionless for an instant, began to soar upwards. 'Hold on' was given, and the ships were gradually pulled back to earth again, when their commanders went aboard, having received their instructions as to where they were to sail. The airships were then finally set free, pushed upwards by hundreds of willing helpers.

L.13, 14, 16 and 22 thus set forth on their adventure, and the word 'adventure' has been fairly chosen, for it was a 'remarkable incident' that, while the commanders of L.14 and 22 were given secret instructions to attack the dockyard at Rosyth, they, in fact, bombed Edinburgh, Leith, and some remote places in the extreme south of Scotland.

V.

The weather conditions were favourable when the ships reached their rendezvous near Borkum—the wind was light—and these conditions lasted throughout the day and night of 2nd April 1916. The four craft left their rendezvous

about noon with the intention of making the coast-line of Northumberland. The distance from Nordholz to Berwick-on-Tweed is about five hundred miles, a journey that took the ships between eight and nine hours' flying to complete.

Whatever may be thought of the actions of the Zeppelin commanders, however much their exploits may be deemed to have been unworthy of members of the civilised community, it is meet and right that a tribute should be paid to the wonderful skill they showed in navigating their vessels at night over hundreds of miles of water. They were, of course, assisted by directional wireless, but very often the results obtained by such a method were at complete variance with the actual positions of the ships.

L.14 and L.22 must have flown nearly fifteen hundred miles during this raid, and must have been in the air for some thirty hours. It is probable that, on nearing the British Isles, the ships split up into two sections, L.14 and L.22 heading for Scotland, L.13 and L.16 for Northumberland, their object being to attack Newcastle and the docks on the river Tyne.

L.13 turned back without making the coast-line; L.16 did not get north of the river Tweed. Those two ships, therefore, are finished with, so far as this story is concerned.

L.22 was the first of the ships to reach the coast-line; she was sighted off Bamburgh at 8 p.m., but turned back and headed out to sea again. At 9 p.m. she reached Berwick-on-Tweed, and at Lamberton Farm, three miles north of that town, dropped fourteen bombs—a salvo that may perhaps be regarded as notifying Scotland of her arrival and, incidentally, as introducing herself to the Scottish people. She then proceeded inland to Chirnside, and at 9.15 p.m. dropped six more bombs in the neighbourhood of that place; a further eight bombs fell in an open field near East Blanterne Farm. No damage of any kind resulted from any of these air-missiles. She then turned east, following the river Whiteadder, and over Clarabad Mill dropped a parachute flare, which lighted up the countryside for miles. She was evidently trying to spy out the land and check her position.

She passed out to sea south of Lamberton at 9.45 p.m., and for want of something better to do dropped five incendiary bombs into the sea. L.22 again appeared over North Berwick at 10.30 p.m., passed over Dirleton, and dropped an incendiary bomb on the golf-links near Archerfield House. (As a large crater was made by that bomb, it is to be hoped that golfers were allowed to pick up out of it without penalty.)

The course she steered brought her over Gullane, Aberlady, Portobello bay, and after passing over Tranent and Leith, she arrived at Edinburgh about 11 p.m. L.22 flew slowly

round Edinburgh on the south side, and dropped three high explosive bombs. These fell at Slateford, at Comiston, and at Bridgend near Craigmillar, but only a few windows were broken. At 12.30 a.m. she went out to sea near Portobello, flew down the Firth of Forth, and returned across the North Sea to her base at Nordholz. Such is the brief chronicle of the part played by L.22 in this the first airship raid on Scotland. The damage she did was, comparatively speaking, small, and, had she been the only airship to reach Edinburgh, Mrs Bruce Gower could scarcely have thought it worth while to waste money on a telegram to London.

VI.

L.14—the heroine of many previous raids—was first sighted off St Abbs Head at 9.30 p.m., and it was due entirely to her handiwork that the night of 2nd April 1916 was made hideous for Mrs Gower, her family, and the inhabitants of Edinburgh and Leith.

The steersman of L.14, when questioned later on in 1916, confessed that he had tried to find Rosyth, but, failing to make that dockyard, had steered for Edinburgh. 'It was easier,' he said, 'to bomb Edinburgh than Rosyth.'

L.14, after leaving St Abbs Head, followed the coast to Dunbar, and flew in a northerly direction across the Firth of Forth. She picked up her bearings at the Isle of May, where she was sighted, and, turning west, she flew over Elie on the south shore of Fife at 11.15 p.m. She then steered in a south-westerly direction, passed over Inchkeith, and arrived over Leith at 11.30 p.m. She immediately set about her business by attacking the Edinburgh Dock, sinking two small boats and breaking the skylights in two Danish steamers there. It is to be hoped that the latter damage was included in the Danish reparations account. She then proceeded to discharge on the Albert Docks a sample of her foreign wares, but in this case no harm was done. A grain warehouse was next destroyed by a high explosive bomb, and the quay wall was damaged.

Commercial and Sandport Streets now were the recipients of some of her cargo, where four bombs fell. At 14 Commercial Street an incendiary bomb crashed through the roof of an apartment occupied by an old lady, and through the floor of her room to the room below, where it burst into flames. The old lady calmly got out of bed, seized the jug from her basin, and poured water through the hole made by the bomb in her floor until the flames underneath were extinguished.

Determined to enforce prohibition on Scotland, the eleventh bomb was dropped on the roof of Messrs Innes and Grieve's whisky bond warehouse, which was destroyed, and with

it the whole of its contents. The damage amounted to over forty thousand pounds sterling. The house of Saint Thomas's Kirk was set on fire and practically gutted by an incendiary bomb, but its inmates, of whom there were three, had a miraculous escape. The eighteenth bomb fell in a court off Bonnington Road, and the nineteenth on the railway line close to Bonnington Tannery, but did not explode. Unfortunately the tannery itself was considerably damaged by the twentieth bomb. It is evident that the steersman of L.14 had accurately followed the course of the Water of Leith in his flight from the docks, and at 11.50 P.M. the airship arrived over Edinburgh.

A vacant piece of ground at Bellevue Terrace was the first of Edinburgh's soil to receive her greetings; the roadway at the Mound was next demolished, and the roof of a house in Lauriston Place was then blown away, without injury to any of those inside. The fourth bomb fell in the grounds of George Watson's College; the fifth in the Meadows, south of the college.

VII.

It was now 11.50 P.M. and the airship had evidently decreased her height to obtain more accurate results. Marchmont Crescent was attacked, a bomb falling on one of the tenement houses there, going through the roof and coming to rest in the basement; fortunately there were no casualties. The airship now circled to the east, and a building on Causewayside was bombed and wrecked, six persons being injured. Gardens at Blacket Place and Hatton Place were shorn of their spring flowers, and, having caused their owners this inconvenience, the airship steered again for the centre of the city. The grounds of the Royal Infirmary were next despoiled by an incendiary bomb, and the Grassmarket pavement immediately in front of the White Hart Hotel was blown to pieces, four persons being injured. Castle Rock then had the first experience in its later history of discovering something more powerful than itself, and the County Hotel in Lothian Road and the Princes Street terminus of the Caledonian Railway were badly shaken by the bursting of a high explosive bomb in their vicinity.

L.14 now circled to the west and flew over Haymarket Station. She dropped three bombs as she was passing north-eastward over the Water of Leith near Mill Lade and Donaldson's Hospital School. Little damage was done, however, beyond the breaking of glass and the slight shifting of a portion of the embankment of the Water of Leith. The airship again came over the middle of the city, flying from west to east, and the greatest tragedy of the whole raid occurred when six people were killed and seven injured by a bomb that fell near Marshall Street.

L.14 gave further evidence of her anti-alcoholic tendencies by destroying a spirit store in Haddon's Court, Nicolson Street, where three people were wounded. A tenement in St Leonard's Hill was ruined, and, alas! in this case the innocents suffered, for a child was killed and two persons were injured. At a quarter past midnight the airship passed over the southern slopes of Arthur's Seat, where she dropped three bombs. These fell on the King's Park, throwing down part of the boundary wall and breaking some window-panes in a building there. The last bomb fell in the grounds of Prestonfield House, and the raid ended. L.14 disappeared towards the eastward, and was seen flying over Tranent at 12.40 A.M., Haddington at 12.45 A.M., Dunbar at 12.55 A.M., and Cockburnspath at 1 A.M.

L.14 and L.22 between them dropped twenty-six bombs on Edinburgh and its suburbs, and twenty on Leith. It is remarkable that only thirteen persons were killed and twenty-four persons injured in all, when we take into consideration that the only defences in existence at the time of the raid were one Vickers and one Lewis machine-gun at Arthur's Seat. Naval sea-planes at East Fortune and Dundee, though they flew for some time during the raid, were unable to find either of the airships. On the other hand the damage done to property was severe, and especially so at Leith, where several houses of importance were destroyed.

It would not, perhaps, be out of place to say in conclusion that our friend, Mr Gower, never left Edinburgh for London during the remainder of the war without Jenny and his daughters.

DAWN.

A BIRD awoke in the woodland,
And opened his sleepy eyes
As the first faint flush of the dawning
Crept over the dreaming skies.

He murmured a drowsy greeting:
A flower in the meadow heard,
And whispered the tidings softly
While over the hills there stirred

A little soft breeze, so tender,
It seemed but a lingering sigh,
That, kissing the earth in passing,
Went home to the clouds to die.

The gold in the East grew brighter;
A cloud like a drift of snow
Was bathed in a rosy splendour,
While up from the fields below

A lark with a rapturous greeting
Rose swift on her joyous way,
Till the air was aquiver with music,
And lo! 'twas a summer day!

JOYCE HANSOR.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

BRIGSHAW'S MONKEY.

By CRAVEN HILL.

PART I.

I.

VIGOROUSLY, animatedly, like a thing alive, the Bombay Mail sped on its way across the scorched and dusty plains. It was the hottest hour of noon, and the express that thundered over the endless rails seemed curiously out of place in that wilderness of sunlit somnolence. Even the solitary man who occupied the last compartment but one lazed indolently in his wicker arm-chair, a five-weeks-old English magazine lying forgotten on his knees, and mopped his brow feverishly at intervals. The heat of the carriage was appalling. Mercilessly the oriental sun blazed down upon the double roof, and even the electric-fan which whirled unceasingly in one corner of the roomy compartment failed to mitigate the intense heat of the dust-laden atmosphere.

Lieut. Peter Brigshaw, on six months' home-leave from his depot at Calcutta, took down his suit-case and extracted a clean handkerchief for the tenth time that day. Then, divesting himself of his tunic and Sam Browne, he let down his berth, which had been folded up against the wall, and climbed laboriously into it.

For some time he lay there in comparative ease, gazing out of the opposite window at the sleepy Indian countryside, which slipped by in an ever-changing panorama. The diminutive stations were few and far between, and for the most part the countryside consisted of rolling tracts of open land, dotted here and there with quaint little native villages, and here and there a belt of dense woodland. He was passing through one of the latter now, and noted with a mild interest the troops of long-tailed monkeys which swung from tree to tree, gambolling in the joy of freedom. Some were engaging in a species of the trickiest acrobatics; others were merely sitting still upon the boughs, close up one behind the other, as if seeking and finding the pleasure that comes from companionship the world over. Others again were busy fighting, chattering excitedly and pulling playfully at each other's tails—all within a few yards of the passing train.

Brigshaw was watching these denizens of the

trees when, with a shrill whistle, the express began to slow down. His interest aroused, the man climbed from his berth and, leaning out of the window, saw that the train was approaching a tiny wayside station, at one end of which stood a mighty tank with a large canvas connection hanging in readiness to replenish the engine with much-needed water. Throwing on his tunic, he prepared to descend to the platform. He had brought with him very little in the way of refreshment, and here, he knew, there was a buffet tucked away in one corner of the station, kept open especially for thirsty wayfarers like himself, where he could obtain the necessary.

As the train drew slowly into the station, Brigshaw opened the door and ran off to the buffet. After five minutes he reappeared with one or two other travellers who had left the train. At one end of the platform a Eurasian guard was frantically waving a discoloured flag, and even as Brigshaw stepped into his compartment the train began to move slowly out of the station.

II.

It was not until he had been in the carriage for five minutes that he noticed his topee was missing. He knew he had left it upon the small green baize table which was fixed to the wall at one end, and, though he searched for it closely for a few minutes in every possible cranny and corner, it still refused to come to light. It was the only helmet he had brought with him, and its loss was serious. Evidently some peddling native had stolen it. Now that he came to think of it, he remembered seeing in the station an old and wizened Indian who was offering bananas along the train. It must have been he, without a doubt. Ah well, it was too late to worry about that now; he must give the topee up for lost.

With a comprehensive curse which embraced all the dusky inhabitants of the land of Ind, Brigshaw climbed back into his bunk and composed himself for a siesta. Wooed by the heat and the monotonous whirring of the electric-fan, he had just arrived at that state of comfortable

coma bordering on sleep when a slight noise at the window brought him post-haste to consciousness. Propping himself up on one elbow, he looked in its direction and blinked stupidly. Was he still in the land of Nod and dreaming—or—or *was* that actually his topee dangling down just outside the carriage? He pinched himself to make quite sure that he really was awake; then, convinced of the fact, hopped out of his berth and made a dash to the window, just in time to see the helmet swung upwards out of his reach. Fortunately it was quite a soft drink that Brigshaw had had at the wayside station, or he might perhaps have wondered if he was quite sober. As it was, he muttered, 'Did I see that topee, or—or was I . . . ?'

As if to convince himself, he stood upon the lower berth, and, hanging perilously out of the carriage window, strained himself upwards to discover the cause of the mystery. And then, with something like a shock, he saw. A monkey was running along the tops of the carriages in the direction of the engine, leaping from one carriage to the next, and brandishing aloft triumphantly the missing topee!¹

Evidently, thought Brigshaw, the creature had boarded the train at the last station, had invaded his compartment in his absence, and had somehow conveyed his topee up to the roof. Like the conscientious fellow that he was, Brigshaw at once took back his curse on all India and the Indians. But, meanwhile, what about it? There was the monkey dashing along the top of the express, making its way engine-wards unnoticed. How was he to recover his precious headgear?

Although he stood up for a while and craned his neck as far upwards as he could, Brigshaw had only fleeting glimpses of the thief as it ran along his side of the train, and after a time it vanished altogether, and did not reappear. He therefore sat down again, transferred his curse to the monkey tribe in general, and pondered on the matter. And the Bombay Mail thundered on its way westwards.

III.

It was about four o'clock the next afternoon when the outskirts of Bombay were reached. Kalyan was passed; the Western Ghats, with their lines of large pipes running from the reservoir in the heights to the towns below, were left behind; Kurla and Parel stations slipped by in a flash; and soon the long mail train steamed in under the mighty glass roof of Victoria Station.

Brigshaw at once got out, collared a dusky porter, and gave his luggage in charge, then, hatless, walked up beside the train towards the engine. The platform was crowded with jostling travellers of all nations, each striving

in indifferent Hindustani to procure a porter for his belongings; but he got there at last, and discovered the occupants of the engine—an Englishman and a half-caste stoker.

Almost before he reached them he found the driver, who had seen him coming, holding aloft in one hand his topee; in the other, the culprit. 'Caught 'er on the tender, sir,' the man explained to Brigshaw. 'I guessed the topee belonged to one uv our passengers, so thought as I'd take charge uv it *and* this 'ere li'l devil. You might like 'er as a souvenir, sir. We often get 'em on the train during this run.'

'Thanks so much.'

Brigshaw took over his property and the struggling monkey, tipped the driver, and hastily made his way along the platform to see the porter about his luggage. On his head was now the long-lost helmet; in his hands, cursing all the human tribe, and punctuating her remarks with defiant stares—the monkey.

IV.

Beneath azure skies, on a sea of sombre indigo, the s.s. *City of Random* ploughed through the liquid leagues on her homeward journey. Over in the far distance one caught fleeting visions of the rocky mainland, rendered hazy and indistinct by reason of the hot silvery mists which intervened. Perim Light was passed, and the vessel was making fine weather of it up the Red Sea.

On deck, lazing in the depths of a comfortable wicker chair, Lieut. Brigshaw sat studying the distant mainland through powerful field-glasses. 'Arabia!' he muttered to himself. 'Well, it looks a pretty dead sort of hole, 'pon my Sam! . . . How anybody can live there beats me. . . . Yet they do, sure as eggs! . . . Wonderful johnnies, those Arabs; but I like 'em best at a distance. Ah, well—wonder how Jenny's getting on. I'll go and give the little brute some grub.' So saying, he rose with a yawn, put his pipe in his pocket, and went below.

Descending to the hold, he came eventually to a large crate labelled in straggling capitals of black paint: 'MONKEY. DANGEROUS.' Bending down to peer through the woodwork, he talked encouragingly to the occupant, and studied her intently. We will take the opportunity and do the same.

She was in many ways a handsome little beast, roughly two feet long, grayish-brown in colour, but her face, ears, feet, and hands were black—coal-black. She was slender of build, long-limbed, with a prodigious tail. Her brows, the most notable feature of her ebony face, were of long stiff hair, projecting like a pent-house. In short, Jenny was a Hanuman or Langur monkey.

On coming into possession of her at Victoria Station, it had been Brigshaw's first intention

¹ This incident actually occurred as related here.

to turn her over to the authorities at the Victoria Gardens, on the outskirts of Bombay, where, he knew, some wild beasts were kept as a sort of zoological attraction. On second thoughts, however, he decided to take the creature home with him, and hand her over to a small zoo just outside his native town. In a way, he had grown rather fond of Jenny, for all her waywardness, or, perhaps, because of it; and if he put her in that zoo he could, he reflected, pay her occasional visits.

So Jenny had been put in a box, and labelled 'Dangerous,' not without reason, for her wild instincts were still very strong within her, and she could not by any stretch of the imagination be termed tame.

Brigshaw called her by name now, but Jenny refused to regard her captor with friendly eyes. She would not even suffer her head to be scratched, but crouched back, glaring defiantly from under her bushy moving brows, glowering with restrained ferocity, nervously clasping one skinny paw with the other, and snorting savagely.

It was not until the man brought forth some grain from his pockets and held it out to her that she condescended to unbend. Perhaps she might not have done so then had not her appetite been craving for food. But, if you cannot tame an animal by any other means, you can generally find the way to its heart through an appeal to the stomach. And so it was now. Jenny ceased to glower, and moved over to take a little nourishment, thereby laying the foundations of a friendship with the man which was to last for many months to come.

For the rest of that voyage the monkey regarded him with friendliness, looked forward to meal-times, and sometimes permitted her master to shake hands with her. The passage through the Bay of Biscay was distinctly a bad one, but though many human passengers were laid low and had perforce to go without their meals, Jenny was not affected thus. Slight sea-sickness she may have felt, but it was not sufficient to take away her appetite. So she came at length to England.

v.

Arrived at the zoo outside Lieut. Brigshaw's native town, Jenny was put into a large cage along with several other animals; and, with three exceptions, she bullied the lot. A queer assortment of beasts did that cage contain. The chief ruler there was a little white pomeranian dog; another was a female goat; and the third was a porcupine, newly arrived. It was only a small zoo, and a separate cage for monkeys had not yet been built.

To the dog, being frightened of its ceaseless yapping, Jenny entirely succumbed, never attempting to take the least liberty with it. As regards the goat, after it had once caught

Jenny on the hind quarters and butted her neatly into the air, she mostly ignored that too, though occasionally she would take advantage of an unguarded moment, jump or drop on to the creature's back, and make it carry her round the cage before she loosened her hold. But with the porcupine she was quite on equal terms.

For the first week after Jenny's arrival, the chief bone of contention was a particular corner of the cage, which each animal liked to consider as its own, and from which each of them tried persistently to eject the other. The guinea-pigs, which also inhabited these quarters, Jenny seemed to despise utterly, never meddling with them, but every inmate of that cage that wore a tail was dead certain to have that tail pulled just when the assault was least expected.

At first sight you might have thought that the formidable armature of the porcupine would be too much even for a monkey, but Jenny learnt to direct her attacks, not at the body of the porcupine, but at his quills. Creeping up until within reach, she would take hold of one of the creature's quills and pull it with a sharp jerk. Now, a quill is simply a very large hair, furnished, like our own hairs, with peculiarly sensitive nerves at the base. A pull at the porcupine's quill, therefore, is just as painful to the owner as is a pull at one of our own hairs. If the porcupine refused to move from the coveted corner, Jenny tried another and harder pull, until the beast was at last so exasperated that he came out into the open, and with quills extended for battle, made a dash at the monkey. That, of course, was precisely what Jenny wanted, and no sooner was the porcupine out of the corner than Jenny leapt over his back and settled herself in the disputed territory. Once there, she squeezed herself so tightly into the corner that the quills of the porcupine could not be brought to bear on her, and so she remained master of the situation for as long as she chose.

Occasionally, however, the porcupine was just a little too quick for Jenny, nimble though she was, and whisked round on her, and let the monkey feel what quills are made for. Whereupon there was a yell of mingled pain and surprise, and Jenny sprang up the side of the cage, chattered angrily for some time, letting forth the strongest monkey imprecations, and from her lofty position awaited her next chance for turning the tables on her antagonist.

With the keeper Jenny was from the first on the friendliest of terms, perhaps because he brought her food; but sometimes when Jenny felt she had not had enough to eat she would grow angry and jump up and down on all-fours, scratching her ribs with her little finger, and uttering maledictions in the form of a series of peevish 'errr-errrs.'

There was no doubt about her being a great

favourite—indeed the greatest—with those folk who from time to time passed along before her cage. Daily there would be several interested persons outside gazing at the zoo's new acquisition, and not without reason, for Jenny, with her bright dark eyes, seemed to have a personality almost human. Indeed, for some time she was worth more than a raging lion to the public. Small boys, in particular, found in her the

greatest source of attraction—how boys do love a noisy fighting animal!—and busily plied her with dainties, except just after her official feeding-time. They soon learnt that it was no use throwing peanuts then, for Jenny's loose-skinned cheeks were already bulging with them. So they passed on to find some more eager recipient of their favours.

(Continued on page 474.)

AT THE UIST FORDS.

By ALASDAIR ALPIN MACGREGOR, Author of *Behold the Hebrides!*

I.

THE efforts that are being made to preserve the ruined remains of the home of Flora Macdonald, who was born in the island of South Uist, have brought to mind certain fascinating associations of the Isle of Benbecula, on the north and south sides of which stretch the vast, sandy, islet-studded fords that from low to half-tide have served for untold generations as a means of communication between North and South Uist.

The origin of the name, Benbecula, has long confused both Gaelic and Scandinavian etymologists. At least one Gaelic authority suggests that, in accordance with a Cymric derivative, the word means the Herdman's Isle, an appellation very appropriate for an island devoted mainly to pasturage. Other translators have rendered it as the Mountain of the Fords (*beinn na faodhail*), a name which, from the peculiar geological formations impinging upon the island, seems equally suitable.

Benbecula, at all events, has been appositely described as a place 'where the sea is all islands and the land is all lakes'—a description not unlike that which MacCulloch gave of North Uist, when he wrote that so much of the island was equally occupied by water and by land that he found it impossible to discern with the naked eye which of the two predominated. That this topographical phenomenon impresses itself on most observant voyagers to the southern isles is adequately borne out in the accounts given by subsequent wanderers and explorers. One writer says that the manner in which North Uist is intersected by the most complicated reticulations of fresh and salt water is 'altogether unparalleled in the history of mother earth.'

In bygone days Benbecula and the Uists were numbered among the ancient properties of the chiefs of Clan Ranald, though the lichen and dilapidated remnants of the Castle of Borve (*Caisteal Bhuirbh*), where the lairds of Benbecula resided long ago, and of the Weaver's Castle testify in only a very meagre degree to the glory of pristine baronial days, when the

mighty descendants of Somerled, the *Rex Insularum*, and grandfather of Donald, who founded the great and noble clan of MacDonald, and of Roderic, who founded the Clan MacRuairi, so firmly established themselves in the more southern of the Outer Hebrides that latterly the chiefs of the MacDonalds were able to assume the dignified title of Lords of the Isles. Those were the days when to *Caisteal Eilean Bheag Rùm* (the Castle of the Island of small Dimensions), which stood on an islet in Loch an Eilean, a lake near Howmore, the captain of Clan Ranald and his family were obliged to flee for protection from the threatened attacks of neighbouring foes.

II.

Oh! these were grand old times in Uist; for at this period the islands were peopled by clansmen who feared neither God nor man, and who viewed the restraining attempts of central authorities as an opportunity of demonstrating to kings and to princes their prowess and their dauntlessness.

Be it said, parenthetically, that, though little is known of the Uists during the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth, several members of the MacRuairi family, which at that time held possession of the north isles, were imbued (in a manner not unlike the MacNeils of Barra—those fearless sea-rovers who were included 'among the best seamen of the British Empire') with a good deal of the piratical spirit of the ancient Vikings, whose blood flowed freely in their veins. From the *Annals of Ulster* we learn that in 1212 Roderic, the grandson of Somerled, successfully harried the Irish coast with an armament of nearly eighty galleys. Then, again, we are told that about 1286 Alan MacRuairi, son of the aforementioned Roderic, accompanied by some of his clansmen, plundered the valuable cargo of a Spanish vessel which in a storm had been driven ashore in the Hebrides; and ten years later these same gentlemen had sufficient temerity to carry their marauding expeditions into the Long Island and Skye.

Loch Maddy was long the rendezvous of these wild pirates. It was not until about the year 1609 that the clan system in the Hebrides received its first real shock, when, through the signing of 'The Band and Statutes of Icolmkill,' the Western Isles were brought under the control of the Scottish parliament, and some measure of order was established. This change, however, was not effected without the exercise of a certain amount of compulsion, because, although the island chieftains assembled at Iona and affixed their signatures to the covenant, in spirit, at any rate, they were long recalcitrant.

Among its nine clauses the covenant required inns or 'oistlairs' to be set down in the maist convenient places within every Ile,' and demanded that the 'extraordinary drinking of strong wynis and acquavitie' be put a stop to, while the inhabitants were forbidden to 'beer pistolletis out of thair awne housis, or schuit thairwith at deiris, hairis, or foullis.' Furthermore, the expulsion of 'vagaboundis, bairdis, idill and sturdie beggaris' was to be rigorously resorted to, the belief prevailing that no order could be established while the islands harboured so many vagrants and ruffians.

III.

No account of the history of Uist, however short, would be complete without at least a passing reference to a refugee prince, who, among the wild rocks and creeks of the southern Hebrides, sought to conceal himself from the wrath of his enemies, and who, during his sojourn there, met, in the person of Flora Macdonald, a Uist woman whose loyalty, in face of adversity, was as the shibboleth of her race.

In the summer of 1745 Prince Charles Edward with his attendants landed at Eriskay from *La Doutelle*, a small French frigate of eighteen guns, which had been placed at his disposal by its owner, Antoine Walsh, a merchant of Nantes. Here, it is recorded, 'he set foot on the kingdom of his ancestors' for the first time.

The voyage was an adventurous one; and that night he put up at the house of Angus Macdonald, the tacksman, where he was visited by a number of sympathisers, including the brother of Lochiel, who at the outset tried to persuade him to abandon his undertaking.

'What a plague is the matter with this fellow that he can neither sit nor stand still, and neither keep within nor without doors?' exclaimed Angus, who did not realise that the prince, having been accustomed to large airy places, was, in consequence of the chimneyless and peat-reeked habitation, obliged to go outside every few minutes in order to get a breath of fresh air.

Later the prince sailed for Benbecula, having reached the island of Wiay one morning after

a stormy night-passage. Here he is said to have sheltered in a tumbledown shepherd's hut. Of this voyage we read that the prince 'was very well pleased, and slept soundly on an old sail.'

After Culloden he was compelled to seek refuge again in the outer isles, and landed at Rossinish in Benbecula. While in South Uist he found his way to a cave on the water's edge at Corodale, a bay between Loch Skipport and Loch Eynort, where he hid himself for some days.

It was at the shieling of a Macdonald near Ormacleit, in South Uist, that, when his capture seemed imminent, he found tenderness and mercy at the hands of Flora Macdonald, who planned his escape to Skye.

Oh, what romance is commingled with the history and tradition of this little Scotland of ours!

IV.

Now, I want to tell you something about those great fords, to which I alluded earlier as being the regular thoroughfare between North and South Uist. Here the isles folk are able to cross as on dry land when the tide is low, unless the weather is very stormy and the seas are exceptionally high.

Half-way across the North Ford—which, with its devious and precarious routes, stretches roughly between Gramisdale in Benbecula and Carinish Inn in North Uist, and is about three miles in length—lies Eilean na h-Airidh (the Isle of the Shieling), where one track branches off in the direction of the low-lying and boggy island of Grimsay. The South Ford, which is only about a mile long, is deeper, and lies between Creagorry in Benbecula and Carnan in South Uist. One has to travel a distance of over nine miles in all when going from one Uist to the other, five miles of this distance being traversed in crossing Benbecula.

I cannot think of the Uist fords without being reminded of the lost continent of Atlantis, concerning which a valuable book has been published recently by an Edinburgh man, who has devoted many years to the theories associated with this interesting subject.¹

A study of the extreme variations in climatic conditions, which resulted in successive denudations on a gigantic scale of areas that once supported a luxuriant vegetation, and an examination of the changes that have been produced by the submergence and emergence of land in what must be regarded as pre-historic times so far as our islands are concerned, yield convincing evidence that at one period in the earth's history St Kilda and the Flannan Isles were not separated from Lewis by the sea, and that the whole of the Western

¹ See 'The Lost Atlantis' by Lewis Spence in *Chambers's Journal*, March 1925.

Isles once formed part of what we now refer to as the mainland of Scotland.

Though these great geological changes are usually so slow as to be almost imperceptible in a generation, and, indeed, sometimes in a century, they are all the time taking place. The old order is continually changing; every moment the valleys are being exalted, and the hills laid low. We know that within historic times the Archæan formations of the Western Isles have witnessed a series of marine and epigene denudations of an important character. From the *Exchequer Rolls* we learn that in 1542 the valued rental of North Uist was reduced as a result of the encroachment of the sea. And nearly two hundred years later (1721) a further intrusion of the sea is recorded in a document addressed to the Forfeited Estates Commissioners, in which the wadsetters¹ and the tacksmen² attest and deliver that, besides the severe losses sustained through murrain among the cattle and sheep, 'about Candlemas last the Sea overflowed severall pairts of the countrie breaking down many houses to the hazard of some lives which hase impaired the lands to such a degree as its possible it may happen more and more that they cannot answer to the worst sett in former times.' The relative changes in the level of sea and land in these regions are further borne out by the *Sailing Directions for the West Coast of Scotland* (1885).

v.

The sands of the Uist fords are whitish in colour, since they are chiefly of calcareous origin. They have been formed by the crumbling and the powdering of sea-shells, which the irresistible force of the Atlantic waves has reduced to an infinitesimal fineness—a process that has been going on uninterruptedly for hundreds of centuries. When dry, these sand-grains are wafted landwards by the wind, where they fall among the bent and other grasses of the machair. In the heat of summer these æolian deposits cause the grasses to wither and to die; in an arid season the machair often becomes parched and sunburnt like a miniature desert, for every fail and blade of grass is shrivelled up, and is rendered lifeless and languid. One writer tells us that, whereas the grasses of the machair-lands on the west side of Uist are in summer dried up by the sun's heat, in winter the finer and more tender grasses are 'melted away by the rains and storms and frost.' The result is that the cattle in the coastal parts often starve, unless they have access to the sea-ware that grows on the rocks, or to a little winter fodder that may have been stored up to tide them over the lean months. Most of the

cattle in Uist are outliers; so you can imagine what a severe time they have in winter, especially on the west side.

The white sands of North and South Uist and Benbecula are visited by innumerable birds—eider-ducks and teals and gulls, and wild gray greedy geese and green plovers. In the month of May they are besieged by all manner of fowls, including the curlew, the snipe, and the rock-pigeon. These regions are visited annually by swans; and each August great flocks of geese invade the cultivated plains of North Uist, where they do so much damage to the crops that the inhabitants are obliged to light fires and to erect wind-clappers in order to scare them away. Seals often frequent the vicinity of the fords; and the shy red-deer come down from the hills to drink of the streams that flow through them.

But it is at eventide that you ought to visit the fords, if you are at all imaginative. Then, should the tide be far out, you will be able to watch the flounders that flop in the sandy channels and adjacent pools at the setting of the sun. And you will see the silent gatherers with their creels among the inexhaustible cockle-beds. And, if you should tarry until darkness has fallen around you, and the sands are aglow with the soft half-light of the Aurora Borealis and of many quivering stars, you will become conscious of the mysterious meaning of those boulders that by the hand of man have been placed at intervals to guide in safety across the fords the pilgrim who may be mist-enwrapped or night-encircled. And you will hear the lonely cry of the sea-birds, and the plaintive piping of the curlews and the oyster-catchers where, at the line of the ebbing tide, the cold green water meets the land. And your ears will be attuned to the sea-music that the breakers of the limitless Atlantic have been making on these Hebridean sands for a million years and more; and you will find yourself at one with the Infinite.

THE CLOUDED ALPS.

WE went to Grindelwald. The mists were low,
The Lütchine's wild wan stream was drenched
with rain;
The heights were hid where Alpen roses blow—
Then said my boy, whose eager hopes were slain,

'Where is the Wetterhorn? The Eiger's snow?
The Jungfrau's beauty? I look up in vain,'
The old Swiss guide smiled as he turned to go—
'Darauf hab' ich gestiegen. Da sie stehen!'³

Then smiled my son, in hope of a to-morrow.
Though heights are sometimes veiled in mists
of sorrow,
We need not present days of darkness count,
But trust to those whose feet have climbed the
mount.

M. B.

¹ One who holds another's property in 'Wadset'—that is, pledge or mortgage.

² A leaseholder or tenant farmer.

³ 'I have climbed them. Yonder they stand!'

A TRAGEDY OF THE ARCTIC.

By GEORGE C. WELLS.

I.

IN July 1923, for the first time in history, a Canadian judge presided over a court held at the Royal Canadian Mounted Police station on Herschel Island, 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle, one of the most desolate and dreary spots imaginable as a place of human habitation. The occasion was the trial for murder of two Eskimo, as the climax of a long series of killings which had taken place during the two previous years, and, as a result, both men—Alikomiak, a youth belonging to the uncivilised Copper Eskimo of Prince Albert Sound, and Tetamagama, an older man—were sentenced to be hanged, a sentence which in due course was carried out.

The story of the tragedy as reported by the Mounted Police and as brought out at the trial is as follows. It is to be borne in mind at the outset that the original cause of the murders was the scarcity of women among the Eskimo. Owing to the difficulty of obtaining sufficient food to support life in the arctic regions, female babies are frequently allowed to die, as they are considered a burden, not being able to take their share in the business of hunting, and the adult women occasionally have two or three husbands, all living together. Jealousy sometimes leads these men to kill each other, or a man who has no wife will kill another man more fortunate than himself and take possession of the widow.

Thus it came about that in a band of Eskimo living in 1921 in what is known as the Kent Peninsula there was a man called Hanak, whose main object in life appears to have been to secure an extra wife or two for himself. As he could hope to attain that end only by killing some of the married men, he had threatened to do so, and he had also threatened to kill two men, named respectively Pugnana and Tetamagama, whom he considered too friendly with the wife he already had. She, by the way, was also named Pugnana. He had challenged these two men to fight with guns; they declined the invitation, but decided to watch Hanak, and kill him if he showed any signs of taking the aggressive.

Hanak had two backers amongst the men of the tribe, Ikpukuwak and his son Ikialgina, the latter spoken of as a useless trouble-maker, of whom it was said that he couldn't keep a wife if he had one, but for whom Hanak had promised to procure a helpmate. The rest of the band, fearing trouble and desiring only peace, had decided to move away; but the day before the emigration was to take place Hanak

made good his threat by firing on, apparently without provocation, and wounding a man named Angoiak, who was walking back to the camp after visiting his fish-traps.

Pugnana and Tetamagama had been watching, and as soon as the overt act was committed by Hanak, they rushed out of their tents, armed with rifles and knives. Tetamagama shot Hanak through the chest, while Pugnana fired at and killed Ikialgina. Then Pugnana killed Hanak's wife (who, as we have seen, bore the same name as the murderer himself) with his knife, and finding that Hanak was still alive, despatched him with the same weapon. In the meantime Ikpukuwak engaged Tetamagama in a rifle duel, the two men exchanging shots from behind shelter, until Pugnana came up, after he had despatched Hanak, and shot Ikpukuwak. Then he went to Hanak's tent and strangled his little four-year-old daughter, which deed, however, was looked upon by the Eskimo as an act of kindness, as she, being alone in the world with no one to take care of her, would have starved to death! The battle being over, Pugnana and Tetamagama carried the bodies of the slain to a near-by lake and threw them in.

According to Tetamagama's story, he and Pugnana shortly after this went caribou shooting, and as they walked along Pugnana told him he had made up his mind to kill some more people, as they were all against him, and he wanted Tetamagama's help. Being unable to dissuade him from his purpose, Tetamagama decided that the best thing to do, in order to avoid further trouble, was to kill Pugnana, but being afraid to attempt it alone, he called in the boy Alikomiak, and the latter agreed to do the deed. The two asked Pugnana to go hunting with them next day, and soon after leaving camp, Pugnana being ahead, Alikomiak shot him from behind, and he fell dead immediately.

II.

News of these tragic occurrences having reached the Mounted Police post at Herschel Island in the late summer of 1921, Corporal Doak was sent to the Kent Peninsula in December. He arrested Tetamagama and Alikomiak, and brought them to a place called Tree River, where a small detachment of the police (consisting of Corporals Doak and Bonshor and Constables Woolams and Stevenson) was stationed, and where there was also a Hudson's Bay Company trading station, in charge of two white men, Otto Binder and C. H. Clark. Besides the two prisoners, Corporal Doak brought with him also, as witnesses, the man Angoiak, whose wounding by Hanak had begun the series of events, his

wife, and Pugnana's widow, a crippled woman named Aguahiak.

As there was only very limited accommodation at the police post, the witnesses and Tetamagama were sent to an Eskimo camp some seven miles away, in charge of Constable Woolams, Mr Clark, the trader, being there also on business. Corporal Bonshor, some time towards spring, set out to carry the winter's mail to Great Bear Lake, and was accompanied part-way by Constable Stevenson. This left only Corporal Doak and the prisoner Alikomiak at the police post, and Mr Binder, his native wife, and their two small children at the Hudson's Bay Company post. Alikomiak was not under close confinement, but assisted in the work of the post, in accordance with the general custom of the police in those regions, which is to trust the Eskimo, owing to their general docility. Doak had treated Alikomiak kindly, and had attended to his feet, which had been frozen after his arrest.

Quite unexpectedly and without warning, on the morning of 1st April 1922, Alikomiak arose while Doak was still asleep, took a rifle, and shot him in the lower part of the back as he lay in bed. The corporal was not killed instantly, but lingered for about two hours, presumably in great pain, the murderer remaining in the room with him but not molesting him further.

During the morning Mr Binder came over, as was usual with him, to visit Corporal Doak, and when he was about fifty yards away Alikomiak, who had been watching for him, fired from a window and shot him through the heart. He then went to Binder's house, where his wife Toktogan, who had seen the murder from the porch, was weeping, and said to her, 'Don't cry any more. I can't help it. I scared. I killed both of them.' They then carried Binder's body into the police post and laid it on the floor.

Shortly afterwards some Eskimo arrived from the camp for trading purposes and found the two white men dead. These Eskimo took the murderer, the native woman, and her children with them back to camp. Alikomiak, according to his own confession, had some idea of shooting Constable Woolams and Mr Clark, but the other natives disarmed him *en route*, and on arrival at the camp he was at once taken in charge by the constable, who, with Mr Clark, then proceeded to the scene of the murder, at the same time despatching a messenger to bring back Bonshor and Stevenson.

Corporal Doak had been a long time in the district, and was well known and respected by both natives and white men; and Binder enjoyed a good reputation as a trader, and was well liked by the Eskimo. Alikomiak's reasons for killing Doak seem to have been rather vague. He said at his trial that he was offended at some things Doak had said to him about his work, and he was afraid perhaps

Doak would beat him, although he had never done so, nor even threatened to; also that he did not want to go west to a strange country, and thought that when he shot Doak the latter would take his revolver and shoot him, and he was not afraid to die. He said that he shot Binder because he thought that when Binder found Doak had been murdered he would want to kill him.

III.

The story of all that had taken place reached civilisation as soon as possible; but as those far northern regions are inaccessible save during a very short season in the summer, except to the most hardy and expert 'mushers,' no action could be taken for some months. It is hard for people resident in the British Isles to conceive the vast extent of Canada and the immense distances to be traversed. Edmonton, Alberta, which may be reckoned the 'jumping-off place' for the Far North, is over 2000 miles from Montreal, and from three to three and a half full days of twenty-four hours each are required of fast and comfortable—yes, luxurious—railway travel to go from one city to the other. Then from Edmonton there extends a railway line, called the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway, which is operated by the Alberta Government, running for nearly 300 miles almost due north to a point called Waterways, on the Athabasca River. During the season of navigation a passenger train runs once a week over the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway, and from about 10th May this train connects with steamers plying to Fort Fitzgerald, a distance of 292 miles. From Fort Fitzgerald to Fort Smith there is a 16-mile portage by motor trucks, in order to avoid a series of rapids, probably as turbulent and terrifying as any in the world; and at Fort Smith passengers can embark on fairly large and comfortably equipped steamers for a voyage of 1400 miles down the Slave River, into and across Great Slave Lake, and thence down the great Mackenzie River to Aklavik, which is within 50 miles of the Arctic Ocean, into which vast body of water the Mackenzie empties by a number of mouths.

The first trip of these steamers from Fort Smith to Aklavik was made about the middle of June that year, and under the most favourable conditions only a few round trips can be made before the season ends. Incidentally, it may be of interest to note that the fare quoted during the summer of 1923—Waterways to Aklavik and return—was \$240 (say about £50), exclusive of meals and sleeping accommodation. From Aklavik to Herschel Island the means of communication are motor-boats and small sailing-vessels.

IV.

With the opening up of the Great Waterways route above described for the brief summer

season, the Canadian Government despatched Judge Dubuc of Edmonton to hold court on Herschel Island, and try Alikomiak and Tetamagama for their crimes, as well as deal with other but less serious cases which had occurred. He was accompanied by a lawyer named Howatt, from Edmonton, delegated to act as crown prosecutor, while Mr Cory, a Winnipeg lawyer, undertook to defend the accused. The jury was composed of trappers and traders, an old steamboat captain living at Herschel Island, and a law-student who travelled with the judge and, when required, acted as his secretary. Cyril Uignik, a Christian Eskimo boy, who had been educated at the Hay River Mission of the Church of England, served as interpreter. Most of the Eskimo were away fishing for white whales during the progress of the trial, and only half-a-dozen or so were present, and they seemed but little interested in the fate of the accused.

Both prisoners gave evidence in a very straightforward manner, and, in fact, it was largely on their own testimony that they were convicted. Mr Cory, as their counsel, did not attempt any denial of the facts, but argued that Eskimo should not be tried or dealt with in the same manner as white men, as they are to-day practically in the same state of development as were the ancient Britons when Julius

Cæsar landed. Both men were found guilty, and were sentenced to be hanged, but did not appear much impressed by the announcement, Alikomiak, especially, smoking cigarettes immediately after sentence had been pronounced, and laughing and joking with the utmost unconcern.

Efforts were made to have the sentence commuted; but the Canadian Government, after full consideration of all the circumstances, decided to let the law take its course, pointing out that in the case of two Eskimo¹ who, in 1917, were sentenced to death for the murder of two priests, but afterwards had their sentence reduced, the exercise of clemency did not appear to have had any beneficial effect, as murders among the Eskimo are becoming very frequent, and that 'in the opinion of those conversant with the conditions in the North, it is in the best interest of law and order that the sentence be carried out.'

Corporal Doak's untimely and tragic end exemplifies the dangers run by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, whose history, since the corps was first formed in 1873 as the 'Royal North-West Mounted Police' to keep order in the North-West Territories, is one long record of heroism, devotion to duty, and good work well done.

THE LIVING BRANCH

CHAPTER II.—*continued.*

III.

IT was rather difficult at first, and for a few moments they did not quite find themselves, but nothing prevented the quick mutual scrutiny that became, perhaps, the more keen as talk grew easier. It happened that the circumstance of each was in this case proclaimed by her appearance, so that without words many intuitive questions were answered. Connie, searching Sybil's face, read its record of boredom and somewhat cynical acceptance of life, if not actual disillusionment. She was still lovely, still held her former allure with all its smooth perfection. As to Connie, Sybil was frankly puzzled. The girl displayed no evidence of wear and tear. Her colour was not so high, but her cheeks had the milky whiteness of superb health. There was a sort of quiet content in her eyes. Sybil stole a look at the long capable hands. They had not suffered. Perhaps, she reflected, Mary Mostyn wasn't a fair average.

'And now,' Connie was saying, 'tell me everything—just how you got here, and where's George. You won't see Jack till to-night; he's up on the hill-side, where we're getting out timber for a new barn.'

Sybil told her, cutting it as short as possible. To Connie it was rather a remarkable recital, being notes from the diary of one who has had the world for a football. The contrast with life on Silver Bay was sufficiently sharp. But when Sybil concluded, the other girl was aware that this was only part of the story, and wondered if the rest of it would ever be told. Her gaze wandered from the Hanover Square tweeds to the American sailor, who was fishing a hundred yards away. The tweeds, the dinghy, the yacht on the other side of the narrows, the Thurstons, who had been sketched in with a slightly cynical touch, George, who had been perfectly described, since Sybil had said nothing of him; yes, she could imagine and supply the rest herself. Her thoughts ranged back to Marchmont and that half-hour by the fire. What a child she was then, and how much more anxious than Sybil guessed. But Mrs Jennison knew. Then Sybil made a little familiar gesture.

'It's your turn now.'

Connie's manner of telling was unconsciously effective. She said hardly anything of what they found at Silver Bay, because already those

¹ See *Chambers's Journal* for May 1919.

first two years of stress had become gently merged into the more equable present. There was much of Jack, their two children, the farm, the building of the bungalow that superseded the original log cabin, the growing trade with the mills, whence a launch brought mail twice a week, returning with produce; but there was no hint of isolation or loneliness. It struck Sybil that the girl had lost none of her charm, and she wondered if Jack Merivale had revealed unexpected resources. It could be nothing else, Connie having evidently discovered some fount of interest where she could drink and be satisfied. The story was so simple as to be rather baffling.

'It sounds a bit heroic,' Sybil said doubtfully. 'And do you mean that you don't really miss all the rest of it?'

'Of course not. We both miss it, but I think we're learning what one might call the art of replacement, and it's getting more natural every year. You were married about four months after us, weren't you?'

Sybil nodded; then, quickly, because she knew what was coming, 'We haven't any children, and I don't think I'm sorry now, so I suppose you'll see that it has all turned out very much as I expected. But our tastes are the same.' She said this with a little burst, as though breaking through some kind of crust behind which she habitually moved; and in saying it admitted that while she had counted on certain definite results from marriage, she was in truth disappointed at the accuracy of her forecast.

'I rather think,' she went on, 'the difference between us is that you've got out of it what you hoped, and I've got what I expected. Jack wanted you, because he was thinking about you, and I wanted George, because, frankly, I was thinking about myself. I believe I admitted that at the time, didn't I?'

Connie smiled. 'I fancy you did.'

'Well, I don't want you to imagine I'm on the penitent bench now, and I'm certainly not going to sit beside a river in British Columbia and confess that I've made the mistake of my life—even to you. But I did hope to find you, and not looking like poor Mary Mostyn, which you don't. If I don't say anything about George, it's because he's only about two miles away at this minute with Mollie Thurston. He isn't fishing, but making all kinds of passionate declarations, which is why they went.'

Connie was amused to realise that she felt slightly shocked, and in that instant perceived what the past five years had really done for her. Her mind slid back to Marchmont and George's proposal. It would have been so easy to stand where Sybil stood now, and she wondered if the result would have been the same. If it had, she could not have taken it so impassively. Then, far up on the hillside sounded

a faint ragged crash, and she knew that another stick of big timber was available for the new barn. At this her thoughts turned to Jack. He had found himself on Silver Bay.

IV.

'Won't you send the man back for the others, and I'll get Jack down for lunch? Meantime, come and see the children.'

Sybil shook her head. She wanted to keep this meeting to herself, and it would lose something of its tang if the Merivales were discussed back and forth across the saloon table. Mollie would be very polite and a shade compassionate, Thurston too ultra-Mayfair for a coast bungalow, and she could anticipate the effect of Connie's Diana-like beauty on George. It was strange, she thought secretly, that he had not capitulated years before. No, the thing wouldn't fit. She was curious to see the children, but, privately, a little afraid; and this amused her. 'I'd like to come up myself, but would rather leave the others out, if you won't think it frightfully rude. And we have to be off in an hour or so on our way north. I'm awfully interested, so do you mind if I regard you as my personal discovery?'

On Jack's account Connie was a little relieved. He was so contented, so keen on his work, that she was glad to avoid reviving in him any of his one-time abashment at being able to offer her so bare an alternative to social isolation. His former keen sense of contrast had now dimmed, or, if he did miss the fleshpots for her sake, he seldom showed it. At intervals which were becoming more rare she caught this in an occasional wistful glance, and always in his devotion was the implication that she had dowered him with utter prodigality. Behind this devotion was a complete love, and his mind, still boyish, had surprised her with its fertility. His was the cheerful habit of minimising his own efforts while he magnified hers, and always with a protective tenderness that touched her enormously. But he never knew how much she leaned on this. She wanted him to feel unburdened.

'Just as you like,' Connie said understandingly; then, with a laugh, 'is it really five years since our last talk?'

Sybil nodded. 'I was thinking of that too, and remember being extremely candid. I suppose you're saying to yourself that I've got just what I asked for?'

'Yes,' admitted Connie, 'I was.'

'Well, it astonished me to realise what an accurate forecast it was. George is exactly what I expected, only more so. We've done everything I anticipated, and perhaps because I had it all arranged in my mind it has been a bit flat. Probably I'll go on doing these things, not having enough stuff in me to change; which really means I'm a sort of servant to my tastes,

and they don't serve me. I'm saying all this, less because it's true than because I've never found anyone else to say it to. I know you're miraculously contented—one can see that in your face—while I'm not; but I wouldn't change places even now. Didn't we say something about our respective ideas of happiness that last time?'

'You suggested that we should compare them after five years. I thought a good deal about that for a while, but I don't now.'

Sybil smiled. 'You know, my dear, there's something about perfectly happy people which some others find almost irritating. That nice sailorman in the dinghy is absolutely serene, but if you asked him what he was thinking about he couldn't tell you. In a general way it's only the ones who are not happy who can tell you their thoughts, so I'd rather forget that comparison. But in a place like this, and especially in winter, which must be rather awful, I should imagine you'd do a lot of thinking which might be a bit disturbing. I'd like to stop thinking myself, and, of course,' she concluded coldly, 'I stopped feeling ages ago. Now, Connie, tell me how this miracle has happened, and how you do it, you—you Trojan.'

v.

'I don't feel a bit like a Trojan,' began Connie, 'but when I got here first I was rather appalled at the bigness and solitude. It made me seem small and impudent, but, of course, I didn't mention this to Jack. Then the mountains became in a way friendly. One has to get over that habit of being surprised and shocked that things happen to one's own self, when it might just as well be some one else. I didn't think much about what I'd left, though I expected to, because it seemed too remote and unreal, while here everything shouted its reality at you. And all the time I was watching Jack unfold one new resource after another in a way he'd never have done in England. What seemed awkwardness there was strength here, and that was a bit of an object lesson to start with. As to myself, while at home I was one of our crowd; here I'm one out of the crowd, and get perhaps a better perspective. You'll ask what's the use of a perspective on Silver Bay, but it's going to help me to have a tremendous time when we go back for a few months next year.'

'I think perhaps it will,' murmured Sybil. 'Please go on.'

'There isn't any more. The thing's all right, and if there was a hole in it I shouldn't mind telling you. But I haven't found one yet. The other side of this life wouldn't interest you—the building up of the place and all that; but the result is, we're doing rather well in a small way, and are going ahead quite steadily.'

'No, it wasn't that end of it, which I can see for myself; it's your particular angle. We are both doing what we proposed to do, and I was frightfully keen to know what your part of it had cost you personally. But it agrees with you, my dear—you never looked so utterly stunning in your life, and you'll create a sensation when you get back. I won't ask you to come to us on account of George. As for me, while I'll look all right for a while yet, it takes more and more time, and naturally I can't stop. Are you still in love with Jack?'

Connie laughed. 'Remarkable though it may sound, I am. Come and see our children.'

vi.

Half-an-hour later, Sybil, gliding through the narrows, waved good-bye to a tall straight figure that stood knee-deep in meadow grass. She was very thoughtful, but not in any way chastened, and though she felt suddenly lonely she would not have admitted it. What she must do now was to freshen up her capacity for enjoyment, not bother about Mollie Thurston, and not be too analytical. It seemed rather a waste of sheer beauty that Connie should be marooned in this cranny of a foreign coast, something she herself would never put up with. But what she had to admit was that the picture of Connie with tiny fingers making lovely disorder of her bronze hair, and Connie's eyes as she regarded her four-year-old son, would obtrude itself in days to come with disturbing frequency. What had really happened was that she and Connie had each grafted on to the tree of existence a branch of their own choosing. One was artificial and nurtured in a hothouse; the other had in it the fibre of health and endurance. One shrivelled in the variable winds of life, and the other thrived. This was still pricking in her mind when the sailorman backed water with one oar, and the dinghy lay three inches from the yacht's white hull.

Thurston emerged from his cabin soon after she reached the deck. Mollie and George were rowed back half-an-hour later; she with a high colour and very talkative, he notably affable—as he always was when he thought it worth while to try to disarm Sybil's suspicions. But this time she didn't care. They all stood in a little group in the bows while anchor was weighed. Then the engines throbbed, and, slowly gathering speed, the yacht headed for the mouth of Silver Bay. In a few minutes they came abreast of the narrows. There was a glimpse of lush meadow and a quaintly-built bungalow, in front of which stood some one quite motionless. George picked up his binoculars.

'It's a woman. Gad, what a devil of a life in a hole like this!'

Sybil was a hundred miles nearer Alaska when Merivale sat that evening on his wide

verandah and watched the pink flush dying on the high peaks. He smoked with great contentment.

'We're going to make that barn eighty feet instead of seventy; and, I say,' he added with a touch of wistfulness, 'I saw a corking yacht

pass the bay just before noon. She evidently put her nose in on the way north. Sort of thing I'd like for you.'

'I'm safer ashore than I'd feel in a yacht on a coast like this,' said Connie innocently.

THE END.

STARS AND THEIR WIRELESS MESSAGES.

III.—THE SPECTRA OF THE STARS.

By Professor GEORGE FORBES.

I.

HAVING prepared the ground in our two previous articles, we are able to understand the first discoveries that were made about the constitution of the stars.

Already the spectroscope had proved that the sun and the earth, situated in the same region of space, are made of the same materials. It was natural to suppose that the sun is not unique among stars in this respect. It was natural to extend the experiment to the other stars, and to expect them all to show spectra, like the sun, with dark lines for the materials found upon the earth. The very first application of a spectroscope to the brightest stars dispelled this expectation. It was soon found that some of the brightest stars have spectra differing totally from that of the sun. This was a discovery of first importance. And yet, on consideration, this result might have been foreseen, for we have another means, more rare but more certain, for finding out the materials that may be in different parts of space. Meteorites are masses of matter that come like comets from interstellar regions, and fall upon the surface of our earth. Some may come from the regions where Vega lies; others from near Capella. Are these made always from the same materials?

The answer is that they differ very much. There are, in fact, two great distinctive fundamental types, called the metallic and the stony meteorites. In the former, nickel and iron preponderate. The late Professor Graham, Master of the Mint, examined some of these, and found large quantities of hydrogen confined in the pores or cavities of the meteoric mass. He told how astronomers had found many stars made of hydrogen. He went on to say, 'This meteorite may be looked upon as holding imprisoned within it, and bearing to us, hydrogen of the stars.'

As yet we have no evidence as to the regions of space from which these two distinct types of meteors emanate. It would, at present, be impossible to say that the ring of the Milky Way and the bun-shaped space are the two sources whence the two kinds of meteorites come. What the meteorites tell us certainly

is that we ought not to expect to find that all stars are made of the same materials.

The new discoveries made by astronomers when they pointed a spectroscope at the stars last century were as numerous and surprising as those made in 1610, when a telescope was first pointed at the stars. The two great pioneers were Huggins in this country and Secchi in Rome. It is to the discoveries which began with Father Secchi at the observatory of the Vatican that attention will now be drawn—discoveries dealing with the materials found in the different stars.

II.

Secchi invented a spectroscope which he could use with his existing telescope, so very simple in application that he was able to make a rapid general survey of all the brighter stars. The results he arrived at were unexpected and surprising. Finding that they did not seem to be of uniform constitution, he set to work to find whether the spectra could be classified in a limited number of types. At the end of his laborious survey he was able to assert that there is 'a fundamental distinction between the spectra of stars, according to a *small number of types*.' This is the wonderful generalisation which to-day lies at the basis of all our knowledge about the constitution of the stars.

He found that nearly all stars belong to one or other of two distinct types, I. and II. The remaining stars he examined were red in colour, and had spectra of two other quite distinct types, III. and IV.

He also discovered, from his first great general survey, that *some of the different types are localised in particular parts of the heavens*. Far too little attention has been given by theorists to this second discovery, the truth of which is now completely established. In the British Association report for 1868 we can read about all the fundamental facts that Secchi had discovered at that date.

Nothing could ever obliterate from my mind the memory of Secchi when I was in Rome in 1871. I was a youngster, fresh from Cambridge. Secchi was, to my mind, one of the greatest of men, from his discoveries. I had a letter of

introduction to him, I think from Airy. He invited me to spend a night with him, at the Vatican observatory, with his spectroscope.

Secchi began by pointing his telescope on Sirius. During a period of about five minutes he was carefully adjusting the apparatus to give the very best effect. At last he stood back and invited me to look. I expected to have difficulty in seeing the spectrum of so feeble a light as a star. I shall never forget the wonder I felt at the splendid brilliance of that spectrum, with four dark lines across it, all due to hydrogen. I knew the solar spectrum well enough to see at the first glance that the spectrum of Sirius was totally different. It seemed to establish the fact that Sirius must consist almost entirely of hydrogen gas; whereas the sun shows lines due to most of the substances found on our earth.

He next showed me the spectrum of Capella, a star of his Type II. This was totally different. Of course I could not identify the numerous dark lines crossing the spectrum. But I was quite ready to accept what Secchi told me, that 'this spectrum is exactly like that of our sun.' In both Capella and the sun the hydrogen lines are far less notable than in Type I., the characteristic lines being calcium and various other metals.

Then he pointed his spectroscope and telescope to Betelgeuse, the red star in Orion's shoulder, whose spectrum is of the Type III. While its spectrum had some resemblance to that of Capella, its characteristic feature was the addition of a number of dark bands or flutings of unknown origin. We now know that these are due to absorption of light by *titanium oxide* in the atmosphere of the star.

I cannot now recall whether Secchi then showed me a spectrum of Type IV., found only in certain faint, blood-red telescopic stars. This resembles Type III., except that the added bands or flutings have a totally different character. They were correctly ascribed by Secchi to absorption of light by *carbon compounds* in the atmospheres of these stars.

Secchi also found that the spectrum of Rigel, and most of the Orion stars, though resembling

that of Sirius, and obviously belonging to Type I., had in addition a number of very fine lines. We now know that these lines belong to helium, an element that was discovered by Ramsay as a terrestrial element in 1895.

III.

Now, we are able to set out Secchi's four types of stellar spectra, and the chemical constitution indicated by each:

TYPE I., like Sirius, essentially a hydrogen spectrum; with a sub-section, like Rigel, showing also helium.

TYPE II., like Capella, solar stars, marked by calcium, metals, and most of our terrestrial elements.

TYPE III., like Betelgeuse, red stars, like the solar type, with titanium oxide added.

TYPE IV.—Telescopic, crimson stars, like the solar type, with carbon compounds added.

Nearly all the stars belong to Type I. or II. Some few stars have a spectrum intermediate between Types I. and II., or between Types II. and III.; but no stars have spectra intermediate between Types I. and III.

The discoveries of the early pioneers, such as Huggins and Secchi, have been enormously extended by later researches. But Secchi's great general classification remains fundamental. Really, he named five types, due to (1) hydrogen; (2) helium and hydrogen; (3) calcium and metals; (4) titanium; (5) carbon.

A very great additional interest, for people who do not own spectroscopes, arises from the fact that all of these five types can be generally foretold by anyone. For it is found that stars which differ in spectroscopic type can generally be seen to shine with different colours.

Sirius, Vega, and all stars of Type I. are white. Some of them may seem to have a bluish tinge, and all the Orion stars, like Rigel, have a greenish tinge. Still, they are all white stars. Capella, and all stars of Type II., the solar type, are, on the other hand, distinctly yellow. Betelgeuse, Antares, and other stars of Type III. are red; those of the Type IV. are crimson or blood-red. People vary in their readiness to detect these differences.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER XIV.—HARIPOL—WOUNDED AND MISSING.

LAMANCHA watched Palliser-Yeates disappear along the hillside, and then returned to the hollow top of the Beallach, which was completely cut off from view on both sides. All that was now left of the mist was a fleeting vapour twining in scarfs on the highest peaks. The cliffs of Sgurr Dearg and Sgurr Mor towered above him in gleaming stairways, the drenched cloudberry sparkled in the sunlight, and the

thousand little rivulets, which in the gloom had been hoarse with menace, made now a pleasant music. Lamancha's spirits rose as the world brightened. He proposed to wait for a quarter of an hour, till Wattie with the stag was well down the ravine and Palliser-Yeates had secured the earnest attention of the navvies. Then he would join Wattie and help him with the beast, and within a couple of hours he might be

wallowing in a bath at Crask, having bidden John Macnab a long farewell.

Meantime he was thirsty, and laid himself on the ground for a deep drink at an icy spring, leaving his rifle on a bank of heather. When he rose, with his eyes dim with water, he had an unpleasing surprise. A man stood before him, having in his hands his rifle, which he pointed threateningly at the rifle's owner. 'Ands up,' the man shouted. He was a tall fellow in navy's clothes, with a shock head of black hair, and a week's beard—an uncouth figure with a truculent eye.

'Put that down,' said Lamancha. 'You fool, it's not loaded; hand it over. Quick!'

For answer the man swung it like a cudgel. 'Ands up,' he repeated. 'Ands up, you —, or I'll do you in.'

By this time Lamancha had realised that his opponent was the peripatetic navvy, of whom Palliser-Yeates had reported. An ugly customer he looked, and resolute to earn Claybody's promised reward.

'What do you want?' Lamancha asked. 'You're behaving like a lunatic.'

'I want you to 'ands up and come along o' me.'

'Whom on earth do you take me for?'

'You're the poacher—Macnab. I seen you, and I seen the old fellow and the stag. You're Macnab, I reckon, and you're the — I'm after. Up with your 'ands and look sharp.'

Mendacity was obviously out of the question, so Lamancha tried conciliation. 'Supposing I am Macnab—let's talk a little sense. You're being paid for this job, and the man who catches me is to have something substantial. Well, whatever Lord Claybody has promised you, I'll double it if you let me go.'

The man stared for a second without answering, and then his face crimsoned. It was not with avarice, but with wrath. 'No, you don't,' he cried. Consideration of public morals compels me to expurgate the speech till the many gaps make the sentences look like pieces of old lace. 'By—you don't come over me that way. I'm not the kind as sells his boss. I'm a white man, I am, and I'll — well let you see it. 'Ands up, you —, and march. I've a — good mind to smash your 'ead for trying to buy me.'

Lamancha looked at the fellow, his shambling figure contorted by hard toil out of its natural balance, his thin face, his hot, honest eyes, and suddenly felt ashamed. 'I beg your pardon,' he grunted. 'I oughtn't to have said that. I had no right to insult you. But of course I refuse to surrender. You've got to catch me.'

He followed his words by a dive to his right, hoping to get between the man and the Sgurr Mor cliffs; but the navvy was too quick for him, and he had to retreat baffled. Lamancha

was beginning to realise that the situation was really awkward. This fellow was both active and resolved; even if he gave him the slip he would be pursued down to the Doran, and the destination of the stag would be revealed. . . . But he was by no means sure that he could give him the slip. He was already tired and cramped, and he had never been noted for his speed like Leithen and Palliser-Yeates. . . . He thought of another way, for in his time he had been a fair amateur middle-weight. 'You're an Englishman. What about settling the business with our fists? Put the rifle down and we'll stand up together.'

The man spat sarcastically. 'Ain't it likely?' he sneered. 'Thank you kindly, but I'm takin' no risks this trip. You've got to 'ands up and let me tie 'em so as you're safe, and then come along peaceable. If you don't, I'll 'it you as 'ard as Gawd'll let me.'

There seemed to be nothing for it but a scrap, and Lamancha, with a wary eye on the clubbed rifle, waited for his chance. He must settle this fellow so that he should be incapable of pursuit—a nice task for a respectable Cabinet Minister in the prime of life. There was a pool beside his left foot, which was the source of one of the burns that ran down into the Sanctuary. Getting this between him and his adversary, he darted towards one end, checked, turned, and made to go round the other. The navvy struck at him with his rifle and narrowly missed his head. Then he dropped the weapon, made a wild clutch, gripped Lamancha by the coat, and with a sound of rending tweed dragged him to his arms. The next moment the two men were locked in a very desperate and unscientific wrestling bout.

It was a game Lamancha had never played in his life before. He was a useful boxer in his way, but of wrestling he was utterly ignorant, and so, happily, was the navvy. So it became a mere contest of brute strength, waged on difficult ground with boulders, wells, and bog-holes adjacent. Lamancha had an athletic, well-trained body, the navvy was powerful, but ill-trained; Lamancha was tired with eight or nine hours' scrambling, his opponent had also had a wearing morning; but Lamancha had led a regular and comfortable life, while the navvy had often gone supperless, and had drunk many gallons of bad whisky. Consequently the latter, though the heavier and more powerful man, was likely to fail first in a match of endurance.

At the start, indeed, he nearly won straight away by the vigour of his attack. Lamancha cried out with pain as he felt his arm bent almost to breaking-point and a savage knee in his groin. The first three minutes it was anyone's fight; the second three Lamancha began to feel a dawning assurance. The other's breath laboured, and his sudden spasms of

furious effort grew shorter and easier to baffle. He strove to get his opponent on to the rougher ground, while that opponent manœuvred to keep the fight on the patch of grass, for it was obvious to Lamancha that his right course was to wear the navy down. There were no rules in this game, and it would be of little use to throw him; only by reducing him to the last physical fatigue could he have him at his mercy, and be able to make his own terms.

Presently the early fury of the man was exchanged for a sullen defence. Lamancha was getting very distressed himself, for the navy's great boots had damaged his shins and torn away strips of stocking and skin, and his breath was growing deplorably short. The two staggered around the patch of grass, never changing grips, but locked in a dull clinch into which they seemed to have been frozen. Lamancha would fain have broken free and tried other methods, but the navy's great hands held him like a vice, and it seemed as if their power, in spite of the man's gasping, would not weaken.

In this preposterous stalemate they continued for the better part of ten minutes. Then the navy, as soldiers say, resumed the initiative. He must have felt his strength ebbing, and in a moment of mental disquiet have decided to hazard everything. Suddenly Lamancha found himself forced away from the chosen ground and dragged into the neighbouring moraine. They shaved the pool, and in a second were stumbling among slabs and screes and concealed boulders. The man's object was plain; if he could make his lighter antagonist slip, he might force him down in a place from which it would not be easy to rise.

But it was the navy who slipped. He lurched backward, tripping over a stone, and the two rolled into a cavity formed by a boulder which had been split by its fall from Sgurr Mor in some bygone storm. It was three or four feet of a fall, and Lamancha fell with him. There was a cry from the navy, and the grip of his arms slackened.

Lamancha scrambled out and looked back into the hole, where the man lay bunched up as if in pain. 'Hurt?' he asked, and the answer came back, garnished with much profanity, that it was a broken leg.

'I'm dashed sorry. Look here, this fight is off. Let me get you out and see what I can do for you.'

The man, sullen but quiescent, allowed himself to be pulled out and laid on a couch of heather. Lamancha had feared for the thigh or the pelvis, and was relieved to find that it was a clean break below the knee, caused by the owner's descent, weighted by his antagonist, on an ugly sharp-edged stone. But as he looked at the limp figure, haggard with toil and poverty, and realised that he had damaged it

in the meagre capital which was all it possessed, its bodily strength, he suffered from a pang of sharp compunction. He loathed John Macnab and all his works for bringing disaster upon a poor devil who had to earn his bread. 'I'm most awfully sorry,' he stammered. 'I wouldn't have had this happen for a thousand pounds—'

Then he broke off, for in the face now solemnly staring at him he recognised something familiar. Where had he seen that long crooked nose before, and that cock of the eyebrows? 'Stokes,' he cried; 'you're Stokes, aren't you?' He recalled now the man who had once been his orderly, and whom he had last known as a smart troop sergeant.

The navy tried to rise, and failed. 'You've got my name right, guv'nor,' he said, but it was obvious that in his eyes there was no recognition.

'You remember me? Lord Lamancha?' He had it all now—the fellow who had been a son of one of Tommy Deloraine's keepers—a decent fellow and a humorous, and a good soldier. It was like the cussedness of things that he should go breaking the leg of a friend.

'Gawd!' gasped the navy, peering at the shameful figure of Lamancha, whose nether garments were now well advanced in raggedness, and whose peat-begrimed face had taken on an added dirtiness from the heat of the contest. 'I can't 'ardly believe it's you, sir.' Then with many tropes of speech he explained what, had he known, would have happened to Lord Claybody, before he interfered with the game of a gentleman as he had served under.

'What brought you to this?' Lamancha asked.

'I've 'ad a lot of bad luck, sir. Nothing seemed to go right with me after the War. I found the missus 'ad done a bunk, and I 'ad the two kids on my 'ands, and there weren't no cushy jobs goin' for the likes of me. Gentlemen everywhere was puttin' down their 'osses, and I 'ad to take what I could get. So it come to the navyin' wi' me, like lots of other chaps. The Gov'ment don't seem to care what 'appens to us poor Gawd-forgotten devils, sir.'

The navy stopped to cough, and Lamancha did not like the sound of it. 'How's your health?' he asked.

'Not so bad, barrin' a bit of 'oarseness.'

'That explains a lot. You'll have consumption if you don't look out. If you had been the man you were five years ago you'd have had me on my back in two seconds. . . . I needn't tell you, Stokes, that I'm dashed sorry about this, and I'll do all I can to make it up to you. First, we must get that leg right.'

Lamancha began by retrieving the rifle. It was a light double-barrelled express, which fortunately could be taken to pieces. He had

some slight surgical knowledge, and was able to set the limb, and then, with strips of his handkerchief and the rifle-barrel, to put it roughly into a splint. Stokes appeared to have gone without breakfast, so he was given the few sandwiches which remained in Lamancha's pocket and a stiff dram from his flask. Soon the patient was reclining in comparative comfort on the heather, smoking Lamancha's tobacco in an ancient stump of a pipe, while the latter, with wrinkled brows, considered the situation.

'You ought to get to bed at once, for you've a devil of a bad cough, you know. And you ought to have a doctor to look after that leg properly, for this contraption of mine is a bit rough. The question is, how am I going to get you down? You can't walk, and you're too much of a heavy-weight for me to carry very far. Also, I needn't tell you that the hillside is not too healthy for me at present. I meant to go down it by crawling in the open and keeping to the gullies, but I can't very well do that with you. . . . It looks as if there was nothing for it but to wait here till dark. Then I'll nip over to Crask and send some men here with a stretcher.'

Mr Stokes declared that he was perfectly happy where he was, and deprecated the trouble he was giving.

'Trouble!' cried Lamancha. 'I caused the trouble, and I'm going to see you through it.'

'But you'll get nabbed, sir, and there ain't no bloomin' good in me 'aving my leg broke if Claybody's going to nab you all along of it. You cut off, sir, and never 'eed me.'

'I don't want to be nabbed, but I can't leave you. . . . Wait a minute! If I followed Wattie—that is my stalker—down to the Doran I could send a message to Crask about a stretcher and men to carry it. I might get some food too. And then I'd come back here and we'd "bukk" about Palestine till it's time to go. . . . It might be the best way. . . .'

But even as he spoke, further plans were put out of the question by the advent of six men who had come quietly through the Beallach from the Sanctuary, and had unostentatiously taken up positions in a circle around the two ex-antagonists. Lamancha had been so engaged in Stokes's affairs that he had ceased to remember that he was in enemy territory.

(Continued on page 469.)

RUBBER THIEVES.

THE rat is often quoted as the most expensive thief levying tribute in either the Old or the New World. Generally considered, this is the case. But insects also cause an immense loss, especially among tropical and semi-tropical crops. The damage rats do among sugar-cane plantations, particularly in the Mauritius and also in several of the islands of the East Indies, is almost rivalled by the rubber thieves. These insect pests bring about great financial loss in the rubber plantations of Brazil; and the worst of them is the rubber-stealing ant, though its fellow-thief, the rubber-stealing bee, is almost as troublesome.

These two thieves in one year cause, it has been reckoned, the loss of from two hundred and fifty to three hundred pounds in weight of rubber, in addition to damage done to the trees by the work of the bees. And, as rubber plantations are numerous in certain States of Brazil, the financial loss is to be estimated in no low figures.

The bees make use of the sweet rubber sap in forming the cones of their honeycombs, and do not wait until the plantation workers come along. They have an uncanny knowledge as to when the sap is ripe, and if the season is late they do not wait for the rubber gum as it oozes forth and drops into the buckets. They start the flow of sap by boring into the tree, and not only cause more gum to be wasted than they take away, but spoil valuable trees.

Up to the present, the only method of defending the trees against the bees' operations is by means of a poisonous wash, killing the insects. But as their honey brings a good price, and a few 'washed' trees means poisonous honey throughout a large district, causing many deaths, the Brazilian rubber-planter prefers to leave the bees alone.

The rubber ants seem to know instinctively when the sap in the buckets and other receptacles is neither too hard nor too soft, and then, coming in myriad numbers, they bite out tiny scraps and carry them off to their nests. On many of the rubber plantations where their nests are numerous—and to effect the destruction of them is almost impossible—the amount of gum thus thieved is so large that efforts are made to ward off the countless pilferers.

The method most in favour is to coat the stumps of the indiarubber trees with a very sticky solution that, on evaporation, leaves a thickish film; in it the ants become entangled and stuck fast. The insects, however, keep marching up in hundreds of thousands, and over the bodies of their comrades, until the sticky film is covered with them, and the tree trunk is black with ants going to and coming from the sap-buckets.

If anyone can present the Brazilian Government with an effective remedy against these two pests, his or her fortune is made.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, Yesterday.

WESTMINSTER is passing through changes which are reflected from the altered world on the proudest, worthiest, and most conservative patch of land in the empire, of which this is the true centre. Can they spare them, ladies and gentlemen who come to London during this summer season should spend a few days in some aimless wandering through this city of Westminster, for I have always found, home and away, that an easy meandering, without guide, without notion of locality or route, or of time or circumstance, care-free and impulsive, catching delights of stones and history and legends, lingering for half-an-hour where others hurry by, is much the most pleasant and profitable way of coming to understand a famous place. I invite the country and foreign friends of London who now accept its hospitality not to content themselves with the conventional trippery call upon the Abbey and the Houses of Parliament, but to wander in and out among Westminster's labyrinths, quaint streets, obscure passages, and its grand and noble spaces. Let them steal through a narrow opening at the side of a splendid avenue called Birdcage Walk, a little east of Storey's Gate. Old Edward Storey was Keeper of the Birds to Charles II., and I think of tradition when sometimes even now I see in the small gardens which back on from Queen Anne's Gate a parrot or something of the kind. From this opening they may creep up the passage called Cockpit Steps—such seducing names!—and at once they will enter Queen Anne's Gate, one of the rarest and most retired quarters in old London, distinguished by the true sheltered doorways of the period of the illustrious queen. Here great men still live. In this smooth and gentle backwater, secluded from the rush of life and action in the surrounding parts, many curious things, with attendant stories, may be discovered. At a corner, against a wall, stands a statue of Queen Anne herself, brought one time from the Strand. We should remember in the record of Anne that it was in her time that the parliaments of England and Scotland joined together, and it seems fit that an emblem of this lady, who, like a true royal Londoner, was born at St James's Palace, should stand here in the shadow of the great

towers of Westminster. And it was in the time of Anne that a beginning was made upon the system of party government; but, considering the condition of things to which we have now attained, whether we are to reckon the queen as blessed for that coincidence makes a point of doubt. Parties and the intrigues of parties are responsible in no small measure for the present ills of the world. Anne was a sound Tory queen. It pleased her to have the big work done for her by a thoroughly Tory general, his wife wheedling the queen to the Marlborough advantage, and of all parts of England there is none that is so truly Tory as Westminster. It is claimed that in system and sentiment, in its traditions and customs, it is stronger, better set, and more abiding than any other part of our country. That a Conservative is always returned to Parliament for Westminster is a detail. Even when Mr Winston Churchill himself, turned back more than half-way towards Conservatism, not long since contested the division, the Marlborough blood and perhaps some of the dare-devil tendencies being in him, he lost to a plain Conservative.

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So we feel that if a place must take a king or a queen from history as its own patron royalty, Anne is the queen for us in Westminster. Something of the flavour of the atmosphere of her time still lingers here. But Queen Anne is dead. Why should so much scornful stress be laid upon a frequent modern statement that Queen Anne is dead, made commonly to those who convey news that is already known? When she died no mystery hung upon the sad event; the whole world knew. A disappointed woman was Queen Anne at the end of her life, and perhaps she was nearly ready to die, even though barely fifty years old. By stressing the death of the queen as a form of satirical humour a tendency may be exerted in careless minds to overlook her living, and all the strong influences that were working on our country at the time. She was a remarkable woman. Though none of them grew up, let us recall to her womanly credit that she had seventeen children, which may be a record for a white queen in her own right. In the public fancy

she is overshadowed among queens of the past by Elizabeth of the glowing romantic period of expansion, the queen of high spirits and intensity of nationalism, of great power of will with feminine caprice, the great but yet the lonely queen. Elizabeth, like Anne, is dead; but one likes to imagine that in some fervent way her soul goes marching on, or to reflect that in these doubtful times, when love of country and loyalty to the common interest are less obviously dominant than once they were, it would be well if it did. Anne, our queen of Westminster, had also sound merits, faults no worse than those of many good women. She was of a type that liked some feminine creature to be purring around her always and taking advantage of her under her very nose and with her tacit consent. I should like to see the ghost of glorious Bess come upon a party of our Bolsheviks in these times. Goodness, what that sharp tongue would say to them! How she would make them run! Anne's ghost walks, but has nothing to say to anyone. On the anniversary of her demise, so 'tis said, her late Majesty, as cut in stone, described on the pedestal as Anna Regina, seeming a pleasant little body with a homely face, holding the constitutional ball in her left hand and the sceptre in the right, and attired in a long lace frock, gets herself down and walks three times round the place. I distrust this story because I know of no reason why thus she should incommode her dead self, since Westminster is unswerving in its old conservatism, and her pedestal is seven feet high, fronted by spiked railings which might be things of indifference to an almost bare-legged modern maid, but would be considerations for a spectral queen in lace to the feet. Of ghosts, however, Westminster, so much steeped in history, has always been an agreeable habitation. I should have seen some of them, but curiously have not, for none except the policemen has sauntered more than I by night in Westminster, which is then enchanting. In the stillness of two and three o'clock in the morning, shortly before the summer dawn, its serenity and strength are presented with a witching power. I have risen at three to creep out for the enjoyment of this spell. No emotional experience of the kind can be superior to that gathered in a slow saunter from the Parliament buildings and the Abbey, along Millbank to Lambeth Bridge, from which the nocturnal prospect down the river, through the bunches of dim yellow lights from Parliament to the city, is superb. We think of Whistler's sublime nocturne of old Battersea Bridge, and under the stars history repeats such famous stories as that of the manner in which James II. crossed the river at this very spot in a little rowing-boat and dropped the Great Seal of England into the water as he went. His queen had made the passage of the river two

days before, and we are told that in her case it was made very difficult and dangerous by the violence of the wind and the heavy and incessant rain. Yet, as ages go, that was only yesterday, and think of it, that the passage of the Thames here was difficult, even for a king and queen, and that there were no bridges. Such a nightly perambulation as I have indicated is well ended, if the moon is up and moving through the clouds, before the Houses of Parliament at the end of Parliament Street, for on such a blue and silver night, as you look across the square, Peel and Palmerston, Derby and Disraeli, and other patchers of our State seem to stand stronger and to tell their lesson with deeper emphasis than in the light of day, with the noise and the crowds about. The moon, inspirer of good sentiment and heavenly crier of eternal lessons, rides above the towers; the morals of age and empire, of power and endurance, penetrate us. The scene is blessed and benign and strong. A spell is here for patriots.

* * *

A somewhat thin idea tediously expressed by travellers is that places and scenes presented to them in their distant excursions exhibited wide and glaring contrasts. How singular would be the scene without such contrasts, in men and things and acts, for it is the law of the world and life. Where there is sunlight shadows must fall. Contrasts are remarkable only when harmony is strained and gross incongruity begins. The crudest I ever saw was once in Rome when on some waste ground adjoining the Colosseum a party of young American male travellers, to occupy a little time which was empty when it should not have been, proceeded to disport themselves in a foolish manner and to sing some jazzy stuff called 'Alexander's Rag Time Band.' Nonsense and incongruity could go no further. Of another kind, less offensive but still disturbing and saddening, is the incongruous contrasted scene from our housetops at Westminster, for to grand monuments we look across the vilest slums. On my roof I stand midway between the Parliament Houses and the Abbey, nobly shaped against the sky, and the Westminster Cathedral, east and west. Far out on the uplands of the southern distance the Crystal Palace is discerned; to the immediate left are blocks of offices, and, by a little manœuvring among the chimney stacks, glimpses of the City may be gained. But all along this low depression between me, standing thus, and the Abbey dirty smoke ascends from thousands of chimneys, making a filthy cloud that rests upon rows of the meanest dwellings to be found in any city. As we look down on this scene, it is suggestive of that drab and pigmy uniformity of the workers' quarters in what is called the Black Country. Some who have moralised with me upon this matter declared it was like Wigan

at its worst; but I know it is worse than Wigan. These are bad contrasts. In these slums poor people live mean and wretched lives, and the circumstances, as I have found them, are depressing. Residence in Westminster, which seems always so serene and tranquil, is being coveted by a new class of rich and tasteful persons, and in some cases they have taken mean streets for themselves and renovated them. Lately, with an idea, I perceived in another mean street a very small house advertised for sale. It was occupied by poor labouring folk, who paid but a few shillings a week in rent for it; but when I inquired by letter of the owners what price they asked, the answer was in the region of four thousand pounds, and so the tale was told. Some of the most valuable sites in Westminster are reckoned at £30,000 an acre, and every inch of this land is of great value, yet much of it is thus wasted in slums. I am informed that sixty-four out of every hundred of the population of Westminster (which officially and municipally is a very wide area, and stretches off towards the Strand) live in houses of three rooms or less. Worse, last March there were 6258 families, varying in number from one to eight, living in one room, 8711 families, varying from one to eleven persons, in two rooms, and 7142, of from one to twelve persons, in three rooms, while 6914 basements were used for dwelling purposes. We hear much of the housing problem now; how terrible is it here at the very heart of empire, the most glorious and venerated spot of our land! However, the slums are slowly being reduced; the four-thousand-pound properties, which in my young days in the country would have been considered barely big enough for fowl-houses, are coming into their own. From my roof I see huge gaps being rent through the chaotic mass. Some day Westminster, if it lives, will be all clean and nice, with more big offices, and pleasant dwellings for serious folk. Even now this is particularly the land of flats, expensive flats, in which nice people, not entirely devoted to the conventionalities of the social season, live agreeable lives. One day last year, when the Labour government was starting work, in a walk through Westminster I passed some waste ground right beneath the great Victoria Tower of the House of Lords, and here found a mean and dirty sample of a travelling country fair, in process of being dismantled for moving on to Kingston, the short season of a week being ended. Here were the roundabouts, with their tawdry fittings, the uglier for the unscrewing being done, exposing their inner mechanism. These contrivances had been circulating for a week, carrying the pale-faced children from the slums upon the backs of dragons, to the accompaniment of the harshest of all musical sounds, something worse than jazz, and manufactured by steam and pulleys. Booths for shies at coco-

nuts had flourished there, and over one was emblazoned the strange announcement that it was patronised by the Royal Family! By many specious means pennies were coaxed from the slum-dwellers who came here for their delights, and thought that by dexterity they might win one of the clocks or garish vases exhibited as prizes. The steam music was belched out with such intensity, and the sound of the slummers' gaiety was so noisy that it was heard in the precincts of Parliament, where the parties were contending for their great and various ideals, and contemplating measures they should take against their enemies afar. Then, the day after, the dismantling being done, dogs sniffed among the debris, and wan-faced children, looking enviously upon the dwellers in the showmen's caravans, took each other's hands, and gazed at their disappearing delights. A cold clammy day was this. I looked up to the grand tower of the House of Lords, and walked by it and past the statue of Oliver Cromwell.

* * *

Those casual wanderers, peeping in and out, are not invited to such parts as these; more wholesome entertainment awaits them in other quarters. In this city, which has been the real capital of England since the twelfth century, and where were the Law Courts until not so long ago, æsthetic and other pleasures may be gathered as you go. From the delightful collection of the Tate Gallery, return from the river bank into real Westminster, and you enter old and tranquil squares where parliamentarians and others live, and where you find curious churches, like St John's, being the second of Queen Anne's fifty churches, with a solid tower at each corner—which caused a famous lord to liken it to an elephant on its back with legs in air. It is not a beautiful building, but it is set with a strange and solid impassivity amid odd surroundings. Not far away, in another square, is a house where a Prime Minister of the present time resided for a space when he lost office, and still in Westminster, in one of those odd streets where exists a close compact line of little shops at which the humbler classes may buy fully all they need, is a fishmonger who, I am told, owned the house. Let Hamlet speak according to his mood, but the chief of government here was in no position to gibe at his landlord for being a fishmonger. And such careless mention of the Dane makes reminder of the exceptional entertainments of Westminster, with all of which conservatism holds. Shortly before Christmas the famous Westminster Play is given in Latin or Greek in the School, according to a custom and tradition that wind back to Elizabethan time. This, however, is special, and not for the people. The conservatism of Westminster is manifested by the performances,

more frequent here than in other parts of London, of the old-fashioned tragedy of Punch and Judy, presented with the traditional style and the old effects. The show is commonly encountered in the byways; but lately there were grand upheavals in the main thoroughfare running through real Westminster, and gigantic cementing and other engines have occupied it, while traffic has been diverted. At the time that ratepayers, including Members of Parliament—of whom many dwell round here—and various eminent and titled folk, viewed these operations with a certain morbid interest, knowing they paid twenty thousand pounds for them; and while the youth and strangers found them a constant delight, as somebody making a public show always is to the lazier passers-by in London, the proprietors of the Punch and Judy exhibition, with a quick instinct, erected among the works their old-time miniature theatre, the conventional construction some eight or nine feet high, with a proscenium measuring three by two, and a stage-manager hidden inside. The show was placed in the middle of the street with the royal name, along which the most magnificent imperial processions have passed. In many ways it is a grand street, but by its curious moods it has missed greatness. Thronged and busy in the daytime, a great quarter for architects, engineers, colonial offices, and the agencies of vast concerns for construction, it lapses to funereal solemnity and emptiness at night. In this, after all, it does but match the surrounding Westminster, which, saving the Commons, is no night-bird of a place at all. But here, day after day, in the middle of the street the tragedy of Punch and Judy was enacted, and the people who stayed to see the cement-grinder's machinery passed on to the more æsthetic delights of this ancient show. Large audiences of good and serious people gathered round and stood for a long time watching. A Member of Parliament and a countess were once among them. And really, conjuring up the sensations of our early years, this entertainment, quite the old thing, seemed magnificent. In order the three dramatic representations to which I had just previously applied myself were the *Hamlet* of Mr John Barrymore, the American, at the Haymarket Theatre (and as one who has seen all the *Hamlets* for thirty years, including that of Sarah Bernhardt, and has classified them, Forbes Robertson first, I would place this of the American in the leading four); next the uncut *Hamlet* given once a year at the Old Vic., and done with great endurance this time by Mr Ernest Milton (but *Hamlet*, after all, is better cut, I think); and then Mr Bernard Shaw's *St Joan*, with Miss Thorndike as the heroine (disappointing to me; Mr Shaw's concealed satire

seems not to be exerted with sufficient dexterity); and now I came to Punch and Judy of precisely the old pattern in the middle of Victoria Street. The performance, which was strictly on traditional lines, as suited the conservatism of Westminster, was neither better nor worse than of yore. Punch was as irresponsible and exuberant as ever. There is nothing in Shakespeare like the strange folly of this madcap, who, despite all warnings, turns his face from the fate that surely envelops him. With the traditional high falsetto voice the part was played effectively, and the strange inconsequence of the character clearly portrayed. Judy, as before, stood for patience with a limit; and some of the minor characters, such as the representatives of the law, were capably performed; but the honours went to a masterly handling of the part of Toby by a small, brown, smooth-haired dog with a white nose, a dog of a kind that seems to be bred for this purpose. Through the violent crises of the play and the wild harangues of Punch a perfect passivity was maintained by Toby, whose restraint and concealment of true art were superb. Only at rare intervals, and at the proper moments, did he yap and snarl. For the most part, with a collar of red, blue, and green, he gazed from his corner of the little stage serenely out towards the Abbey and Parliament, as who should say that monuments endure while the petty quarrels of mankind, petty even though death itself may hang upon them, pass away. I must give a word of praise to the short scene of the revels when Judy appeared with the baby, which was incontinently killed by the irascible Punch. Some of the soliloquies of the latter seemed too much drawn out, so that the performance lasted beyond four o'clock, with the result that the elders were caught by the children going home from school. At this appearance many, including the countess and myself, departed; the Member of Parliament had already left, for the Budget was being discussed in the House of Commons.

* * *

Something like poor Jack Point does the writer feel among this fooling. He is leaving Westminster. It is now good-bye, and he is somewhat sad, for he likes and reverences the place. One thing at least he has humbly in common with the Prince of Wales, who, in parting for his latest long voyage, said in a speech that Westminster was his home town. A wanderer as he is, the writer returns from afar to his home town, Westminster, but does it stealthily, for it has been for many years his place of secret delight and solitude. Few have known of it. Here he has been himself. When he has come homing from distant parts the heart of things most truly and appropriately

has been where he is now. With his head upon his pillow he can hear the chiming of Big Ben. Up two flights of steps he mounts to his flat roof, high in the air, from which he can survey Westminster and much of other London, the Parliament, the Abbey, the Cathedral, and the slums. There is much space for walking up here aloft, and for thinking it is superb. Being fond of the sea, he has often pretended this space to be a quarter-deck, along which he has affectedly walked with the jaunty manner of the sailor man, the side rails and an occasional telescope—and even the newly-erected wires of the radio enthusiasts—assisting the illusion. It was easy to consider it in the war-time as a battleship, for from this quarter-deck he beheld straight up above him the first

Zeppelin that came to London, like a gigantic silvery cigar shining in the blue night sky. Some months later bits of shells fell fast upon the quarter-deck, and once a missile all complete and deadly missed it by inches, crashing into the courtyard below. With sweet solitude and no conventions most things may be done and the rest assumed, and man is then what he may choose to be. So, being fond of southern Spain, this writer easily imagined in non-seafaring moods that this space above him to which he ascended in pleasant summer evenings was his azotea, like the flat roofs on which the Sevillians sit happily in summer, listening to the guitar and castañuelas, and watching the children dance. . . . Some time, after distant journeys, he may return.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER XIV.—*continued.*

LAMANCHA'S military service had taught him the value of the offensive. The newcomers were, he observed, three navvies, two men who were clearly gillies, and a warm and breathless young man in a suit of a dapperness startling on a wild mountain. This young man was advancing towards him with a determined eye, when Lamancha arose from his couch and confronted him. 'Hullo!' he cried cheerfully; 'you've just come in time. This poor chap here's had a smash—broken his leg—and I was wondering how the devil I was to get him down the hill.'

Johnson Claybody stopped short. He had rarely seen a more disreputable figure than that which had risen from the heather—dissolute in garments, wild of hair, muddy beyond belief in countenance. Yet those dilapidated clothes had once, very long ago, been made by a good tailor, and the fellow was apparently some kind of a gentleman. He was John Macnab beyond doubt, for in his hand was the butt-end of a rifle. Now Johnson was the type of man who is miserable if he feels himself ill-clad or dirty, and who discovers in a sense of tidiness a moral superiority. He rejoiced to have found his enemy, and an enemy over whom he felt at a notable advantage. But, unfortunately for him, no Merkland had ever been conscious of the appearance he presented, or cared a straw for it. Lamancha in rags would have cheerfully disputed with an emperor in scarlet and suffered no loss of confidence because of his garb, since he would not have given it a thought. What he was considering at the moment was the future of the damaged Stokes.

'Who's that?' Johnson asked magisterially, pointing to the navy.

The man's colleagues hastened to inform him.

'It's Jim Stokes,' one of the navvies volunteered. 'What 'ave you been doing to yourself, Jim?' And Macnicol added, 'That's the man that was to keep movin' along this side o' the hill, sir. I picked him, for he looked the sooplest.'

Then the faithful Stokes uplifted his voice. 'I done as I was told, sir, and kept movin' all right, but I ain't seen nothing, and then I 'ad a nawsty fall among them blasted rocks and 'urt my leg. This gentleman comes along and finds me, and 'as a try at patchin' me up. But for 'im, sir, I'd be lyin' jammed between two stones till the crows 'ad a pick at me.'

'You're a good chap, Stokes,' said Lamancha, 'but you're a liar.—This man,' he addressed Johnson, 'was carrying out your orders, and challenged me. I wanted to pass and he wouldn't let me, so we had a rough-and-tumble, and through no fault of his he took a toss into a hole and, as you see, broke his leg. I've set it and bound it up, but the sooner we get the job properly done the better. Hang it, it's the poor devil's livelihood, so we'd better push along.'

His tone irritated Johnson. This scoundrelly poacher, caught red-handed with a rifle, presumed to give orders to his men. He turned fiercely on Stokes. 'You know this fellow? What's his name?'

'I can't say as I rightly knows 'im,' was the answer; 'but 'im and me was in the War, and he once gave me a drink outside Jeroosalem.'

'Are you John Macnab?' Johnson demanded.

'I'm anything you please,' said Lamancha, 'if you'll only hurry and get this man to bed.'

'Damn your impudence! What business is

that of yours? You've been caught poaching, and we'll march you down to Haripol and get the truth out of you. If you won't tell me who you are, I'll find means to make you.—Macnicol, you and Macqueen get on each side of him, and you three fellows follow behind. If he tries to bolt, club him. . . . You can leave this man here; he'll take no harm, and we can send back for him later.'

'I'm sorry to interfere,' said Lamancha quietly, 'but Stokes is going down now. You needn't worry about me. I'll come with you, for I've got to see him comfortably settled.'

'You'll come with us!' Johnson shouted. 'Many thanks for your kindness. You'll damn well be made to come.—Macnicol, take hold of him.'

'Don't,' said Lamancha. 'Please don't. It will only mean trouble.'

Macnicol was acutely unhappy. He recognised something in Lamancha's tone which was perhaps unfamiliar to his master—that accent which means authority, and which, if disregarded, leads to mischief. He had served in Lovat's Scouts, and the voice of this tatterdemalion was unpleasantly like that of certain high-handed officers of his acquaintance; so he hesitated and shuffled his feet.

'Look at the thing reasonably,' Lamancha said. 'You say I'm a poacher called John Something-or-other. I admit that you have found me walking with a rifle on your ground, and naturally you want an explanation. But all that can wait till we get this man down to a doctor. I won't run away, for I want to satisfy myself that he's going to be all right. Won't that content you?'

Johnson, to his disgust, felt that he was being manoeuvred into a false position. He was by no means unkind, and this infernal Macnab was making him appear a brute. Public opinion was clearly against him; Macnicol was obviously unwilling to act, Macqueen he knew detested him, and the three navvies might be supposed to take the side of their colleague. Johnson set a high value on public opinion, and scrupled to outrage it; so he curbed his wrath and gave orders that Stokes should be taken up. Two men formed a cradle with their arms, and the cortège proceeded down the hillside.

Lamancha took care to give his captors no uneasiness. He walked beside Macqueen, with whom he exchanged a few comments on the weather, and he thought his own by no means pleasant thoughts. That confounded encounter with Stokes had wrecked everything, and yet he could not be altogether sorry that it had happened. He had a chance now of doing something for an honest fellow—Stokes's gallant lie to Johnson had convinced Lamancha of his superlative honesty. But it looked as if he were in for an ugly time with this young

bounder, and he was beginning to dislike Johnson extremely. There were one or two points in his favour. The stag seemed to have departed with Wattie into the *Ewigkeit*, and, happily, no eye at the Boallach had seen the signs of the gralloch. All that Johnson could do was to accuse him of poaching, *teste* the rifle; he could not prove the deed. Lamancha was rather vague about the law, but he was doubtful whether mere trespass was a grave offence. Then the Claybods would not want to make too much fuss about it, with the journalists booming the doings of John Macnab. . . . But wouldn't they? They were the kind of people that liked advertisement, and, after all, they had scored. What a tale for the cheap papers there would be in the capture of John Macnab! And if it got out who he was! . . . It was very clear that that at all costs must be prevented. . . . Had Johnson Claybody any decent feelings to which he could appeal? A sportsman? Well, he didn't seem to be of much account in that line, for he had wanted to leave the poor devil on the hill.

(Continued on page 483.)

A BOATING SONG.

THE little streams of England,
They wander where they will,
Thro' the lush Fenland pastures,
By poplar, wharf, and mill;
Or else thro' wooded valleys
They hide, so sweetly shy.
We love to go a-wooing them,
My little boat and I.

The little streams of England,
They are so old and wise;
They knew the men that made us;
They saw our cities rise.
Of ancient wrongs and splendours
They dream as they drift by;
And we go dreaming with them,
My little boat and I.

The little streams of England,
They are for ever young,
And they will still be singing
When all our songs are sung;
And they shall watch new glories
Blossom against the sky,
As we in fancy see them,
My little boat and I.

Give me an English river,
Give me my little boat,
And in the soft blue English air
An English songster's note.
Not for your far Rivas,
Your costly heav'ns, we'll sigh—
We know a nearer paradise,
My little boat and I.

GILBERT THOMAS.

A CUSTOM OF THE SERVICE.

By Commander CHARLES GLEIG, R.N.

I.

MORE than normally sleepy, the sub arrived on deck to relieve the lieutenant who had kept the middle-watch. He had been to a dance overnight, and although he had left the festive scene early, there had been little time for sleep when he was called at 3.50 A.M. The sub rather resented having to keep the morning watch every morning when the fleet was in port, but he had not confided his dissatisfaction about it to anybody. He was privately of opinion that the watch-keeping lieutenants enjoyed a much easier life of it in harbour than he did himself. For when you begin the day—every day—at four o'clock, it is surprising what an amount of duty can be got through before turning-in time.

As he mounted the bridge ladder, the sub noticed that the south-westerly wind had much freshened since he returned on board at 1 A.M. He noticed this because his old cap narrowly escaped being blown overboard. It was a nasty, wintry morning, and still pitch-dark. The fleet was lying at single anchor in the roads, but was not much sheltered by the breakwater, with the wind in the south-west. The *Brutus*, in which the sub had the honour of serving, was the last ship in one of the lines. In the pitchy darkness one could hardly distinguish the hulls of the other ships, but their anchor lights twinkled faintly to port and starboard of the *Brutus*. The sub had a momentary impression that these anchor lights looked farther off than usual, but he was too sleepy to concentrate on that or any other subject. Walteson, who had kept the middle-watch, was awaiting his relief under the lee of the chart-house. The sub liked Walteson better than any of the other watch-keepers, because he found him free of the offence of patronising youth and inexperience. More than once, too, Walteson had asked him to dine in the ward-room on guest nights, and the sub appreciated the courtesy.

'Ah, there you are at last, Reggie,' remarked the lieutenant.

'Am I behind time, sir?'

'Oh no, only five minutes, but it's surprising how long a minute seems when one's watch is over.'

The sub explained about the dance, and Walteson did not dwell upon the virtue of prompt reliefs. 'The wind has freshened,' he said, 'and the glass is still falling. You'll see in the night order-book that the captain is to be called should it seem at all necessary to drop a second anchor. Really, I think there's nothing else to tell you—so good-night.'

II.

Enviously the sleepy sub watched the lieutenant making for his bed. He was painfully sleepy, and half resolved to attend no more dances, unless the commander switched him on to some other duties. Dances were all right, but one required five or six hours of sleep in order to face a seventeen-hour day. He wondered whether a certain young lady in the port at all appreciated his attendance at those dances. It was pretty certain, he thought, that she did not, for what could she know of the arduous life of a naval sub-lieutenant?

The sub opened the sliding door of the chart-room and went in out of the stinging wind. Here was comparative warmth and a cheerful light. Along one side of the chart-room ran a well-padded settee. There the navigator sometimes slept when the fleet was at sea and close to land. The couch was also utilised by nearly all watch-keeping lieutenants when the fleet was at anchor. It was one of the customs of the service (although contrary to the King's Regulations) for night watch-keepers to enjoy illicit sleep upon the chart-house settee. Following this ancient custom, it was the sub's almost invariable habit to sleep in the chart-house until the hands were turned out at 5.30 A.M. A portion of the morning watch was thus passed quite agreeably, and without any serious risk. The sole danger was that the flagship might make a flashing signal while the signalman of the watch also slept. The quartermaster, however, could be relied upon to keep awake—this being another long-established custom of the service. It was easier for quartermasters to keep awake, because they only rarely attended dances, and went early to their hammocks.

The sub, before settling down to doze, went out onto the bridge to remind the quartermaster to call him when the hands were turned out—or if the flagship happened to signal. The quartermaster kept his harbour watch near the after-turret and the gangway, so that the sub had to call out to him from the bridge. Forward, the marine sentry was pacing his short beat, carrying an unloaded rifle at the slope. Custom of the service did not permit him to sit, much less to sleep. And always, when the ship's bell tolled the hour and half-hour, the faithful sentry cried out to the heedless night, 'All's well.'

Looking to windward, while waiting for the quartermaster to reach the bridge, the sub remembered his fleeting impression. Yes, there could be no doubt about it—the *Brutus*

had dragged her anchor and had drifted considerably out of her assigned position as the rear ship in one of the lines. How far she had dragged the sub could not determine, but she was very distinctly out of position—a couple of cables, at least, he thought. At daylight this would be noticed by the flagship. And it occurred to the sub that the ship might still be dragging her anchor, so getting more and more out of position.

'Quartermaster,' he said, 'how much has she dragged, do you think?'

The petty officer, after looking hard at the anchor lights of the fleet, thought it might be a matter of three cables. The sub went into the chart-house, found a sextant, and returned to the bridge rail. After a few minutes he decided that the ship was no longer dragging.

'I expect it was some time in the middle-watch, sir,' said the quartermaster.

The sub paced the bridge twice before replying. This gave him time to reflect that Walterson would be 'in the soup' unless it could be made to appear that the dragging had not occurred during the middle watch.

The quartermaster was a trustworthy man, so the sub took him into his confidence. 'All right, sir,' he said, with a wink, 'I've seen nothing up to now.'

III.

The sub no longer felt any desire to sleep in the chart-house. The ship might continue to drag her anchor, but, besides this possibility, he had to think out how to clear Walterson. For it was pretty clear that the lieutenant had slept during his middle-watch, and had failed to notice the dragging. Walterson was a good chap, and the sub was appreciative of those dinners in the ward-room. Other lieutenants of the ship had not condescended to recognise that his constant keeping of the morning watch, in port, relieved them of a solid slice of their duty.

During a full hour the sub paced the bridge, using from time to time his sextant to make sure that the dragging had ceased. Shortly after two bells (5 A.M.) he summoned the quartermaster again. 'Report to the captain,' he said, 'that the ship has been dragging her anchor during the past half-hour. Tell him that we have now left off dragging, and ask if I shall let go the other anchor, or wait till the commander comes on deck.'

'Very good, sir,' responded the petty officer with an appreciative chuckle.

Presently he returned to the bridge. 'The captain says, sir, that you ought to have reported the dragging at once. He says you are not to let go the second anchor until the commander comes on deck, and not to let it go then, unless the commander considers it necessary.'

'Anything else?'

'He says you're to report to him what the commander decides on it.'

At 5.30 A.M.—a ghastly hour for turning out on a wintry morning—the shrill piping of the boatswains' mates broke out on the sleeping decks. And between the piping the sub could faintly hear the familiar admonitions of the petty officers. 'Heave out—heave out—heave out. Show a leg and a pusser's stocking—heave out.'

A few minutes later the commander came on deck, and the sub descended from the bridge to report to him the captain's order.

'When did she begin to drag?' demanded the commander.

'Only since I came on watch, sir.'

The commander went up on the bridge, and decided that the second anchor should be dropped. This was accordingly done, and sufficient cable was veered out to ensure against further dragging. The captain, like a wise man, received the report in his bunk, and remained snugly between the sheets until his usual time for rising. The morning watch ran its course, and at 7.30 the sub was relieved by one of the lieutenants.

IV.

Some two hours later, Lieutenant Walterson and the sub were sent for to the captain's cabin, but the sub got there first. The deck log lay open upon the cabin table. 'I see,' said the captain, 'that the ship began to drag at 4.30 A.M., and continued to drag until you called me soon after 5 A.M.'

'Yes, sir, as nearly as I could judge.'

'I don't quite understand,' said the captain, 'why you delayed calling me.'

At this moment Walterson entered the cabin, and may have overheard the captain's remark.

'Because she had left off dragging, sir,' explained the sub.

'Another time,' said the captain, 'you should call me immediately.'

'Yes, sir. I thought——'

'Theirs not to reason why,' remarked the captain mildly. 'There's no harm done, but you should have had me called sooner.'

'Yes, sir.'

'Because,' continued the chief, deigning to give a reason, 'if we had been stationed in the middle of one of the lines a second anchor would have had to be dropped immediately.'

'I think I should have dropped it, sir, in such a case.'

'Without waiting to have me called?' asked the captain.

'Yes, sir—I think so.'

'You would have done quite right,' said the captain approvingly.

He indicated by a nod and a gesture that the sub might leave the cabin. Left alone with the lieutenant, the captain remarked that the

sub was a smart lad, not devoid of reasoning powers.

'Quite our best sub, sir,' said Walterson.

'There are certain old customs of the service,' observed the chief—'I need not specify them precisely—which have been handed down by captains and lieutenants for, perhaps, centuries. Some of them conflict with the King's Regulations, but we do not look too closely into these old customs, Mr Walterson, unless they happen to lead to undesirable results.' He broke off abruptly to ask: 'You didn't notice any dragging during your middle-watch?'

'No, sir, I did not,' replied Walterson truthfully.

'Quite so,' agreed the captain; 'and so, I suppose, you didn't warn your relief that she might drag if the wind increased?'

'I referred him to your night order-book, sir.'

'I think that is all I wanted to ask you,'

remarked the chief; 'but it's lucky we are the rear ship in the line.'

Walterson saluted and made toward the door. He had understood the captain's allusion to old customs conflicting with the regulations. But as he opened the door the captain spoke again. 'Isn't this your guest night in the ward-room?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Ah, then I shall be dining in the mess, I remember.'

'So I heard, sir.'

'I wonder if you'd care to invite the sub?' said the chief.

'That's just what I was thinking of doing, sir.'

'And a very appropriate thought, too,' said the captain cryptically.

'He means,' reflected Walterson, as he walked away, 'that I owe the sub a good dinner.'

STARS AND THEIR WIRELESS MESSAGES.

IV.—HYPOTHESES.

By Professor GEORGE FORBES.

I.

MANY hypotheses have been propounded to account for the different types of spectra. All of these are regarded by the true astronomer as being merely tentative. When so regarded, they are useful for indicating directions of research that will tend to support or refute one or other of these hypotheses. So in time we may hope to reach truth. The particular hypothesis most generally preferred by astronomers fluctuates from decade to decade. Here it will be well to concentrate upon a single one of these hypotheses, which may be only partially true, but which seems to the present writer to be the most obvious one, and not based upon any improbable assumption. It is the only one that is not in conflict with one of the main facts of observation, the localisation of spectral types in space.

The obvious interpretation of the different types of spectrum is that about one-half of the stars, like Sirius, are chiefly composed of hydrogen; that some of these, like Rigel, are unique in containing much helium in addition; that nearly all the remaining half of the stars, like Capella and our sun, are composed of the same materials as the earth is made of; that the red stars, like Betelgeuse, are largely composed of titanium oxide; and the crimson stars of Type IV. are largely composed of carbon compounds.

If we accept these obvious conclusions about the materials that stars are made of, Secchi's hint that stars with the different contents are to be found in different constellations opens out

a totally new aspect of the universe. The suggestion is that stars have been made out of the materials prevalent in each region of space by a condensation of these materials under gravitation. And our task is reduced to finding what regions of space contain the various materials found in the spectra of different stars.

We already know that our stellar universe seems to be a limited region resembling, in shape, one of the spiral nebulae. For it consists essentially of two parts: (1) the wide flat ring filled with the clouds of stars that constitute the Milky Way; and (2) the great bun-shaped space inside the ring with the solar system not very far away from its centre.

The researches carried out since the time of Secchi prove that the first of these parts is the home of the hydrogen stars: and the second is the home of the stars of the solar type. This stands as a general truth, in spite of the fact that in the course of ages many stars may, by their proper motions, have passed from the region of their birth to the other region, and make exception to the general rule. Moreover, it is quite obvious that at the boundary between the two regions stars would have built themselves up out of the constituents of both regions, and it is a remarkable fact, giving strong support to this hypothesis, that we find composite stars whose spectra contain every proportion of the two types. We have a continuous series of star-spectra passing by slow gradation from the Sirius type to the Capella type of spectrum. Yet again, Kapteyn found that the general average distance from us of the hydrogen stars

is two and a half times that of the solar type, just as we should expect if the former were in the Milky Way and the latter in the bun-shaped space.

II.

This localisation of stellar spectra in space is by far the most wonderful and the most illuminating positive fact, in relation to the structure of the universe, that has as yet been revealed to us by spectroscopic research.

Some of the other spectral types are still more precisely localised, most especially those of a fifth type which Pickering added to the four types of Secchi. A few words should be said about the intense localisation of the helium stars. These are nearly all found in the constellations Orion and Carina, and the short arc of 40° that connects them, along the border of the Milky Way. The distance from us of the stars on this short bit of the Milky Way is suspected to be even greater than that of the hydrogen stars in the Milky Way itself. They seem to lie in a limited region, or cloud, of concentrated helium, at the outer boundary of the Milky Way. This reminds us of the concentrated secondary nucleus of light in the whirlpool nebula at the outer end of one of its spiral arms.

Here again, as with Types I. and II., we find every stage of intermediate spectrum between the helium and hydrogen types. But there is no part of space where the helium and bun-shaped spaces can commingle. So there are no intermediate spectra between helium and Type II.

Types III. and IV., on the other hand, would be, on this hypothesis, in spaces adjacent to, or enclosed by, the bun-shaped region. For intermediate spectra between each of them and Capella are found in a continuous series; and none between their spectra and those of the hydrogen, Milky Way type.

The localisations of Types III. and IV. have been shown clearly by Pickering, Plummer, Espin, and others. All their results seem to be explained if there be two non-intersecting rings of space within the bun-shaped region, one containing titanium oxide, the other carbon

compounds, one in the plane of the Milky Way, the other slightly inclined to it.

III.

It is very satisfying to note that we have found a scheme of construction of the stellar universe that fits the main facts revealed by the spectroscope, and is in agreement with what we already knew about the shape of our universe. It is particularly pleasing to see how the variegated spectra all fit into one continuous succession from helium to calcium, and thence into two branches, titanium and carbon.

But there are many facts that are not so easily explained. One is that the temperatures of stars are found to vary with spectral type. Broadly, we have to account, on this hypothesis, for the outer regions of the Milky Way being hottest, and the central regions of the universe much cooler. There is also much difficulty in understanding why the size of stars should vary with spectral type, or with the regions we have assigned to them, as seems to be the case. Such difficulties must inevitably arise from our still imperfect knowledge of natural philosophy. For we are now only in the twentieth century.

The theory which has now been examined must not be taken as being necessarily true. It is certainly the obvious reading of the facts, but is repudiated by the vast majority of astronomers of to-day, who at present have a fancy for looking upon all stars as being made of the same materials as our earth. They ascribe the different spectra to different temperatures; and they consider that every star, during its life of visibility, shows in succession the whole series of spectra from low temperature to a maximum, and back again to coldness. It is a very ingenious and attractive hypothesis.

All such hypotheses must, in the present state of knowledge, be speculative. The locality-hypothesis and the age-hypothesis are both intensely interesting; but we are still very far from knowing why the stars are shining in the way they do. The fact remains that the stars are making great efforts, by wireless telegraphy, to give us the information we are trying to lay hold of, and every year adds to the knowledge that will some day tell us the whole truth.

BRIGSHAW'S MONKEY.

PART II.

VI.

AND so life went on, a dull life for Jenny indeed, which she sometimes resented, as you could see if you watched her closely, sitting up aloft with that unfathomable expression in her intelligent dark eyes, which seemed to be looking into the past, picturing old times, old

sights, old friends among the leafy peepul trees of the Central Provinces. But one evening, after the keeper had been along and given her some fodder, there came to her cage a youth whom Jenny had often seen watching her before, and whom she had come instinctively to dislike. It was as if the sight of him roused her to the uttermost depths of rage, brought

to the surface all the savage ferocity that had recently been sleeping within her. He was peering in at Jenny now with an ugly gleam in his eyes, when suddenly a long, thin arm shot out between the bars and snatched off the glasses he was wearing—his beautiful pince-nez—scratching his pale face at the same time, and disarranging his sleek, elegant hair. With a curse the young man lifted his stick, pushed it through the bars, and delivered a vicious stab at the softest portion of Jenny's anatomy. His glasses were broken; he could never have those back; but he was determined to have revenge of some sort, and the stick was the handiest method. With a little scream of rage Jenny seemed to lose every bit of docility she had acquired during the past months, and angrily she walked up and down, puffing out indignant little snorts, raising and dropping her bushy eyebrows, displaying her teeth, and glaring defiantly at the young fool outside. After a while she climbed up to her perch and continued to glare down at him, scratching her ribs, puffing, and working those expressive eyebrows—always a certain sign that she was angry. The sight encouraged the sickly youth outside to further efforts, and pushing his stick through again—not without first looking furtively round to see if there was a keeper within sight—he continued to agitate the monkey, till finally he caught her a severe blow across the back. Then he laughed; he was the sort who would. Jenny sprang towards him, mad with rage, and ran all round the cage, uttering cries which very soon brought the keeper along at the run. When he got there, however, he was somewhat puzzled. It was closing time, and though he looked up and down the path outside, there was no one to be seen, for, of course, the youth had vanished.

Opening the door of the cage, and calling to her gently, the keeper made to go inside, intent on finding out what the matter was. But even as he approached the monkey Jenny fairly leapt past him, shot out of the door, and next instant was lost in the gloom. Dashing out after her, the keeper made a thorough search of the trees and bushes in the immediate vicinity, but, closely as he looked, not a sign of Jenny could he see. For some time he called her by name, but the monkey would not show up, so finally he had perforce to relinquish the search, hoping that Jenny would return during the night. It was a serious matter for him, and he strode over to the head-keeper's lodge to make his report, heavy of heart, filled with the gravest misgivings.

VII.

Once out of the cage Jenny ran like mad—literally like mad. She was once again the wild young savage she had been when the engine-driver of the Bombay Mail had thrown

his coat over her and pinned her down to the coal on the tender months ago. Away down the pathway she flew, fairly leaping in her anxiety to get free from the horrible tortures of her tormentor, until suddenly the tall hedge which surrounded the zoo loomed up before her. Into the thick of it, without a moment's hesitation, she plunged, a flying vision of legs and whirling tail, and so out into the roadway on the other side.

There, the place being deserted, she sat down abruptly for a moment, as if uncertain which way to turn, till all at once Fate took a hand and sent down the road a lumbering carter's van with the back door open. No sooner did Jenny see that van than she was in it. Dashing after it, she leapt, with one colossal bound, through the open door and vanished.

Inside was a miscellaneous collection of furniture and odds and ends, among which Jenny settled herself down in comparative calm. Her temper, until now thoroughly ruffled, suddenly subsided, and she was once more calm and peaceful. Settling alongside a massive chest of drawers, she closed her eyes and—went to sleep. And the carter's van lumbered on and on.

At length the vehicle pulled up and came to a standstill. The men in front, arrived at their destination outside a long line of murky stone buildings fronting a wharf, slowly descended, and walked round to the back of the van. It was full dusk now, and the veil of night lay over everything; but the wharf was well lighted by a number of lamp-standards placed at regular intervals along the quayside, and beyond them lay an assembly of mixed shipping in the oily waters of the river.

'Well,' said the driver to his assistant as they got down, 'that's that, Bill. We'll get the stuff inside, and then hop over to the 'Sailor's Arms' for a pint. Gosh, reckon I could do with it right enough; it's mortal cold.'

It was just at that moment that Jenny awoke from her doze, and, hearing men's voices approaching, quickly leapt to her feet and glanced out of the door. Next moment she went through it like an arrow and made off down the wharf-side, full speed ahead. She was not minded to endure the proximity of man for a while, and sought only to get away from the hated voices. As she went the carter just happened to catch a glimpse of the dusky form dashing from the van. 'Gosh!' he exclaimed in a frenzy. 'What's that? Did you see it, Bill? Came from inside the van, I reckon, and looked more like a bloomin' monk. than anything I ever see. Why, look, there 'e goes 'longside the wharf-edge. Bide 'ere a mo' while I catches 'im.'

Whereat the rotund and ungainly figure of the man puffed its way across the road and down the wharf. But the carter had about as much chance of catching the nimble Jenny as a

snail has of hopping over the moon. And long before he had traversed twenty yards the agile monkey was well out of sight.

Hearing the man's footsteps behind her, Jenny paused a moment to consider her next move. Just on her right a mooring rope fixed to a bollard fell away over the water to a cargo-boat which lay against the quay, and the sight at once suggested a suitable means of escape. She jumped to it, launched herself on to the thick rope, and ran along it with all the aplomb of an accustomed tight-rope walker. Next moment she had gained the ship, and sat upon the bulwarks, gazing intently into the night. Over on the quay one or two loafers were lounging about, pipe in mouth, hands deep in pockets, but beyond them Jenny could see no one. She turned her attention to her immediate surroundings.

It was an ancient and rather weather-beaten cargo-boat, but for the moment there seemed to be nobody about, so Jenny crossed gingerly over to the edge of the hold and sat awhile peering down into the black depths. Down there was a medley of huge packing-cases, and from a ship's-crane above a long stout rope dangled invitingly into the darkness. Jenny sprang towards it, secured a firm grip upon it, and lowered herself into the hold, where she presently arrived among the cases. There, finding at length a snug corner up in the bows, she settled herself down for the night. It was close and stuffy where she was, but it was warm, and under its soothing influence she lay down and slept.

VIII.

Early next morning the *Golden Foam* slipped her moorings and sailed, outward bound for Karachi and other Indian ports, with a miscellaneous cargo of cotton and engineering goods. When Jenny awoke from her slumber it was to hear those voices which she had come to hate, and for a while she lay hid among the bales. It was only sheer hunger that at last forced her out. She came up on deck then, famished and thirsty almost beyond bearing. But the captain, a humane man and an animal lover to the very heart of him, ordered a man to look after Miss Jenny and her needs, and strictly forbade any undue teasing of the monkey. Perhaps he guessed something of Jenny's past history—I don't know. At all events he gave orders that the monkey was to be taken care of and fed until India should be reached, when they would be able to set her free.

So Jenny was given some soup—a commodity which she had never taken before, but which she now took to kindly enough. And after that she was allowed to roam freely about, and soon became on good terms with the men, whom she easily surpassed in the agility with which she ascended the rigging. She was, indeed, often pursued by members of the crew from one part of the rigging to another, when,

finding herself unable to escape from them by direct speed, she would swing herself out of their reach by grasping a loose end of rope, and thus bring the chase to an end.

Sometimes, too, she would ascend the rigging and wait there, at the mast-head, making faces till the men were almost within touching distance. Then she would suddenly lower herself to the deck by the nearest rope, or pass from one mast to the other by means of the mainstay.

At night, although her protector did his best to show Jenny the sleeping-place that was intended for her, she would as often as not run up to the mast-head and stay there till dawn, when she would allow herself to be coaxed down again by means of a peace-offering of coffee or tea. Once she was offered and accepted some wine, and shortly after that evidenced her affection for strong drink by stealing the captain's whisky-flask when he was out of the way, and 'scoffing' the contents, with dire results.

Came a day at length when land hove in sight, and an air of general excitement and unrest came over the vessel. It was Fort Manora, the entrance to the harbour at Karachi. Towards noon the *Golden Foam* sailed into the harbour and berthed without delay. It was one of those blazing hot days that occasionally visit that north Indian port. The very air seemed saturated with clammy heat, and so the process of unloading was left over until the cool of the evening.

On the floor in the captain's cabin, however, Jenny sat, a metal ring around her neck, and attached to the ring a chain. At the table sat the captain himself, talking earnestly to a friend, who had that afternoon come aboard the ship. 'And I want you,' the skipper was saying, 'to take her with you when you go down to Bombay to-morrow and turn her loose at one of those wayside stations around which the Langurs congregate. She'll be happier there than here, I'll warrant. Jones—that's the mate y' know—says the men want her to stop on this here ship as a mascot, but I'll not have it. Take her back where she belongs, there's a good chap. She must have come from somewhere down that way originally, for you don't get that sort of monkey anywhere else in the world.'

So Jenny was taken by train next day, and turned loose among her own kind. True, they were not the troop of Langurs to which she had once belonged, but they were Langurs, and welcomed Jenny, figuratively speaking, with open arms. And when, sitting beside the railway track, she gazed steadfastly at the vanishing train, her little beady eyes sparkled with intelligence, as if she understood, and her bushy penthouse brows went up to the limits of their expansion. Then, with an excited, joyous 'errr-errr,' she turned and ran off into the trees. Jenny had got back to her own.

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

NEW UPHOLSTERY SPRINGS.

IT seems not unlikely that spiral springs for upholstered seats have had their day, and will be superseded by the type described below. The new springs consist in essence of closely-spaced single wires of special manufacture passing from front to back of the seat, and following the contour of the surface, so that, except for a sheet of felt, very little stuffing is required. A strong wood frame forms the foundation of the seat. This carries stout steel bars along the front and the back, and along each side. The ends of the transverse wire springs are given several turns round the front and back bars, leaving short projecting ends which catch on the frame, and therefore cannot unwind. The result is a strong tendency on the part of the spring wires to push the seat upwards. To keep the springs equally spaced they are threaded through longitudinal wire coils, there being three chains of these in a seat of the ordinary size. These chains are attached at the ends to coil springs on the side bars, which keep them strongly extended. The complete arrangement forms a resilient wire cage closely following the contour of the finished seat. Many of these spring seats have been fitted into omnibuses and other vehicles with satisfactory results.

AN UNDER-THE-BED WARDROBE.

Under every bed there is a considerable space that is generally wasted. If a trunk is kept in this position it is hard work to pull it out and push it back again; moreover, these operations damage the carpet. These disadvantages have been obviated by what is in effect a horizontal wardrobe supported on rubber-tired wheels. The device takes the form of a box measuring 48 inches in length, with a width of 24 inches and a depth of 11 inches, so that two readily fit under a full-sized bed. Strongly made and lined with cretonne, the box is fitted with two wheels at each end, and has two handles for lifting purposes, and another for pulling it out from under the bed. A lid extends over two-thirds of the width from the front, and is hinged at its back edge, while strips of wood along the front and sides close down over the joint and prevent the entry of dust. These under-the-bed wardrobes are made with mahogany finish, of light or dark oak, or of polished solid mahogany.

A GIGANTIC AMERICAN LOCOMOTIVE.

If the huge locomotive described in this paragraph is not the largest in the world, it at least has special features which are without parallel in previous examples that have been

referred to in these pages. Built for the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway by the American Locomotive Company, this remarkable engine has a weight of over 252 tons, which is increased to 346 tons if the tender is included. The boiler may be safely taken as the longest yet made, being less than an inch short of 57 feet, while the maximum diameter of the barrel is 8 feet 8 inches. The fire grate is enormous, with its area of almost 113 square feet, which means 14 feet long by 8 feet wide. It burns over 5½ tons of coal an hour. Even two firemen would be hard worked to shovel so large a quantity into the furnace; this, however, is done by mechanical stokers. Funnels become shorter as locomotives increase in size. In this case there are two, one in front of the other, and they project only 11½ inches above the smoke-box. There are 20 wheels:—two sets of eight, coupled together in fours at each side, and a pair at each end of the engine. The coupled wheels have a diameter of 57 inches. Two separate engines drive the two sets of coupled wheels. Each has two cylinders, with a bore of 23 inches and a stroke of 32 inches. The two engines together develop 3902 horsepower, with a steam pressure of 205 pounds per square inch. This power means that the locomotive can pull with a force of over 46 tons. To ensure a supply of fresh air to the engine-men in tunnels two blowers are provided, which draw air from the space between the engine and the tender and discharge it into the cab. But gas masks are also provided, and these are supplied with fresh air from a reservoir.

TUBULAR EARTHS FOR LISTENING-IN SETS.

Everyone possessing a listening-in set knows how important is a good 'earth.' A water main is often used, but this form of earth means soldering a copper wire to an iron pipe, a job that is beyond the skill of most amateurs, while there may not be a water-pipe in a convenient position. Buried copper or galvanised steel plates are satisfactory, but these involve digging as well as soldering. In this connection much may be said in favour of a pointed steel tube, filled with powdered carbon, which is supplied complete with 15 feet of bare copper wire. This is specially made for the earthing of wireless sets, and can be driven into the ground in any convenient position, a metallic joint with the earth-wire being made without soldering. Measuring 2 ft. 6 ins. in length, the earthing tube is fitted at the top with a malleable iron cap which is soldered on, thus making a good electrical connection. Before the tube is driven into the ground, the wire is bent to one side into a slot provided for this

purpose, so that it will not be damaged. The tube is driven down until holes in the cap are level with or below the surface of the ground, their function being to admit water, which improves any earth connection. The powdered carbon in the tube forms a solid mass with the wire. Being a good conductor of electricity, the carbon, especially when damp, maintains a good earth even after the steel tube has been eaten away by corrosion.

A FLY-PROOF MILK JUG.

Objections to keeping milk in open jugs scarcely need enumeration. Flies are found struggling on the surface, and cats and dogs can help themselves to the milk. On the other hand, air must be allowed access if the milk is to keep fresh for the maximum period. A jug with a special lid, which is now obtainable, does away with the objections specified, while giving the necessary ventilation. Made of polished aluminium, the lid has a short cylindrical part which goes into the mouth of the jug until further progress is arrested by a projecting ridge that rests upon the rim of the jug. This ridge also serves as a hold for the fingers when removing or replacing the lid. The jug is made of white semi-porcelain with the usual spout at one side and a handle at the other. Just above the handle, but inside the jug, is a slight excrescence which engages with an L-slot in the side of the lid to form a bayonet joint. Horizontal slots in the side of the lid next to the spout prevent the entry of flies, while giving free access for air, and allowing of the milk being poured out even when the lid is on. These jugs are made in four sizes, having capacities of $\frac{1}{2}$, 1, $1\frac{1}{2}$, and 2 pints respectively.

A HAND TRANSMITTER FOR WIRELESS TELEPHONY.

In our issue for May there was described a wireless transmitter for lifeboats which sends out distress signals in the Morse code when a handle is turned. Invaluable as this instrument is likely to prove for the Morse code, it is useless for transmitting the human voice. A wireless telephone transmitter on similar lines has been brought out recently. It might be thought that a generator could not supply a truly continuous current, and that the resulting 'ripple' would be disastrous to speech transmission. The design of the generator under review successfully overcomes this difficulty, and the 'ripple' is so small that the effect is quite negligible. Like the lifeboat set, it can be operated by turning a handle, but as electric power is available for transmission work more often than not it is also made in a form suitable for being driven by an electric motor. Currents up to 30 milliamperes (i.e. approximately to $\frac{1}{33}$ of an ampere) at 1000 volts are generated

by this machine, involving a speed for the armature of 2800 revolutions per minute for the maximum output. At lower speeds lower pressures are produced, and the current may be increased to 40 milliamperes. Similar multiplying gear to that used in the lifeboat transmitter is provided between the armature and the handle, the latter being turned at 140 revolutions per minute for the maximum speed. When the appliance is driven by an electric motor no gear is required, the two spindles being coupled together, or the drive is effected by a belt. Only one-eighth of a horse-power is needed, for which the cost of current is very small. This little machine is intended for supplying the plate current in valve transmitters, the positive terminal being connected to the plate of the valve. At a low speed it can also be used for supplying the high-tension current of amplifier valves in connection with listening-in sets. The hand machine is particularly suited to the requirements of radio societies for field work, the weight being only $10\frac{1}{4}$ lb. With a set mounted on a car unit speech has been transmitted satisfactorily when the car was moving at high speeds. The machine has also been applied to motor-boats, aeroplanes, and yachts. Remarkable results have been achieved by British amateurs using this generator for transmitting both speech and Morse signals. In the spring of 1924 a well-known London amateur was successful in transmitting telegraphic messages to Philadelphia. Among numerous recent speech-transmissions probably the most remarkable is the achievement of the secretary of the Bradford Radio Society, who has on several occasions transmitted speech in daylight to the east of Switzerland, a distance of 800 miles.

HEAT FOR ALL THE HOUSE FROM THE KITCHEN RANGE.

The present high price of coal has given rise to several developments in the direction of utilising the maximum amount of heat from its consumption. In this connection it is increasingly becoming the practice in medium-sized houses to instal in all the rooms radiators for which hot water is supplied by a boiler incorporated with the kitchen range. A recently-devised system of this character contains several advantageous features. Of these the form of boiler is the most unusual. Rectangular in all directions, it measures 3 feet wide by 2 feet high by 1 foot from front to back. A vertical recess 14 inches wide and 9 inches deep passes from top to bottom and forms the fireplace. A special feature consists of two oval vertical tubes in each side of the boiler. A hot-plate and an oven are arranged above the fire recess, the flames impinging against the former, and part of the oven bottom being also exposed to the hot gases before they descend by way of the

tubes. The whole contrivance is set in brick-work, in which the necessary flues, dampers, and soot-doors are arranged. A damper can be opened on one side to pass some of the hot gases directly round the oven instead of first through the tubes. The usual plate-rack is arranged in the recess above the hot-plate. Being in a closed circuit, the water passing through the boiler and round the radiators is used over and over again. It does not, therefore, deposit scale, and the boiler and pipes never become 'furred.' Should hot water be required for baths or any other purpose, it is obtained from a device known as a 'calorifier.' This consists of a hot-water tank in which is a radiator, the latter having hot water from the boiler circulated through it by a separate closed circuit. The fire-grate can be placed in three positions according to the depth of fire required. In winter the lowest position gives the fire-box a depth of 21 inches. Spring and autumn are provided for by a depth of 15 inches, while in summer, when no radiators are needed, the grate is raised within $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches of the top of the boiler. Should the boiler and oven be fixed in the wall between the kitchen and the living room, the fire can be made to pass through, showing in the living room as an open fire with bars in front, although the stoking is done in the kitchen. In the summer the fire is above the sitting-room firebars, and, therefore, gives no objectionable heat. The fuel used is anthracite cobbles, either alone or mixed with coke; a mixture of coke and slack coal in the proportion of about 6 to 1 has also been found efficient. With a system comprising cooking, a domestic hot-water supply, and five radiators, the consumption is about 5 tons in twelve months.

'SUN VALVES' FOR LIGHTED BUOYS.

A great many of the buoys that mark the dangers to navigators around our own and other coasts are lighted by acetylene gas, which is stored in cylinders contained in their steel bodies. Apart from comparatively costly and complicated clockwork devices, no satisfactory means exist for turning off the gas at sunrise and turning it on at sunset; hence many of these buoys exhibit their lights by day as well as by night, thereby wasting gas and involving re-charging twice as often as would be the case if they were alight only during the hours of darkness. Many attempts have been made to invent a device, apart from clockwork, that will put out the light during the hours of daylight; but, until comparatively lately, none of these 'sun valves,' as they are called, has proved entirely successful. One made by the noted French makers of lighthouse apparatus, Messrs Barbier, Bénard, & Turenne, however, has amply demonstrated its ability to do what is required. It will be common knowledge among readers of

these pages that a bar composed of two strips of different metals lying side by side, of which the one expands more than the other when both are heated to the same degree, will assume a curved form when its temperature is raised. If such a bar be bent into a ring, with a gap between the ends, a rise in temperature will cause the two ends to come closer together, assuming that the metal with the greater expansion is on the outside. It follows that if one end is rigidly held, the other will move closer or further away according to the temperature. It is easy to understand that if the sun were always unclouded the heat-rays from it, playing upon such a ring, would move the end enough to close the tiny valve which admits gas to the light; but it will be news to many that the slight increase in temperature caused by mere daylight in cloudy weather is enough to do this. It will be obvious to every reader that the working of a device that is affected by so slight a difference of temperature would be completely upset by the changing seasons, and even by shifts of wind from a warm to a cold quarter, or vice versa. This difficulty has been entirely overcome by using two rings, one of which is exposed to daylight, and blackened so as the more readily to absorb heat; while the other, although open to the air (or rather the gas, as we shall see later), is screened from the light, and absorption of heat is reduced to a minimum by polishing the surface. Otherwise these rings are alike, and the one is fixed above the other. Both the free ends move in unison with general changes of temperature, and at night both are level. But when daylight strikes the upper ring it expands, and its free end moves in, whereas that of the lower ring, which is screened, remains stationary. By hinging the gas-valve lever on the free end of the lower ring, that of the upper ring can be made to move the valve with any difference of expansion between the two, although when they expand together no movement takes place. Normally, the valve is open and admits gas to the lamp when the two free ends of the rings are level. The movement of the upper one when affected by daylight shuts off the gas. It will be understood that the amount of movement of the upper ring is almost infinitesimal, but the multiplication of a comparatively long lever gives enough range to operate the valve. The device is protected by a gas-tight glass cover, to which gas is admitted from the reservoir in the buoy. An interesting feature is the conical form of this cover, which makes it impossible for birds to perch thereon. A cover that afforded 'claw'-hold would soon be obscured by droppings.

THE POSSIBLE PASSING OF THE 'CATWHISKER.'

Everyone with a crystal listening-in set will agree that a great advance would be made by an equally sensitive detector which did not

require the searching with the catwhisker for a sensitive spot. This has now been provided. The new instrument consists of a selected piece of the rare mineral bornite, against which an artificial mineral of the zinc-oxide order is pressed by a spring. No catwhisker is needed, and no adjustment except in the first instance. The bornite is embedded in Wood's metal in a wooden cap. The other crystal is mounted on a spring plunger which maintains a good pressure. The device is housed in an ebonite tube, with a brass terminal at each end. The spindle of the spring plunger passes through one of these terminals, and is fitted with an ebonite knob. Experience and tests have established the fact that these detectors are at least as sensitive as the best crystals and catwhiskers, while they require no searching and are unaffected by vibration.

A SUBSTITUTE FOR STAIR-RODS.

Everyone who has slipped on a loose stair-rod will admit that this ancient device leaves something to be desired. A substitute now coming into vogue takes the form of a metal arm at each side of the carpet, which turns on a single screw. When the arms are in a vertical position, the carpet is free. To hold it firmly in place they are folded down over the carpet until they lie along the angle generally occupied by the stair-rod of which they take the place. A knob, or 'boss,' at the outer end of each arm presses the carpet into the corner. So long as the screws are properly put in there is no possibility of these arms allowing the carpet to become loose, yet it can be freed in a few seconds when the carpet is to be taken up. They are made in various lengths to suit different widths of carpets and the rise of step. They do not require cleaning, and they can be obtained with an oxidised copper, brass, nickel, or oxidised silver finish.

COOLING BY EVAPORATION.

Many readers of these notes will have seen the porous earthenware jars that keep water cool by evaporation. This principle has recently been applied to cold-storage boxes for the home. These consist of a zinc box with a zinc framework outside having porous tile panels, the lid being of similar construction. If possible, the box is immersed in water for two minutes once a day, and so hygroscopic are the tiles that each takes up something like a pound of water. During the following twenty-four hours the water slowly evaporates, with the result that the inside of the box is kept remarkably cool even in the hottest weather. These boxes can be taken apart, which allows of packing the sides, bottom, and lid so that they lie flat. The framework is also readily detachable, and thus a new tile can be easily substituted for a broken one. Several sizes of this variety of

cold-storage box are made, some of the upright type for food-containing jugs and basins, others of a flatter shape for dishes.

'BEHOLD THE HEBRIDES!'

There are many Roads to the Isles, and each has its own appeal. Boswell, a century and a half ago, took Johnson there by one and brought him back by another, and his *tour de force* in transporting that unwieldy Scotophobe into the western wilds, so far from his books and his beloved London, was almost as great an achievement as the Life itself. Bozzy and the Doctor reached the Hebrides via Inverness (where Johnson purchased a copy of *Cocker's Arithmetic* to wile away the hours!) and Fort Augustus, and returned by Oban and Loch Lomond. Another line of approach was favoured in a book which we had occasion to mention in these columns last year, *The Road to Rannoch and the Summer Isles*, by T. Ratcliffe Barnett, who has recently collected an equally delightful set of essays on *Border By-ways and Lothian Lore* (Grant & Son). Mr Alasdair Alpin MacGregor, whose article 'At the Uist Fords' appears elsewhere in this issue of the *Journal*, comes from the Isles himself—and you may be sure he knows every way back to his native heath. Your Celt sees and feels and knows things of which the Sassenach is unaware; hence the exceptional value of a book on the Western Isles from a Highland pen. In *Behold the Hebrides!* (W. & B. Chambers, Ltd.; 7s. 6d. net) Mr MacGregor has brought together (with excellent illustrations) over a score of vivid sketches dealing with those fascinating fragments of Scottish territory in every aspect—their history and traditions, their folklore and superstitions, their industries and customs, their scenic charm and mystic glamour. And those who would behold the Hebrides, whether in wistful dreams or in joyous reality, could wish for no better guide than this fervid and persuasive Gael.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, Chambers's Journal, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

(1) THE STEEL HAND.

By ASHLEY L. BARNES-LAWRENCE, Author of *Jacob Bateman's Ladder*.

CHAPTER I.

I.

THERE are few persons who do not know what is meant by an iron hand, and of late years the 'mailed fist' has become almost as proverbial as the 'butter fingers' of boys at school. But nobody believes that those fingers are really made of butter; or that a strong hand, though sometimes called an iron hand, is actually made of that metal.

The inference to be drawn from these premises is that the steel hand with which this story is concerned was not really made of steel. But whoever jumps to such a conclusion will find by a perusal of these pages that he is wrong; for this particular hand *was* made of steel.

It was made by a hardware firm in Birmingham to the order of a well-known London surgeon, and as a mechanical contrivance was very skilfully designed not only to be like a human hand in appearance, but to serve some of the uses in which the hand is ordinarily employed.

Hubert Carrington, for whom this mechanical contrivance was intended, had lost his right hand in somewhat curious circumstances.

An all-round athlete, and a first-rate cricketer, as well as a capital good fellow, he so greatly distinguished himself in the Eton and Harrow match of the year in which he left Harrow, that he is referred to in his old school with respectful admiration even to this day.

But it was during the progress of this great cricket-match that he met with the accident which eventually entailed the amputation of his right hand.

He was fielding at point, pretty near in, when the batsman, taking advantage of a ball coming rather wide on the off-side, cut at it with tremendous force. Ordinarily speaking, a fielder standing where young Carrington did would have left the ball alone, and considered himself lucky in not being hit, and perhaps killed; but Carrington, as the ball whistled past his head, put up his right hand, and although he failed to hold the ball, his attempt caused the ball to

spin upwards high above his head, and he then caught it with both hands before it touched the ground.

It was a magnificent bit of fielding, requiring considerable courage and address, but it cost him his right hand. The top of the third finger of that hand had the skin torn off it in the form of a cap. This was immediately replaced and the finger was bound up; and perhaps all would have been well with him, but Carrington, with the pluck inherent in a well-bred Englishman, continued the game, and actually played to the finish—materially helping to win the match for Harrow.

Better a thousand times if he had retired from the game when he was first hurt! The wound refused to heal; blood-poisoning set in; and eventually the doctors said that, if he did not consent to the loss of his hand, he would lose his life.

He said he would as soon lose his life as lose his trusty right hand. But his mother with tears persuaded him that his right hand could no longer be regarded as good and strong. The opinion of the famous surgeon who had been called in was that it never could be good and strong again, and that the necessity for the operation was urgent.

And so he consented; but the career of a soldier to which he had looked forward from his childhood was henceforth closed to him. The operation was successful, but the recovery of bodily health and strength was slow, and it was many months before his natural cheerfulness of disposition came back to him. His friends, indeed, lamented that never again was he the merry fellow he had been before his accident.

II.

That, then, is how the steel hand came to be thought of. It was his own idea; but it was Mr Mackenzie, the eminent surgeon, who contrived, by his knowledge of anatomy and of mechanics, to give practical effect to the idea.

The result was that, after many experiments and several failures, the Birmingham cutlers

succeeded in manufacturing an artificial hand exactly the shape of the human hand, and adapted, as far as they could adapt it, to the purpose in view.

It is not necessary at this point to describe more minutely the cleverness of the mechanism by means of which Carrington, in process of time, was able to take up any object he wished to handle, and to retain it, if he so pleased, in what was literally a grip of steel.

A time came, however, when it fell to my lot to be compelled to make a most careful examination of this very contrivance, in view of one of the most tragic events that I was ever called upon to investigate.

The Carringtons lived at Olderton Manor, a comfortable and picturesque old country-house situate on the borders of the parish of Wingate; and it happened that I was appointed to the Rectory of Wingate, and came into residence there, just at the very time when Hubert had to undergo his operation. Needless to say, I lost no time in making kindly inquiry after him, and I continued to call day after day.

The Carrington family consisted of the widowed mother and her three children, Hubert, Cecilia, and Alice. Of these Hubert was the eldest.

'I wonder if Hubert would care to see me?' I asked at my third visit. 'Tell him I took my degree at Oxford, and have known a good many Harrovians there in my time.'

Mrs Carrington was doubtful whether her son ought to see a visitor at all; he was so ill and dispirited about himself.

Hubert, however, expressed a desire to see the new rector who had shown so much interest in him, and so upstairs I went.

Apparently my visit did him no harm, for it was reported to me afterwards (and it is wonderful how these things do get reported) that I had cheered him up tremendously, and that he wanted very much to see me again.

Such was the beginning of our friendship. I certainly managed to cheer him up, by leading him to take new and hopeful views of the opportunities for usefulness which remained to him, and I was able to convince him, from my own personal knowledge of human life, that physical and worldly losses are sometimes more than counter-balanced by the spiritual gains that result from them.

It is one of the consolations in the trying work of a clergyman that, although he has to make his way, often enough, into places of darkness, and to walk through ways in life that are overshadowed by the disappointments and tribulations of his fellow-beings, he is allowed sometimes to see the dispersal of the darkness, and to realise that he has been a man sent from God to bear witness of the light. It may be but a single ray of light that has penetrated the prevailing gloom, but that ray is not seldom

the harbinger of the dawning of a brighter day; and a man's hopefulness is renewed within him when he begins to see that the Sun of Righteousness has arisen with healing in His wings.

Hubert learned to bear his own particular burden not only with resignation, but with that kind of courage which causes the soldier to feel a sort of satisfaction in the long march and in the grim fight.

Thus in my early intercourse with him were laid the foundations of a friendship which was destined, four or five years later, to be of some service to him when he needed, as young men sometimes need, a friend.

III.

Meantime it was a delight to me to witness his growing interest in country pursuits. Fishing and shooting were beyond his powers; but he continued to ride, and after a while was to be seen in the hunting-field, not, perhaps, in the first flight, but taking his fences and enjoying the getting away after hounds.

What, however, began to claim his more serious attention was agriculture; and all sorts of schemes occupied him for the improvement of land, the cultivation of crops, and the planting of timber. And then, not content with his efforts in this direction at home, he must needs persuade his mother to agree to the purchase of some six hundred acres of land in British Columbia.

He did not buy this property without first going to see it; and then, in due course, there followed occasional visits to the locality to see what he could do with it.

I pass over the next three or four years, or perhaps I should say they passed over me, and I don't know that they added anything to the grayness of my gray hairs, for my hair turned gray some years ago—but that is another story. A man, it is said, is only as old as he feels, and nothing, I think, does more to make a parson feel old than to see those whom he has known as children, even the babes he has christened, growing up to be men and women, and in their turn presenting their babies to him to receive his blessing.

At Olderton Manor my juvenile playmates, Cecilia and Alice, had ceased to play with me, except at tennis and at arm's length. They were more charming than ever, but alas! they were no longer children: they were actually 'out'; and to be 'out' meant that, however much you might call upon these young ladies at home, you could hardly ever find them in. Quite recently they had been presented at court, and I sympathised with the anxious feeling of their mother, who, while wishful for the marriage of her daughters, dreaded the prospect of separation from them. But a matter more immediate than the marriage of the daughters was the engagement of the son.

Hubert had become engaged to an exceptionally nice girl, the only daughter of a retired cavalry officer living at Bath.

General Sir Thomas Weston, K.C.B.—to give him his full title—occupied a fine house there, and probably lived up to every penny of his means. There was a son, Arthur, half-way through his terms at Oxford, and doubtless he also helped to make a hole in his father's income. At any rate there seemed to be no present provision for the daughter, and the engagement, therefore, was likely to be a long one.

Hubert, however, was only in his twenty-fourth year at this time, and Vera Weston was three years younger. 'No sort of need for hurry,' said the old general. 'I never married till I was well over forty, so these young people have plenty of time before them.'

Vera came in due course to Olderton on a visit to Hubert's family, and there it was that I first made her acquaintance. My intimate friendship with Hubert might have hindered, rather than helped forward, any approach to friendship on her part towards me, for a man's fiancée has been known before now to show jealousy of her future husband's friends, and to exert herself to keep them at a distance; and a very good thing, too, if the aforesaid friends are not fit for a lady's society—which is as much as to say that I do not place myself in that category.

Let it suffice that this young lady evidently regarded my friendship with Hubert as a passport to her own affection, and we became at once very good friends; and in the result it turned out very well that this was so, for a day came when it was difficult to say which was the more wretched of the two, Hubert or his bride-elect. And I rejoice to think that in that dreadful time I did not despair of either of them, nor fail them.

CHAPTER II.

I.

A PARSON who lives nearly all the year round in the country—and can't leave his parish for many days together—is apt to value the quasi-independence afforded by membership of a London Club.

To be in town for ever so short a time and yet not to have a house, or even a hat-peg, that you can call your own—what is this but to feel homeless, and to be in the position of those unhappy persons who don't know where their next meal is to come from? A man can't always be sponging on his friends, or hunting about for a suitable place in which to take luncheon or dinner; it is demoralising, and means expense, or anxiety to avoid expense.

I had long been a member of the New University Club. And here it was that I

found a note from Carrington one morning, telling me that he hoped to be in town that very day, and that he would turn up at the club on the chance of having luncheon with me.

'Weren't you a bit surprised to get my note?' he asked, as we devoured a particularly good lobster salad between us.

'No!' I said. 'I am past the age to be surprised at anything.'

'I am so pleased to hear that,' said he, as he smiled away at me, 'for I was rather afraid I should surprise you by what I have arranged for you. Yes!' he went on, 'it is all arranged, so you must come.' And he went on to tell me that Vera at that very moment was staying with friends at Richmond; and that the daughter of the house, an old school-friend of Vera's, had got her to come up for a big dance, a quite swell affair to be given in two days' time.

'Of course I am among the invited,' he said; 'Vera saw to that; and as I was to bring a friend, she particularly said I was to bring you.'

It was in vain that I demurred. I told him I did not know Sussex Lodge; and as for Vera's friends, the Chapmans, I could not say that I had ever heard of Admiral Chapman's existence.

'Oh, but they've heard of you,' he rejoined, 'and are awfully keen to make your acquaintance; and according to Vera they really are exceptionally nice people. Now, do come; I don't half like going there without you, and Vera, I know, will be mortally disappointed if you don't turn up.'

Well! I had come up to town chiefly for the sake of a little change from the solitude of my country rectory, and so I suffered myself to be persuaded; and in my heart of hearts thought it was all very kind of them.

II.

We got down to Richmond in good time on the appointed night, and Sussex Lodge looked brilliantly lighted up in its setting of fine old trees as our taxi-cab glided swiftly up to the main entrance.

Here we were promptly pounced upon by well-trained men, who stripped us of our outer garments, offered us refreshments, and handed us over to a major-domo, and in a few moments we were being welcomed by our host and hostess.

They received us with the utmost kindness, and at once introduced me to two or three nice people. That word 'nice' means a great deal; too often the alternative is 'not nice,' and while the one sort seems to shrivel a man up, the other draws him out, and makes him feel on good terms with himself and with the world around him.

It was a large gathering, and if titles nowadays mean anything, there were several notables present.

One great pleasure that awaited me was finding, among the later arrivals, a cousin of my own, until quite recently Governor of Bombay, whom I hadn't met for a term of years.

Also I was honoured by a dance with the young lady for whom the ball had been arranged; a daughter of the gods, divinely fair, the adored of her father and mother, and of sundry young men who, while they worshipped her at a distance, seemed to regard me rather as a busy-body in other men's matters. However, they couldn't all have her; so why not I?

Vera also, perhaps out of compassion for my gray hairs, but more likely because she knew how safe a corner she occupied in my heart, gave me two dances; and it was at the end of my second dance with her that the first disagreeable incident of this memorable evening took place.

Vera was a little tired, and though her card was full, and the partner elect turned up to claim his dance, she begged off on the plea of fatigue, and continued to sit with me. A few moments later she touched my arm, and hurriedly whispered, 'Do not leave me. There is that horrid man coming this way.'

I had barely time to glance in the direction indicated, when a dapper-looking man with a rather aggressive moustache, and an insolent look about him, came to a halt in front of us,

and, ignoring me, addressed my protégée with an easy familiarity which in itself was offensive.

'Oh! here you are!' he exclaimed; 'I've been looking everywhere for you. I've come to claim my dance—the next one after this, isn't it?'

My companion's attitude stiffened. 'I remember telling you that I couldn't give you one,' she replied; 'I am engaged for all my dances.'

'Oh! I know,' he drawled; 'but you said you would see later on in the evening.' And with this he fiercely pulled his moustache, and leaned forward as though to try to see her card.

By this time I had taken the measure of the intruder, and had come to the conclusion that he had had the proverbial 'glass too much.' 'The lady is tired,' I said.

'She hasn't said so,' he snapped out, with a gleam of quarrel in his eye.

'Allow me to tell you,' I replied, 'that she has said so to me; and as for any promise of a dance, my partner has already told you that she gave you no such promise.'

I remained seated, and he favoured me with a long and threatening stare. 'Damned interfering,' he muttered under his breath; and then with a forced smile he bowed low to Vera. 'Perhaps later on,' he said, and sauntered off.

(Continued on page 498.)

SWIMMING FOR THE MIDDLE-AGED.

By SID G. HEDGES,

Hon. Instructor, Silver Medallist of the Royal Life Saving Society.

ONE has only to visit the Serpentine in Hyde Park, any morning of the year between six and eight o'clock, to realise that some of the keenest swimmers in England are middle-aged men. A wild enthusiasm for bathing characterises youth, but theirs is not that deep enjoyment of the artist which belongs to the finest swimmers. Of course, fine swimming is by no means necessarily synonymous with fast swimming.

Swimming is the perfect exercise for the middle-aged. An old writer has praised swimming as—

Of exercises most complete,
Because 'tis violent without heat.

And even the violence he implies is not at all essential. Swimming is strenuous, or not, as one likes to make it.

But, as many people arrive at middle-age without having learned to swim, I propose to give here such advice as will enable them to make a beginning. It is much easier to learn in salt water than in fresh, but salt water is more disagreeable if a chance mouthful is gulped down.

The greatest asset the learner can have is confidence, and one's share of this can easily be increased. What one needs to feel is that the body is really buoyant; that it is not inevitable that one will sink immediately the first swimming attempt is made.

Wade out until the water is breast-deep. Now take a good breath; bend forward, and snatch up a handful of sand or a pebble from between the feet. It will not be so easy as it would seem; in fact, the water will strongly resist the attempt to get down—it will actually push the body upwards. This sure knowledge of one's buoyancy will give much confidence for further trials.

The next step should be an attempt at floating, for this will help tremendously in back-swimming. Customarily, people begin to swim with the breast-stroke, but for the middle-aged bather I recommend back-swimming. In this quick results can be obtained, and thus the discouragement resulting from the reflection that 'I ought to have learned when I was young' will be the sooner dispelled.

To begin floating, sit on the sand, with the

water just around the shoulders; stretch the arms above the head; then gradually lean backwards until the ears are immersed, and the arms are lying along the surface of the water. Continue to straighten the body with exceeding slowness, and soon, providing that the arms and the ears are kept in the water, the whole body will be suspended, with the heels alone touching the bottom. It is essential that the body be quite straight, the chest and the stomach right on the surface, and the head thrown well back into the water. On no account must the body be in a 'sitting position.' These points apply equally to all back-swimming. Probably, if you are well built, the legs will rise from the bottom, but it does not matter if they do not.

During first attempts at this floating practice, and for the back-swimming which I am about to describe, a friend's supporting hand may lend additional confidence; but it is not at all essential.

Before actually trying back-stroke the leg movements must be thoroughly understood. They can be practised whilst lying on a bed, or, one leg at a time, when standing. The kick consists of four parts:

One.—The legs are drawn up to the body, heels touching each other, and knees pressed as flatly apart as possible—this is to prevent them from protruding above the surface and so sinking the middle of the body into the incorrect 'sitting position.'

Two.—The feet are driven right out, widely apart, until the legs are straight. Thus the soles of the feet are thrust against the water and drive the body head foremost.

Three.—The straight legs are swept in together until the ankles meet. This movement resembles the closing of the blades of a pair of scissors. It is the most important part of the stroke, for the greatest propulsive power comes from the driving out of the wedge of water from between the legs.

Four.—Nothing further is done at all. The legs remain straight and together, feet pointed in line with them; and the body *glides* until the impetus of the kick is exhausted.

When first practising the kick in the water, the swimmer should keep his hands on the hips. This opens the chest and so helps the body to float. It is not good in learning any stroke to begin by trying both arms and legs together. Better results are assured by concentrating on each set of movements separately, and only when arms and legs can each work with mechanical precision should they be combined.

The simplest arm-stroke has but two parts. To begin, the arms lie straight at the sides. Then they are gently carried outwards until they are about eighteen inches from the hips. During this negative or recovery movement the

hands should be flat or *feathered*, so as to give the least resistance to the water. Next, the arms are swirled vigorously in to the sides, like a pair of oars made to sweep right up to the sides of a boat. Hands should be cupped during this movement, to catch the water strongly. The sweep-in of the arms should synchronise with leg movement *two*. The hands should then remain still at the sides until the gliding in *four* is finished. As much gliding as possible should be performed in this style of swimming. It is gliding that necessitates and develops a good, horizontal position.

During all first practice there will be a constant temptation to blur the three distinct movements of the leg-stroke into one ineffective circular motion of the legs. This must not be yielded to; the separate parts of the kick must always be clearly defined.

All swimming movements should be big and deliberate; restricted, jerky actions are bad.

This method of back-swimming can easily be learned in two or three days in the sea, though rather more time will be necessary before fifty or a hundred yards can be covered. But when a little distance like this can be swum a much-improved arm-stroke may be learned.

In this, the hands, to begin, are held down by the thighs as before. Next, they are slid up the sides of the body past the shoulders, and so on until the arms are fully extended beyond the head, in line with the body. The hands should now be about twelve inches apart, with palms facing outwards. During the whole of this movement the hands should have been just beneath the surface. The next movement is the positive, or propelling one. Both arms, remaining quite straight, are swept right round in big semi-circles until they reach the sides once more in the preliminary position. The hands glide up the body in the recovery, while the legs are making their kick, and the sweep round of the arms occurs while the legs are straight in the number *four*, gliding position. As the arms make their sweep the chest should come quite clear of the surface, and the head be thrown so far back that the water washes over the forehead.

This is not a commonly practised method of swimming, chiefly because there are faster ways; but no other stroke will more surely give good style and a sense of ease and confidence in the water, which is always the mark of the fine swimmer.

But by this time you will be anxious to know something of the breast-stroke, the commonest of all modes of swimming, though not the easiest to learn. Of course, in breast-stroke one is right way up, which gives a good many practical advantages.

It is best to begin with the arm movements, and these should be practised in water that is

shoulder-deep—so that the arms can just be immersed. But be careful to face towards more shallow water, else you may, by the arm-strokes, get drawn into inconvenient depths.

The movements can be divided into four parts.

One.—Draw up the hands under the chin, back to back, thumbs and first fingers touching. Elbows should be dropped to the sides, and fingers be pointing to the front, parallel with the surface of the water.

Two.—Shoot the hands forward until the arms are straight, parallel with the surface, and about four or six inches beneath it. At the end of this movement the hands should be about twelve inches from each other, palms cupped and facing outwards.

Three.—Arms do not move.

Four.—Sweep the straight arms through a quarter circle, and always parallel with the surface, until they are in line with the shoulders.

In actual swimming the body glides forward for an instant while the arms are steady in *three*.

The kick is precisely the same as in back-stroke, except, of course, that the body is the other way up. To practise the kick it is necessary to hold on to a rock or the steps of a bathing pavilion, or to rest the elbows on the bottom in shallow water, in order that the body may be supported and kept horizontal. The heels should be at a constant depth of nine to twelve inches.

In *one*, when the legs are drawn up, care must be taken that the knees are underneath the body; a common fault is merely to draw the feet backwards, so that the soles emerge from the water.

The arms and legs should be combined as follows:

One.—Arms and legs are drawn up.

Two.—Arms and legs are thrust out.

Three.—Arms remain still; legs sweep in.

Four.—Arms sweep round; legs remain still.

A friend's hand beneath one's chest is particularly helpful during first attempts at this combination. He may also assist by counting aloud *one, two, three, four*, allowing about two seconds for each.

When some proficiency is gained, correct breathing should be added. Inhalation should be performed during *four*; exhalation during *two*. A learner often gets into difficulties by breathing-in during *two*—a very inopportune time, for during this negative movement the head is lowest in the water.

It should be remembered that the more of the body there is immersed the more easily will one float. In breast-stroke, therefore, the chin should be constantly submerged, and, of course, the shoulders. When once two or three yards can be achieved, unsupported, one has actually

begun to swim, and progress becomes sure and rapid.

One's aim should constantly be to swim an increased distance; and one should certainly not be satisfied until a quarter or a half-mile can be covered with ease. This moderate ability in back and breast-swimming will almost inevitably stimulate ambition to do still more, and probably a real study of swimming in its many branches will ensue.

There is nothing more fascinating than swimming; there is nothing more healthful; and there is nothing more suited to give both benefit and enjoyment to the middle-aged. And, curiously, swimming is about the only exercise in which it is a decided disadvantage to be slimly built. A person more corpulent is happy as a swimmer, for he can the better resist the chill of the water, and, too, he is more buoyant.

Man or woman, any middle-aged person who undertakes to become a swimmer is certain of finding a new zest in life.

A CHÂTEAU IN DREAMS.

I.

WEBS of thought for reverie's weaving
Framed anew, in mystic space—
Miraged dream past all believing,
Looms the cradle of a race:
Sombre towers and turrets pointing
Skyward with an ancient pride,
Lichened shields for whose anointing
Brave Crusaders fared and died.

II.

Knightly halls, grim armour keeping
Watch on silken legend walls,
Glittering steels in noontide steeping,
Ice-gray shades when moonlight falls—
Buoyant youth and age care-laden
Share ancestral honours there;
Haughty dame and winsome maiden
Grace the sweep of tread-worn stair.

III.

Tapers ray fair antique faces
Crowning carcanets of gold;
Blithe lavolta's gallant paces
Wing romance charmed years enfold.
Pictured forms, of life forsaken,
Hailed to kindred's festal cheer,
Quaff, in vows of fealty taken,
Wine of joy with rue of tear.

IV.

Coo of dove and prattling childhood,
Falconers give their call of lure;
Lilies throned, and menial wildwood—
Hark! the nightbird's descendant pure.
Chapelled lances, dawned in glory,
Flush the moth on hatchments drear.
Priestly chant of sacred story
Sounds Resurgam, full and clear.

Mangled waste! strange lifeless token!
Creature breathes, nor earth-fruit teems.
Silence waits some lone word spoken—
Vanished Avalon of Dreams!

ALBERT H. WHITIN.

ON THE PLATFORM.

By ARCHIBALD MARSHALL.

I.

THE little train that wound and looped its way up the mountain valley had a platform at either end of each car, where those who preferred to be outside could stand, or sit on the perches provided for two of them. Arthur Manby elected to stay on the platform during an excursion up the Rubaithal, not so much because he wanted to smoke—though he always wanted to smoke—as because he was feeling annoyed with his wife, and still more annoyed with his wife's bosom friend, Ruby Pickthorp.

Why should he have to accompany these two elderly and unattractive women on their suddenly announced expedition, when, if they had stayed indoors to write letters, as they had said they would, he might have made one of the party that had chosen that day to go up the Fehrental? One Thal was as good as another, with the same firwoods, pastures, and chalets, and the same mountain scenery. But what a difference in the company! Arthur Manby was four years older than his wife, and seven years older than Ruby Pickthorp, but he did not feel himself elderly. He was at home with youth, especially feminine youth. He was *not* elderly. A man of fifty-two, who had preserved his figure and most of his hair, could not be called elderly nowadays. He was the equal of—well, anything over the age of eighteen. He didn't care for mere children, and he was not the sort to go dangling after young married women. Eighteen to twenty-four—that was how he liked them. Their society was refreshing, and where was the harm in it?

As the train moved off, a heavily-bearded gentleman, with little knickerbockers showing his bare knees and a short jacket of red and blue checks, who occupied the opposite perch, was surprised to see him hurl away a half-smoked cigarette with a muttered exclamation and pull out a pipe and tobacco-pouch. The exclamation was punched out of him by the bitter thought that the other party would now be in a like train to this, and that with luck he might have been sitting on a similar platform with that dear little Iris Feldham on the perch opposite, instead of the bearded gentleman with the bed-jacket and the hairy knees. It was almost more than he could bear. Why hadn't he rebelled—said calmly that he had made his arrangements and couldn't alter them now? But the unfortunate thing was that he had said nothing about making arrangements. He had been intending to creep off. And a still more unfortunate thing was that his wife had known it. No doubt that was why she had suddenly

decided on this expedition; and, of course, Ruby Pickthorp had backed her up. What a pair!

He was going to be talked to. However had he come to allow that, *par exemple*, that he should be talked to like a naughty boy in front of another woman? It comforted him a little to use a French phrase to himself, but only a very little, about as much as the first whiff of his pipe, and the effect soon wore off. It was humiliating, that was what it was. But she didn't mind humiliating him. More than once, when he had been making himself the life and soul of some party, while she and Ruby Pickthorp had sat dull and glum in a corner, she had come over and, ignoring everybody else, practically ordered him up to bed. And he had always gone, if not immediately, very soon, with a light word to save his face, but knowing that the words used when he got upstairs would not be light, and that very likely Ruby Pickthorp would be there to hear them.

An official came for the fares, and indicated that he was expected to pay three of them. That was another thing. She had plenty of money of her own, and Ruby Pickthorp had, if not plenty, enough to pay her own train fares. He was always being sponged on; and what did he get for it? Just look what he could have done with his money if he had been free, *par exemple*! The phrase seemed to come of itself this morning. A nice little flat in town, instead of that dull suburban house, with *her* always in it; meals at the club whenever he felt inclined for them, and billiards as late as he wanted to go on playing; trips abroad whenever he liked, and nobody to look after but himself. Why, it would be a pure delight to sit in a train without *her* opposite to him, and there were always people to make friends with, and go about with, wherever one went.

The bearded gentleman cleared his throat without reticence. Very disgusting! These foreigners! She didn't clear her throat like that, but she had an irritating way of doing it all the same, a series of what the novelists call 'ahems,' when she would be sitting bunched up in her chair with her knitting, and very likely with her toes in trodden-down bedroom slippers turned inwards, and would pick him out of his novel with: 'Well, you're not very lively!' She never cared what she looked like when she was alone with him. 'I think I'll put on my slippers; my corns are shooting to-night. You might go and fetch them for me.' And he would go. Not amiably, perhaps; but still he would go and fetch down the horrid pink things, and be thanked by: 'I shouldn't have thought you'd have minded doing a little

thing like that for your wife. I'll fetch them myself next time.' But she never did; and to do himself justice he wouldn't have let her. He did his duty by her all right.

II.

They came to a halt. The bearded gentleman got off, and his place was taken by a young man in the same sort of Tirolese costume, but without the bed-jacket. Very natty, that green cloth and the horn buttons. The whole costume was picturesque, and he had thought of getting one for himself. Men much older than he wore them, and his figure, at any rate, was as youthful as it had ever been, or very nearly. But she had thrown scorn on the proposal. 'Make a fool of yourself at *your* time of life!' And Ruby Pickthorp had laughed unpleasantly. Really, that woman! No, she was too much. He'd get rid of her, insist upon it. But he knew he wouldn't. He might insist, but she would remain.

The young man looked about thirty. Oh, if only he were thirty again! Or twenty-eight, for he had married her at twenty-nine. Was it possible that he had been in love with her? Yes, he had; one must be honest. But it was like having been in love with another woman; there was nothing whatever to connect the two. That being in love when you were first married didn't seem to have anything to do with what came after. Marriages ought to be for five years at the outside, and then start again. There were a good many who wouldn't start again. Once bit, twice shy.

The young man got up and craned over the side of the car. They were skirting a curve, but there was nothing exceptional in the way of a view here, just a long slope of velvet-green pasture, with the firs from above breaking into it here and there. But now he was waving ecstatically. A large chalet came into view, its widespread roof dotted with heavy stones, gay flowers in all its windows. On a balcony stood an elderly woman with a large shapeless figure, and a slim young girl. They were too far off for exchange of words, but the waving went on until the chalet was lost to view again, the young girl doing less of it than the other two. The young man took his seat again with the look of the beatified male on his face. It was clear enough which figure he retained in his eyes. It had given Arthur Manby pleasure too, but as they went on the other figure obliterated it. The young man might be looking forward to marrying the one, but when a few years had passed over his head he would find he had married the other. That was how it happened; and the years passed so quickly that one might almost as well marry the other at once, and have done with it. Much better not marry at all; but, of course, the young man wouldn't believe it.

Why couldn't he get rid of her? People did now. No fuss, no great upheaval. Just a sensible understanding. You go your way and I'll go mine. We haven't hit it off very well together. Not your fault, of course, nor mine either, but we shall be happier apart. Why shouldn't he make that suggestion and insist upon carrying it out? This would be a very good opportunity. One couldn't do it in cold blood, out of the blue, *par exemple*. But if she was going to start in on him when they got out of the train, with Ruby Pickthorp picking her way like a censorious hen on the other side of her, and not flinching from putting in her word when she saw occasion, then he would take his opportunity. Gone a bit too far this time. Now we'll have an end of it. They would both laugh at him, of course, and refuse to take it seriously. But he would only have to stick to it, and they'd have to take it seriously.

But somehow he knew that he wouldn't be able to stick to it.

III.

Here they were. Now for it! He joined his wife and her friend. Was there anybody of all the crowd that bunched its way through the gate and straggled along the road who felt as much distaste for the company he was in? Not a smile or a word. Just a grunt from her and a sniff from Ruby Pickthorp. A contemptuous proleptic sniff. Oh, he was in for it! They had been putting their heads together; he knew the signs. But they would find it different now. The worm was going to turn at last. They'd be singing another tune before long.

He put on his usual armour, an air of sulky indifference. It hadn't served him very well before, but it wasn't armour for defence he would want this time. He was fingering his weapon of attack, which he couldn't use until the attack was launched against him.

It began in the usual way. 'Oh, you needn't behave like a naughty child. A nice thing to bring out a husband who hasn't got so much as a word to throw at his wife! Don't walk so fast. These stones hurt my feet.'

He reduced his pace to the amble of obese maturity, while the happy talkative crowd forged ahead, walking lightly and easily, as he would have done himself in this crisp mountain air if he had been in the sort of company to which he rightly belonged. He took a firmer grasp of his determination.

'I've got something to say to you. Ruby and I have been talking it over. I've had enough of it. Any young ninny of a girl rather than your own wife! And sneaking off to make a fool of yourself without a word! Enjoying yourself all day and bringing back nothing but a fit of the sulks! There isn't a woman who'd stand it.—Is there, Ruby?'

'I wouldn't,' said Ruby, sniffing. She had a

large nose to sniff with, and a pair of gooseberry eyes, but he never looked at them if he could help it.

It was a well-known opening. His time would come when she said, 'We'll have an end of it once for all.' Yes, they would have an end of it, but not in the way they thought. But he had better get rid of the sulkiness. 'Well, what are you going to do about it?' he asked lightly.

'Listen to that, Ruby! Isn't it beyond everything? Well, what I say now is, it's time to have an end of it once for all. I'll tell you what I'm going to do about it, as you've asked so politely; and Ruby says I'm quite right. I've overlooked it time after time, and hoped it would be the last, but it never is the last. Now it's going to be. We'd better part and have done with it. You go your way and I'll go mine. No need to make a fuss about it, and no need to have any talk. If anybody asks questions, just say we haven't hit it off very well, and as we're both sensible people we've just come to an understanding. No need to part as enemies, either. You're you, and I'm me; and that's all we need say about it. Isn't it, Ruby?'

'Except that you're sick and tired of it,' said Ruby, 'and you've made up your mind.'

'Yes, I've made up my mind. Ruby's coming to live with me. I don't suppose you want the house, as you've always turned up your nose at Wandsworth. The things in it you paid for mostly, but I can buy them off you. Luckily I've got enough of my own, and sha'n't want to take anything from you. You won't be as well off without me, but you'll have enough, and you'll have to do on it.'

Could he believe his ears? But he mustn't jump at it. 'Well, that's a serious decision to come to,' he said. 'It wants thinking over.'

'Oh, it's been thought over,' said Ruby Pickthorp. 'You've brought it on yourself, Mr Manby. Doris wants to have an end of it now, and she's quite right.'

She was helping him, though that wasn't her intention. 'I think you're both making a lot out of what doesn't amount to anything,' he grumbled. 'I enjoy society. There's nothing wrong in that.'

'Then go and enjoy your society. That's what Doris wants. You don't seem to have anything left for her, and she's sick and tired of it.'

'Yes, I'm sick and tired of it. I sha'n't go back on it now, whatever you say. You've brought it on yourself, and you must make the best of it. Go off and do what you like, without having a wife to look after you and see that you have everything that you want.'

'Or ought to want,' Ruby Pickthorp amended it.

'Or that any decent man of your age *would* want. Go and see how you like that.'

Perhaps a little sulkiness wouldn't come amiss. 'I don't see why I should be kicked out in that way,' he said. 'But if it's going to be like that I might as well clear out now.' He stopped in the road.

'Oh, you can show your obstinacy if you like. But if we are going to part—as we are, for I'm sick and tired of it—I should have thought you'd have wanted to part friends.'

He walked on again. 'If it's got to be,' he said . . .

'Oh, it's got to be, all right,' said Ruby Pickthorp; 'and the sooner you make up your mind to it the better. You'll have plenty of time to be sorry for it when you're by yourself. I should have thought you'd have wanted to leave the best impression you could on Doris, considering that you won't have her much longer.'

'Well, that's just what I was going to say,' he said, still sulkily. 'If you've made up your mind, what's the good of quarrelling now? I should have thought we might have parted as friends.'

'That's just what I said, didn't I, Ruby? It will just show whether there's anything left of him at all, whether he takes it sensibly or just blusters it out.'

'Well, I'm ready to take it sensibly, if you'll let me.'

'Oh, of course it's always me who's in fault. Still, if you're ready to part as friends, so am I. This looks a nice place for lunch, and I don't want to walk any farther. Let's have our last meal together in peace anyhow, and have *something* to look back on out of it all.'

IV.

He sat out on the platform going back. On the seat opposite to him was a young pleasant girl, quite nice-looking, though heavy about the calves and ankles. If he had had any skill in the language he might have struck up a conversation with her, but perhaps it would be as well not to take advantage of his liberty quite so soon. Hardly decent, with those two just inside. Ruby Pickthorp had sniffed when they had passed her sitting there.

Well, she could sniff as much as she liked now. He wouldn't be there to hear her. Fancy having her in the house morning, noon, and night! Still, he was glad his wife would have somebody. He wasn't feeling hostile to her now. His feelings were quite different from what they had been when he had sat on this very platform two or three hours before. The landscape looked different too, more sunny and sparkling. He hadn't felt so sunny and sparkling himself for years. There was no doubt it was the right solution, and thank heaven she had come to see it herself. She would get on

perfectly well without him. She would have her Ruby Pickthorp, who had been more to her than he had been for a long time past. She'd hardly miss him. As for his missing her, it was a sad thing that marriages should end in that way, but really he couldn't feel anything but utter relief at the idea of his freedom. He had lots of life in him yet—years and years of it—and he would live it exactly as he liked. What a delightful thing life was! Just ordinary living was enough; just to sit out here on this platform, and look at the foreign scene, the folds of the valley, the villages with their tall spired churches, the parcelled fields, the shaggy mountain slopes, and the jagged summits of naked rock. You hardly wanted company to enjoy it with; you only wanted not always to be oppressed by the wrong company.

Poor Doris! She wasn't always so bad, though to be let off going on living with her was about the best thing that had ever happened to him. He didn't think that he had been so happy when he was looking forward to marrying her twenty odd years ago as he was now; he didn't think he had ever been so happy in his life. One had extraordinary capacity for happiness when one grew older. One wasn't depending on one thing to bring it; one could make oneself happy over all sorts of little things, if one had a free mind. He had really quite enjoyed the lunch they had had, sitting at a table under the chestnuts, with the view of the snow-capped mountain at the end of the valley. His coming freedom had had most to do with it, no doubt, and he had begun to taste it, though he had had to be careful not to show too much jubilation. But she meant it, and had shown herself sensible. They had discussed it all in a friendly way, just as if he had been going off by himself to fish, which she had let him do once a year, while she and Ruby Pickthorp went for a cure to Harrogate. It wasn't going to be quite their last meal together, but they were actually going off the next morning. She and Ruby wanted to get home, and adapt the house to their new requirements. He could stay here as long as he liked, and then go wherever he wanted to. There would be a few things to settle, but they could do that by letter. He didn't know where he would go to when he had had enough of this; not London, for he didn't feel quite safe yet so near her. Sudden freedom was a thing you had to get used to gradually. It had kept coming over him in wafts that freedom was his, and once or twice he had been so delighted with the prospect that he had been quite gay, and made them laugh. Fancy their laughing, after they had given him the boot like that! But it showed how much it was the right thing to do. They would be as comfortable without him as he would be without them.

What a miracle of luck it was that she had

at last come to see it, and to want it for herself! No doubt Ruby Pickthorp had had something to do with bringing her to it, probably because it would suit her to take his place in the house, to which she was quite welcome. There had been hints of it before, but he had put his foot down there. But that, *par exemple*, no! How French he was getting! The result of coming abroad. He had always wished he could talk French fluently. He might, perhaps, go and live for a few months in a French family and learn it—a family with some nice young people in it, and something to do. It would be like being young again himself, to do a thing like that, and it was only one of the things he might do. The whole of the world would be before him to-morrow, and the whole of his time. Oh, surely it was too good to be true! He knew now that he never could have done it himself, however he might have strung himself up to it. She'd have put a stop to it somehow. He didn't mind admitting it, now that it was she who had given him his freedom. How it was that she had so got him under her thumb he couldn't tell, but there it was; or rather had been, and was no longer.

He was glad that they were going to part friends. He would think kindly of her, when he thought of her at all, and she would think kindly of him. He had been generous about the furniture. She could have it all, and he wouldn't hear of her paying for any of it, although her income was actually larger than his. The lunch had really been a success. He had been able to keep his jubilation from showing too much, but it had helped him to display himself in an agreeable light. It was best to part company in that way, leaving no grudges behind.

v.

The tram which they took from the station also had little platforms before and behind, but she said: 'Come in here,' when they got to it, quite in the old way. It annoyed him slightly, because he had intended to go inside with them anyhow. By this time to-morrow he would have got rid of them both, and he might as well pay them attention until he did. But if she was going back to her old form, for the short time that remained, he would dispense himself from doing that; for he wasn't under her thumb any longer, and there were plenty of people in the hotel who would be glad enough to have him with them.

They sat down. 'We've been talking it over,' she said. 'You *can* behave decently, as you showed us at lunch, so I'm going to give you another chance. Ruby is coming to live with us, so you'd better be careful how you behave, for it's the last chance you'll get.'

Ruby sniffed.

A LOCUST INVASION IN PARAGUAY.

By T. MARTYN.

I.

PARAGUAY, as you may or may not know, is in the centre of South America, and is fenced in by Brazil, Argentina, and Bolivia. It is nice to have near neighbours, sometimes; at others it isn't. When we hear of 'Foot and Mouth' in Bolivia—well, it's just a matter of weeks and it is romping across Paraguay. If Brazil has a little revolution on, first thing we know the Federals are chasing the Rebels over our border, to the detriment of our peace of mind. The same with Argentina. As soon as the locusts get tired of her wheat and maize, they fly over the fence to sample our mandioca; and we don't like it. I'll tell you about the visitation we are suffering from at the present moment.

II.

For the past four days it has been snowing furiously, not snow as you denizens of more temperate climes know it, but a snow of locusts. For a week or more we had been expecting them. Travellers had come along with tales that made one feel thankful one had 'stopped home,' instead of going the journey contemplated last week—tales of having to dismount, blindfold and lead the horses over a carpet of locusts, so thick that the track was obliterated and all sense of direction lost.

Locusts under foot, in the air in clouds, hanging to the trees in masses, to rise in thousands, stunning the passer-by with the drone of their wings and the stench of their foul breath!

Young fellows with good horses have tried to force their way through, only to be thrown, and have to stumble blindly along, seeking shelter, with the gross insects beating in their faces, creeping down necks, up sleeves and pants, whilst the maddened horses galloped wildly for home.

As I say, we expected them; but there was a chance that they might give us a miss. If a south wind from Argentina sprang up they would drift from us, but if it was a northerly 'buster' from Brazil, well, good-bye crops and everything else green.

We spent our spare time going outside, wetting fingers to see which way the faint breeze was coming. Then, when we were beginning to hope they had passed in another direction, they came.

The cattle gave us the first intimation. Moving frantically, with tails erect, they stampeded to the 'montes' for shelter. The horses came to the slip-rails, whinnying to be let in. Whilst we were wondering what had struck them, the sun became overcast, without a cloud in the sky. Then we knew.

Flying low, a few stragglers went swiftly past, followed by the advance-guard of an enormous army. In a dense cloud they flew, horizontally, without any seeming sense of direction. The rattle of them, as they struck the tin roof, reminded us of the machine-guns in revolution time. They cannoned against the windward side of the house, piling themselves in heaps, to lie writhing over each other at the foot of the wall.

Standing at the door watching them hurtle past, brought to mind the blizzard we got tangled up in near Alberta many years ago. There it was perishing cold; any animal life caught in the blizzard stood a good chance of going into cold storage 'for keeps.' Here it was stifling hot. Before the locusts came along it was a fairly warm day; now it was oppressive, and fairly made one gasp.

There seemed no end to them, but as they were flying steadily we hoped they would keep on doing it and alight anywhere but on our patch—selfish, yes, but human nature.

We couldn't hear each other speak for the drumming on roof and walls. My wife shook my arm and pointed outside.

'What is it?' I shouted.

'The well's not covered,' she screamed back.

'Phew; damn it.' That wouldn't do. If they started to alight the water would be ruined. A neighbour of ours, at the last visitation—four years ago—forgot about his well. He had to empty it and scoop out about a foot of dead locusts. Then they couldn't use the water for months after. I started on the run for the well enclosure, but fetched up on the wood pile with barked shins. Pulling my hat down over my eyes, I 'took a think.'

The gate to the well was to the right of the pile. If I passed the chopping-block on the left and kept straight on I ought to strike the fence; then it was only a matter of sticking to the pickets till I found the gate. My cogitations had taken only a minute or so, but by the time I had decided what to do I was ankle-deep with the insects that had bumped against me. Blindly I stumbled on and fetched up at the fence and found the gate. Sure enough, the well was open. I peered down, but it was too dark to see if any had got in. Closing the trap, I stood at the gate and calculated where the house was, then pushed through the storm to it.

III.

Towards sundown they slacked off, and we were able to go out to see what was what. We had been consoling ourselves that all except the comparative few that had stunned themselves

had passed on; we found they hadn't. Millions had passed, but millions stayed with us. The orange and peach trees were swarming with them, busily chewing up the leaves. The ground below was strewn with tiny green oranges; that meant a big shortage next season, even if they did not kill the trees. I cut a long switch and started beating them from the trees. They flew up in clouds, but as they simply flew from one tree to another I got tired before they did.

We went over to the cultivation patch and surveyed the young plants. Not much harm done as yet; only a few stragglers that we promptly stopped from nibbling. The vegetable garden is the apple of my wife's eye. I went into that with misgiving. If the pests were chewing that down the señora would surely run amuck and 'kill, kill' in all directions. All serene, bar the tops of some celery plants, which we pulled and took in for our own consumption.

Over supper my better-half asked me to explain the why of locusts. A theory of mine is that Nature never makes a mistake, always acts for the best, although it may not seem so to those that are close up. Even flies and mosquitoes are sent to teach us to be clean. Hornets are doubtful, though they sometimes leave a good impression behind—when sat on suddenly. Anyway, one year we cleared all our hornets out of the house—they were getting too familiar. That year we never got a cabbage or a lettuce. The green caterpillars—that hornets thrive on—got the lot.

But as to locusts, their best friends—if they have any—cannot say much for them. Certainly they are harmless, inasmuch as they have no weapons of offence or defence. A brother colonist, who hadn't been ravaged, argued that a flight of locusts passing over the land was as good as a ton of fertiliser to the acre. That may be so, but it's poor consolation to the man who has lost his crops and has to go with a tight belt and a long score till next season. After much reflection the only conclusion we could come to was that they were sent to keep agriculturists from getting swelled-head through too much prosperity.

They were still drumming on the roof when we lit the lamp. The light attracted a few inside. I caught one, and ran the rule over him—about four inches long, a big bull head, all mouth and goggle eyes, long tapering body, with four legs towards the front, for clinging on to our orange-trees, and a pair of powerful grasshopper legs at the rear, to enable him to get over the ground when the land is being cleared for replanting.

My natural history studies were interrupted by one of the insects flying down the lamp-tube, putting the lamp out and smashing the glass. So we went to bed, hoping our unwelcome visitors would clear off in the night.

IV.

Next morning a woeful sight met our eyes. The 'blighters'—that's an abusive term, but it's correct, as they both blight the land and blast our hopes. Well, the 'blasters' were still flying over, but instead of the majority passing along or attacking the trees they were alighting on our cultivation.

In the maize and mandioca patch they were piled in a wriggling mass, three or four inches thick, gorging every green thing they could clap their goggle eyes on. The cotton plants had vanished; the beans were no more; and there wasn't a sign of the tobacco that was going to pay the store bill. The vegetable garden was nearly as bad. The cabbages had been gnawed off at the roots, and each one was a mass of the insects, busy eating up our vitaminic food. My wife ran for a couple of sheets and some sacks to cover up the celery and the beets, whilst I took charge of the bed that was to supply us with new potatoes for Christmas. The remainder of our garden truck we had to let slide down their capacious maws.

All day long we took turns to patrol our precious potatoes, walking round the beds, waving a branch to keep the locusts on the move, and stamping on those that tried to slip in on the sly. For the night watch we engaged our squatter's boy, Ricardo, with strict instructions to worry them. At 10 p.m. I went out to see how he was getting on, and to supply him with sustenance. He assured me it was quite o.k., and I could sleep tranquilly, now that he was on guard.

Next morning we found Ricardo asleep under the oranges, with locusts walking all over him, and our tubers gone south on the way to Brazil.

We gave them best then, and are reserving our energies for twenty-one days hence, when the eggs they have deposited in the earth will come to life and start hopping across country, devouring everything their forefathers have missed.

And the pests are still drifting over.

PATHWAYS.

WHEN I dwelt in the country
I loved the sounding sea,
The ships that sailed its waters
To lands of mystery.

And now upon the ocean
I yearn for the shore,
For lanes where sun and shadow
Play truant evermore.

In cage of gold the linnet
Will pine for woods and storm—
Peril has freedom in it,
Dark night and glorious morn.

And so when on the ocean
I dream of roads that wind
Through every hill and hollow
And pathway of my mind.

CAHIR HEALY.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

By JOHN BUCHAN, Author of *John Burnet of Barns*, *Greenmantle*, &c.CHAPTER XIV.—*continued.*

IT took some time for the party to reach the Doran, which they forded at a point considerably below Archie's former lair. Lamancha gave thanks for one mercy, that Archie and Wattie seemed to have got clean away. There was a car on the road, which caused him a moment's uneasiness till he saw that it was not the Ford, but a large car with an all-weather body coming from Haripol. The driver seemed to have his instructions, for he turned round—no light task in that narrow road with its boggy fringes—and awaited their arrival.

Johnson gave rapid orders. 'You march this fellow down the road, and bring the navy; better take him to your cottage, Macqueen. I'll go home in the car, and prepare a reception for Macnab.'

It may be assumed that Johnson spoke in haste, for he had somehow to work off his irritation, and desired to assert his authority.

'Hadn't Stokes better go in the car?' Lamancha suggested in a voice which he strove to make urbane. 'That journey down the hill can't have done his leg any good.'

Johnson replied by telling him to mind his own business, and then was foolish enough to add that he was hanged if he would have any lousy navy in his car. He was preparing to enter, when something in Lamancha's voice stopped him.

'You can't,' said the latter. 'In common decency you can't.'

'Who'll prevent me? Now look here, I'm fed up with your insolence. You'll be well advised to hold your tongue till we make up our minds how to deal with you. You're in a devilish nasty position, Mr John Macnab, if you had the wits to see it.—Macnicol, and you fellows, I'll fire the lot of you if he escapes on the road. You've my authority to club him on the head if he gets nasty.'

Johnson's foot was on the step, when a hand on his shoulder swung him round.

'No, you don't.' Lamancha's voice had lost any trace of civility, because he was very angry. 'Stokes goes in the car, and one of the gillies with him. Here, you, lift the man in.'

Johnson had grown rather white, for he saw that the situation was working up to the ugliest kind of climax. He felt dimly that he was again defying public opinion, but his fury made him bold. He cursed Lamancha with vigour and freedom, but there was a slight catch in his voice, and a hint of anticlimax in his threats; for the truth is that he was a little afraid. Still, it was a flat defiance, though it concluded with a sneering demand as to what and who

would prevent him from doing as he pleased, which sounded a trifle weak.

'First,' said Lamancha, 'I should have a try at wringing your neck. Then I should blast any reputation you may have up and down this land. I promise you I should make you very sorry you didn't stay in bed this morning.' Lamancha had succeeded in controlling himself—in especial, he had checked the phrase, 'infernal little haberdasher,' which had risen to his lips—and his voice was civil and quiet again.

Johnson gave a mirthless laugh. 'I'm not afraid of a dirty poacher.'

'If I'm a poacher, that's no reason why you should behave like a cad.'

It is a melancholy fact which exponents of democracy must face, that, while all men may be on a level in the eyes of the state, they will continue, in fact, to be preposterously unequal. Lamancha had been captured in circumstances of deep suspicion which he did not attempt to explain; he had been caught on Johnson's land by Johnson's servants; the wounded man was in Johnson's pay, and might reasonably be held to be at Johnson's orders; the car was, without question, Johnson's own. Yet this outrageous trespasser was not only truculent and impenitent; he was taking it upon himself to give orders to gillies and navvies, and to dictate the use of an expensive automobile. The truth is that if you belong to a family which, for a good many centuries, has been accustomed to give orders, and to take risks, and if you yourself in the forty odd years of your life have rather courted trouble than otherwise, and have put discipline into Arab caravans, Central African natives, and Australian mounted brigades—well, when you talk about wringing necks your words may carry weight. If, too, you have never had occasion to think of your position, because no one has ever questioned it, and you promise to break down somebody else's, your threat may convince others, because you yourself are so wholly convinced of your power in that direction. It was the complete lack of bluster in Lamancha, his sober matter-of-factness, that made Johnson suddenly discover in this potato-bogle of a man something formidable. He hesitated, the gillies hesitated, and Lamancha saw his chance. Angry as he was, he contrived to be conciliatory.

'Don't let us lose our tempers. I've no right to dictate to you, but you must see that we're bound to look after this poor chap first. After that I'm at your disposal to give you any satisfaction you want.'

Johnson had not been practised in commercial

negotiations for nothing. He saw that obstinacy would mean trouble, and would gain him little, and he cast about for a way to save his face. He went through a show of talking in whispers to Macnicol, a show which did not deceive his head-stalker. Then he addressed Macqueen, 'We think we'd better get this fellow off our hands. You take him down in the car to your cottage, and put him in your spare bed; then come round to the house and wait for me.'

'This is my show, if you'll allow me, sir,' said Lamancha politely. He took some notes from a wad he carried in an inner pocket. 'Get hold of the nearest doctor—you can use the post-office telephone—and tell him to come at once, and get everything you need for Stokes. I'll see you again. Don't spare expense, for I'm responsible.'

The car departed, and the walking party continued its way down the Doranglen. Lamancha's anger was evaporating, philosophy had intervened, and he was prepared to make allowances for Johnson. But he recognised that the situation was delicate, and the future cloudy, and since he saw no way out, decided to wait patiently on events, always premising that on no account must he permit his identity to be discovered. That might yet involve violent action of a nature which he could not foresee. His consolation was the thought of the stag, now, without doubt, in the Crask larder. If only he could get clear of his captors, John Macnab would have won two out of the three events. Yes, and if Leithen and Pallister-Yeates had not blundered into captivity.

He was presently reassured as to the fate of the last. When the party entered the wooded lower glen of the Doran it was joined by four weary navvies, who had been refreshing themselves by holding their heads in the stream. Interrogated by Macnicol, they told a tale of hunting an elusive man for hours on the hill-side, of repeatedly being on the point of laying hold of him, of a demoniac agility and a diabolical cunning, and of his final disappearance into the depths of the wood. Questioned about Stokes, they knew nothing. He had last been seen by them in the early morning when the mist first cleared, but it was his business to keep moving high up the hill near the rocks, and he had certainly not joined in the chase when it started.

Johnson's temper was not improved by this news. Twice he had been put to public shame in front of his servants by this arrogant tramp, who was John Macnab. He had been insulted and defied; but he knew in his heart that the true bitterness lay in the fact that he had also been frightened. Anger, variegated by fear, is apt to cloud a man's common-sense, and Johnson's usual caution was deserting him. He was beginning to see red, and the news that there had been an accomplice was the last straw.

Somehow or other he must get even with this bandit, and bring him to the last extremity of disgrace. He must get him inside the splendours of Haripol, where, his foot on his native heath, he would recover the confidence which had been so lamentably to seek on the hill. . . . He would, of course, hand him over to the police, but his soul longed for some more spectacular dénouement. . . . Then he thought of the journalists, who had made such a nuisance of themselves in the morning. They were certain to be still about the place. If they could see his triumphant arrival at Haripol, they would write such a story as would blazon his credit to the world, and make the frustrated poacher a laughing-stock.

As it chanced, when they entered one of the woodland drives of Haripol, they met the gillie, Andrew, on his way home for a late tea. He was asked if he had seen any of the correspondents, and replied that after a hard chase he and Peter and Cameron had captured one, who at the moment was in Cameron's charge, and using strong language about the liberty of the Press. Andrew was privately despatched to bid Cameron bring his captive with all civility and many apologies up to the house, with a message that Mr Claybody would be glad to have a talk with him. Then, with three navvies as a vanguard and four as a rearguard, Lamancha was conducted down the glade between Johnson and Macnicol—the picture of a criminal in the grip of the law.

That picture was seen by a small boy who was lurking among the bracken. To the eyes of Benjie it spelt the uttermost disaster. The stag was safe at Crask, but the major part of John Macnab was in the hands of his enemies. Benjie thought hard for a minute, and then wriggled back into the covert and ran as fast as he could through the wood. To him, at this awful crisis, there seemed to be but a single hope. Force must be brought against force. The Bloody Mackenzie, now tied up under a distant tree, must be launched upon the foe. The boy was aware that the dog had accepted him as an ally, but that it had developed for Lamancha the passion of its morose and solitary life.

The prisoner's uneasiness grew with every step he took down the sweet-scented twilight glade. He was being taken to the house, and in that house there would be people—women, perhaps—journalists, maybe—a most embarrassing situation for a Cabinet Minister. The whole enterprise, which had been so packed with comedy and adventure, was about to end in disgrace, and it was he, the promoter, who had let the show down. For the first time since he arrived at Crask Lamancha wholeheartedly wished himself out of the thing with a clean sheet. There was something to be said after all for a man keeping to his groove. . . .

They emerged from the trees, and before them stretched lawns, with a large and important mansion at the other end. This was worse than his wildest dreams. He stopped short. 'Look here,' he said, 'isn't it time to end this farce? I admit I was trespassing, and was fairly caught out. Isn't that enough?'

'By Gad, it isn't,' said Johnson, into whose bosom a certainty of triumph and revenge had at last entered. 'Into the house you go, and there we'll get the truth out of you.'

'I'll pay any fine in reason, but I'm damned if I'm going near that house.'

For answer Johnson nodded to Macnicol, and the two closed in on the prisoner. Lamancha, now really desperate, shook off the stalker, and was about to break to his left, when Johnson tackled high and held him.

At the same moment the Bluidy Mackenzie took a hand in the game.

That faithful hound, conducted by Benjie, had just arrived on the scene of action. He saw his adored Lamancha, the first man who had really understood him, being assaulted by another whose appearance he did not favour. Like a stone from a sling he leaped from the covert, straight at Mr Johnson Claybody's throat.

It all happened in one crowded instant. Lamancha felt the impact of part of Mackenzie's body, saw Johnson sprawl and fall, and then observed his captor running wildly for the house with Mackenzie hot on his trail. Then—such is the instinct of man to side with man against beast—he started after him.

Never had a rising young commercial magnate shown a better turn of speed, for a mad dog was his private and particular fear, and this beast was raving mad. Macnicol and the navvies were some twenty yards behind, but Lamancha was a close second. Crying hoarsely, Johnson leaped the flower-beds and doubled like a hare in and out of a pergola. Ahead lay his mother's pet new lily pond, and, remembering dimly that

mad dogs did not love water, he plunged into it and embraced a lead Cupid in the centre.

Mackenzie loved water like a spaniel, and his great body shot after him. But the immersion caused a second's delay, and enabled Lamancha to take a flying leap which brought him almost atop of the dog. He clutched his collar and swung him back, making a commotion in the fountain like a tidal wave. Mackenzie recognised his friend and did not turn on him, but he still strained furiously after Johnson, who was now emerging like Proteus on the far side.

Suddenly the French windows of the house, which was not thirty yards off, opened, and the stage filled up with figures. First the amazed eyes of Lamancha saw Crossby entering from the right, evidently a prisoner, in the charge of two gillies; then at one set of windows appeared Sir Edward Leithen with a scared face, while from the other emerged the forms of Sir Archibald Roylance, Mr Palliser-Yeates, and a stout gentleman in a kilt, who might be Lord Claybody. To his mind, keyed by wrath and confusion to expectation of tragedy, there could only be one solution. Others beside himself had failed, and the secret of John Macnab was horridly patent to the world.

'Archie,' he panted, 'for God's sake call off your tripehound. I can't hold on any longer. . . . He'll eat that little man.'

Lord Claybody had unusual penetration. He observed his son and heir dripping and exhausted on the turf, and a figure, which looked like a caricature in the Opposition Press of an eminent Tory statesman, surrendering a savage hound to a small and dirty boy. Also he saw in the background a group of gillies and navvies. There was mystery here which had better be unriddled away from the gaze of the profane crowd. His eye caught Crossby's and Lamancha's. 'I think you'd better all come indoors,' he said.

(Continued on page 509.)

CANADA'S SOUTHERNMOST CORNER—PELEE ISLAND.

A CANADIAN, if asked to name the southernmost part of his country, might very well be at a loss for an answer. It is, in truth, a small island in Lake Erie, once famous as the only place in Canada where the Catawba grape could mature, and not unconnected with the people of Scotland in its little-known history. This is Pelee Island, the first home of two famous pioneering families, the M'Kees and the M'Cormicks.

Few travellers visit its shores, for it is some way from any big town, Windsor in Ontario being the nearest on the Canadian, Sandusky on the American side. The shape of it is long and narrow, the island being about nine miles in

length, and from three to four from east to west. The interior is to a large extent below the level of the lake, and an interesting system of pumping and canals enables this low but fruitful land to be cultivated. The whole length of the shore is wooded, with a fringe of bush behind the outer trees; consequently, seen from the lake, the island presents an exquisite study in green, red and white houses standing out in picturesque relief.

Originally the name of the island was Point-au-Pelée, a name possibly given to it by an early French-Canadian trader. The only record of its history (apart from local legend, which is perhaps the most interesting, though least

accurate of all) is a memorial to Lord Monck, then Governor-General of the country, dated in the year 1863. This document was drawn up on behalf of Mary M'Cormick, 'widow or relict of William M'Cormick' and of her surviving sons and daughters.

The memorial is of great interest as a record of how the British acquired the island, besides having a really human story behind it. It opens lucidly enough. 'On the first day of May, 1788, the Chiefs and Sachems of the Bands of the Chippewa and Ottawa nations of Indians, then owning and inhabiting the island (of Point-au-Pelée), executed with all due solemnity, and delivered to Thomas M'Kee, who was a half-breed and a Chief, and then of the Parish of L'Assumption, Quebec, a lease of the said Island, for a term of nine hundred and ninety-nine years.'

A legend has it that the new settlers gave the Indians a bushel of corn an acre, but there is no authenticity for this one-sided story. At any rate the Indians decamped, and Thomas M'Kee reigned on the island until his death in 1815, when he was succeeded by his son. Meanwhile the Indians who had originally been owners of the island were fast becoming extinct, their chiefs apparently being all dead by the year 1823, so that the right of the M'Kees to the property became almost absolute.

But before he died, the original Thomas M'Kee suffered a misfortune. 'The lease was taken from him,' says the document, 'with all his baggage, by the enemy, on the occasion of the retreat of the British forces after the battle of the Thames (in which he had participated) during the last war with the United States.'

In 1815 we have mention for the first time of the M'Cormick family; they obtain a lease as tenants to one of M'Kee's sons. Eight years later, one William M'Cormick secured the conveyance in fee of the whole island. It is interesting that, though a part of the island is now held in small farms, the M'Cormicks are still the leading island family, their property being considerable.

Alexander M'Kee made a thorough survey of the island in 1847. It was found to contain nearly twelve thousand acres, of which over five thousand were marsh. 'This marsh,' the surveyor reports, 'in consequence of its low level, is utterly irreclaimable; and about two thousand acres of the residue are liable to be overflowed during anything like a high stage of water; and further, there are at least five hundred acres on bed-rock—slightly covered with soil—which is also unfit for purposes of tillage. So less than four thousand acres are available at all times as arable land.' Thanks to the development of quarries, and the canal and pumping system, Pelee is now—in proportion to its size—one of the most productive corners of Canada.

In 1859 the M'Cormicks wished to raise a mortgage loan. The capitalists refused the money, there being no proofs of ownership. The island families thereupon brought an amicable action against the Crown, but were unexpectedly defeated, owing, as it appeared later, to the loss of the Indian lease. In the same year the Crown replied by issuing an 'information for intrusion' against Mary M'Cormick and William M'Kee. The memorial to Lord Monck was in answer to this, and eventually the families were confirmed in their rights by the Crown.

The most interesting development of recent years on Pelee Island has been the installation (and subsequent withdrawal) of a large wine-cellar, whose products are now famous in Canada, the finding of oil in small quantities, and the remarkable growth of the island fishing industry. It was the wine industry that caused the shortening of the name Point-au-Pelée, brevity being preferred in business.

Some Indian legends still survive. On the north-west side of the island is a large flat rock standing a few feet from the shore, known as Huldah's rock. The story runs that a trader came to Point-au-Pelée in the days of the Indians, and stayed a while on the island. There a beautiful Indian girl named Huldah fell deeply in love with him, and he remained with her for some time, living among the tribe. One day a ship arrived with an imperative summons for the white man to return to England. He promised never to desert his Indian girl, and departed, hoping to come back to the tribe.

Months and years went by, and Huldah stood every morning on the rock waiting and longing for the white sail of her lover's ship. It never came, and after long suffering, Huldah, in despair, threw herself from the rock where she had waited day by day for so long.

A traveller leaves the pleasant island with regret, for the people are kindly, and it is a beautiful place. It is said that the climate is the mildest in Canada, and if this is an exaggeration, it is certain that as a place for settlers it has many advantages and not a little romance.

LOCH ARD—SUNSET.

No breath disturbs the fragrant evening air,
No ripple steals across the loch's fair breast;
Craggs, trees, and bens are all reflected there,
Rose-flushed the waters from the crimson west.

The boats lie idle by the wooden pier;
Beside the boat-house, water lilies dream;
Far off, a shepherd's whistle loud we hear,
Nearby, the murmur of a mountain stream.

The crimson turns to gold, the gold to gray.
Soft twilight draws his curtain o'er the scene,
While, one by one, to guide our homeward way,
The silver stars shine forth from skies serene.

B. DUNBAR DEY.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

WILD DUCK.

By BEATRICE HERON-MAXWELL.

THE gray mists of evening are beginning to creep over the long valley, veiling the distant reaches of meadow-land in a soft indistinct haze, massing the scattered brakes and copses into one dark blur against the horizon, and bringing into relief the nearer, though still shadowy, outlines of tree and bracken. Even these look one dull uniform colour, bereft now of the glory that the sunset had shed on their autumn tints, which merge through tones of green and gold and russet to deepest crimson. Across the fields that lead to the river we go, treading quietly on the light carpet of fallen leaves that strew the ground, and hushing our voices to a murmur; for this is the hour of Nature's evensong, and we are nearing the haunts of the wild-fowl at the time that they take their last flight before rest.

A narrow path winds round the bend of the river, and slanting down to meet it from the uplands is the Lovers Walk, shut in by tall trees set closely in a long trim avenue. The shadows here lie thick and deep; and when we pass on to the desultory track that skirts the river border, our eyes—grown accustomed to the gloom—find clearer sight in the more open space, and we pick our way with ease through the gathering twilight to where a glint of pale silver shines between tall rushes and sheltering willows. This is the valley of the Teste, the river dear to hearts of fishermen who angle with the fly; and, ribbon-like, it winds with fitful haste through pleasant pastures, with here a lazy pool beside a bridge, and there a little torrent or a splashing weir; while swift, vague forms—elusive, hovering—speak of sport past and to come, of failures still to be redeemed.

Here on a stretch of sedgy grass we halt and draw breath and realise the stillness; a quiet of repose and not of loneliness, like that of a vast cathedral, where, though there is no sound of audible prayer, the silence holds echoes of many voices.

Four of the 'guns' move farther off, in couples, and are lost to view in the obscurity, and when the sound of their steps dies away we find that our ears—grown accustomed to the hush of night, as our eyes are to the dimness—are conscious of many sensations.

There are innumerable minute sounds, heart-

beats of the world's life—the fluttering of tiny wings, the stir of little feet, the rustling of small soft bodies in the tangle of the hedge; leaves shaken by a fleeting touch or breath fall in a shower to the ground; a field-cricket sings, and faint chirrupings betray the nesting-places of drowsy birds and little wayside creatures. At our feet a miniature offshoot of the river finds unobtrusive way, hidden in the deeper grass, and with its murmur one can detect the shy, startled movements of a belated moor-hen hurrying home.

Over by the river a heron calls and a night-jar answers harshly; and, far in the distance, where the dark line of woods meets the sky, an owl hoots with quaint semblance of distress.

Then comes the welcome, grating sound of duck voices, and our hearts beat high, for they are stirring and restless, and the sound is echoed higher up the stream. At any instant now they may come. The clouds have gathered over, and it would be too dark to shoot if it were not for a strip of lightness athwart the sky above our heads. We wait and watch. A wave of absolute quiet seems to settle over everything for a moment, and then, cleaving the air to our right with metallic rhythm, comes the sound we wait for—a sound that is indescribable, though we might liken it to a clear, sharp whistle with a soft dull thud in it, or to the beating of thin plates of silver together; but which in reality resembles nothing else under heaven, so that when you have once heard it you know that it is caused by the wings of many ducks in full flight, and that in another moment they will cross your vision and be past and gone.

We raise our guns—quickly, silently—and when the triangular cloud of dark silhouettes appears against the lighter sky, follow it with our aim for an appreciable fraction of time, and—fire! The other guns ring out simultaneously, and there is the hurtling sound of inert bodies falling through space, a splash or two in the river, and again dead silence. It is almost too dark to find those on land, but we grope about till success rewards us, and even, by the aid of a long bough, draw two floating victims carefully to the bank; and with this result, small as it is, we fain must be con-

tent, for the night is at hand, and the duck, cautioned and wary, will make no more flights this evening.

So with our string of 'flappers' we go home, and in the fullness of time digestion, waiting

upon appetite, approves our prowess; for there are few things better than a tender 'flapper' taken in one of his first autumn 'flightings,' before either he or we have reached 'the winter of our discontent.'

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

CHAPTER II.—*continued.*

III.

VERA'S bright eyes sparkled with indignation as she turned to me. 'Isn't he horrid?' she queried.

'Who is he?' I said.

'Oh! I'm so glad you answered him as you did,' she replied. 'Hubert had to be rather rude to him just now; he seems as though he couldn't let me alone; he has quite persecuted me.'

'Surely not?' said I. 'However, he sha'n't persecute you while you have a bodyguard around you comprising Hubert and myself, to say nothing of all the others. I had been thinking they seemed a very nice set of people here.'

'Oh yes, they are!' she answered; 'and the admiral and Lady Emma are two such dears; they have been so kind to me during my visit here.'

'Well,' I said, 'between you and me I think the admiral's champagne has been a little too much for your admirer. However, don't look troubled; we sha'n't allow him to worry you.'

At this moment up came Hubert, and I resigned Vera to him—not without an inward sigh, for a solitary man must not be supposed to be insensible to the charm of such a girl as Vera; and when the accepted lover, worthy of his prized possession, proudly carries her off with an air of ownership as though he challenged the whole world to deny his right, the man who is left to himself feels distinctly left.

But I was glad for both of them; and as I watched them gliding through the intricacies of 'The Arcadians' to the strains of the Red Imperial Band, I too felt a sense of ownership—they were my very dear friends, and I felt proud of them.

It was now nearly two o'clock. The party was a large one; but there was no crush, for a portion of the extensive grounds surrounding the house had been lighted with fairy lamps, and on this summer's night there were as many guests out upon the lawns as in the house. In fact, a number of the guests, acting upon a hint from their hostess, arranged to have some of the dances upon the lawn, and a very pretty scene it was; and when

Music arose, with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell.

But I began to think about getting away. Hubert had said that he would not be later than two, and for the past five minutes I had been on the look-out for him.

A little later I caught sight of Vera with our hostess, and at once went up to them. 'I'm afraid I must get hold of Hubert,' I said, 'and drag him away from all these enchantments. Have you seen him?'

'No, indeed!' cried Lady Emma; 'and here is Vera complaining that this is one of his dances and he has not come for her.'

I remained chatting with them, and still he did not come. I was just about to go in quest of him, when I saw him hastily making his way to us. He seemed rather breathless and excited. 'Oh, Vera! I'm so sorry about this dance,' he said; 'but the fact is I felt rather overdone with the heat.'

Lady Emma expressed her concern, and suggested some iced coffee; and Vera, laying her hand upon his arm, said, 'Yes, you do look pale. Come and see if a little coffee won't pick you up.'

'No, thank you,' he murmured; and then, in an aside to me, 'I've ordered our taxi to come round, so if you are ready——?'

We made our adieux. 'Vera leaves us to-morrow,' said Lady Emma.

'Yes,' said Vera; 'and Hubert has promised to be at Paddington to see me off.—Don't come, dear,' turning to him, 'if you are not feeling quite fit; but come if you can. I shall be on the look-out for you; one o'clock sharp, remember.'

A clasp of hands and a smile, and so we departed. And many a long day it was before those two poor sweethearts met again.

Very rapidly our motor devoured the twelve miles between Richmond and St James's. My young friend seemed averse to talking, and with the help of a couple of cigars we soon became absorbed in our own private thoughts. I had thoroughly enjoyed the evening, and my only regret was Hubert's indisposition; but I hoped that a few hours in bed would soon put him to rights again.

'Good-bye, old man,' I said as I got out at my club; 'I suppose we shall meet at Wingate before long? I go down to-morrow, but if you still feel seedy, send me word, and I will come round after breakfast to your hotel and have a look at you.'

However, there was no word from him next morning, and so after a late breakfast, and a look at the day's papers, I went into the City, transacted some business there, and in due course betook myself to Waterloo Station for Wingate and home.

CHAPTER III.

I.

THE train had but just started, and I was unfolding an evening paper, when a headline caught my eye.

'SHOCKING DISCOVERY AT RICHMOND.'

'At an early hour this morning the body of a gentleman attired in full evening dress was discovered at the foot of a large cedar tree in the pleasure grounds of Sussex Lodge in circumstances which point to a sudden and violent end.

'Admiral Chapman, who resides there, at once identified the body as that of Major Spicer, one of his guests at a ball given on the previous evening.

'It seems that Major Spicer had but lately returned from India, on retirement from active service. He came to the ball unaccompanied by any friend, and as the number of guests was large, exceeding two hundred, his departure with the others when they left had been taken for granted.

'The coroner's inquest will be held to-morrow, and although there are rumours that the appearance of the deceased points to death by strangulation, it may be found that death was due to apoplexy, or some other natural cause.'

I put down the paper, and rapidly passed in review the events of the previous night.

This must be the very man who had annoyed Vera, and whom I had frowned upon.

She had whispered his name so hurriedly to me that I could not be quite sure of it, but it certainly was something like Spicer, and I had little doubt—yes! this must be the very man. Poor fellow! What a dreadful and sudden tumble out of this life!

And then I remembered that Vera must still have been at Sussex Lodge when the discovery was made. How shocked she must have felt! And, indeed, how every one would feel it, especially the kind old admiral and his wife!

I hoped Hubert had been able to meet Vera at Paddington as had been arranged. He would be at Wingate before Sunday, and then I should be able to hear more about it. My Saturday's *Times* also would be sure to have some account of the inquest, and as the circumstances were so peculiar, a detailed report might well be expected.

II.

The full report need not here be given. Let it suffice that the personality of the deceased officer was referred to, and also the unexcep-

tionable character of the entertainment, and of the guests at Sussex Lodge.

Evidence was given as to the finding of the body, and as to its appearance. The medical evidence, however, was incomplete, and although there was a consensus of opinion that death was due to suffocation, it did not appear that there were sufficient *data* to determine the question whether the deceased had been subjected to violence at the hands of some other person, or had died through falling on his face in a fit.

There was considerable congestion and discoloration in the region of the throat and some abrasion of the outer skin, and these marks afforded reason for the suspicion that Major Spicer had come to his death by foul means. But if so, what were the means employed?

It was within the range of possibility that a noose might have been thrown over his head by some one approaching him from behind, or, if the attack had been a frontal one, very great strength and determination must have been shown by some person who apparently had seized him by the throat.

A further consideration of the case led to conjectures of a different kind. The attitude of the body when it was found showed that death had not taken place without a convulsive struggle, for both hands were violently clenched. But the left hand was clenched upon the throat, and it was argued that under a sudden sense of suffocation due to natural causes the deceased officer might have made a desperate effort to tear his collar off, and thus caused the abrasions and bruises.

Under these circumstances it clearly was of the utmost importance that the inquest should be adjourned to give time for a more searching investigation. The inquest, therefore, was adjourned. In the final result the medical experts were unable to come to absolute agreement as to primary causes, and an open verdict was given.

III.

Meantime my talk with Hubert Carrington at Wingate, to which I had looked forward, never came off.

He was not at church on the Sunday morning, but his mother and sisters waylaid me in the churchyard after service, and at once spoke of the tragedy at Sussex Lodge. 'Hubert has sent me a note,' said Mrs Carrington, 'just a few lines. He is greatly shocked, as indeed, my dear rector, you must be. He tells me he decided he wouldn't leave town till after the inquest was over.'

'Oh! I should hardly have thought that was necessary,' I observed.

'Probably,' exclaimed Cecilia, 'the fact of Vera being at the Lodge will have made him decide to stay.'

'No!' said I, 'for Vera was to leave at

midday on Friday, and Hubert was to see her off at Paddington.'

It was not until some days after this conversation that in the course of further talk with the Carringtons I was told a piece of news which much surprised me.

It appeared that Hubert had stayed in London until after the inquest; but as soon as this was over, instead of coming home to Olderton he had written for some of his clothes and other things to be sent to him without delay, to enable him to proceed to Montreal by the Royal Mail steamer which left Bristol three days later.

'I dare say,' said Mrs Carrington, 'he won't mind my showing you his letter. It seems to have been a very sudden decision; but he explains the reason for it.'

'You see,' he wrote, 'my agent out there advises me not to lose any time, as the value of the land is rushing up week by week in consequence of the decision of the Canadian Pacific Railway to bring their new branch right through the Pine Creek district.

'This will bring it within six miles of my holding; and the question isn't just a question of selling my land at the right moment, but whether we ought not to spend all available capital on buying up every acre at present prices. A huge advance is absolutely certain, and I agree with my agent that I ought to be on the spot.

'So probably, dear mother, I shall have to be there some considerable time, but I will keep you well posted as to my movements. I can almost hear you saying, "Now, my dear boy, don't speculate," so let me assure you that I've no intention of doing anything rash. But land is land, and can't run away; and the railway will make the land valuable without much help from me.'

IV.

Some six or seven months passed, and still there was no sign of any home-coming on the part of my friend Hubert.

During this time I saw as usual a good deal of his mother and sisters; but although they heard from him periodically, there seemed to be no special news for them to tell.

I myself in the same period received from him only a couple of letters, very brief and not altogether satisfactory to my way of thinking. The tone of them struck me as being rather stilted and reserved.

And then one day something happened which made me distinctly uneasy about him.

'I shall be in town to-morrow for three or four days,' I said to Mrs Carrington; 'so if you or the girls want me to do any commissions for you, pray command me.'

They seemed to have no commands to lay upon me, so I said good-bye, and Mrs Carrington accompanied me to the entrance-hall.

'I wonder,' she said, 'if you will be running up against Vera during your stay in London?'

'Oh! is she just now in London?' I asked.

'Yes, she and her father and mother are staying with old friends, the Chichesters, in Lennox Gardens.'

'Oh, I should very much like to see Vera again!' I exclaimed.

'Well now, do call,' she replied.

'But do you really think I might?' I questioned.

'Yes! I'm sure you might; Vera always looked upon you with so much affection as being my boy's great friend.'

'Then I certainly will; and perhaps you would drop her a line, so that her friends may understand that I don't come altogether unannounced.'

She paused, and looked somewhat wistfully at me. 'I think on the whole I would rather not write,' she then said; 'and if you only will call it would be so kind of you. I want you to report to me very particularly what you think about dear Vera.'

'Why! has she been ill?' I asked.

'No! not ill—but there is this long and unexpected absence in Canada, you see; and, dear friend—I really must make a confidant of you—I have begun to feel quite unhappy about my son. It is evident that something has come between him and Vera. They were so fond of each other, and now a sort of estrangement has come about. There is hardly a reference to her in any of his letters. And then his going off so hurriedly, and for so long a time! There must have been some misunderstanding, or some quarrel, and it dates back to the unfortunate dance at Richmond.'

'Well, I happened to be with him,' I said, 'when he parted from her that night. He then was suffering from indisposition caused by the heat of the evening; but he and Vera certainly seemed affectionate enough when they parted, and he was to see her off from Paddington in the morning.'

'But that's just what he didn't do,' said Hubert's mother.

We looked into each other's eyes. 'Did Vera tell you this? or Hubert? or both of them?' I asked.

'No! it was Vera. She was talking to me about Hubert's long absence when she was here some two months ago, and I discovered that he was not writing to her nearly so often as I had expected. She told me about his not turning up at Paddington, and then, poor child, she quite broke down.'

'Then the estrangement is not on her side,' I said. 'I will make a point of going to see her; and if,' I added, 'it should turn out that I have nothing to report to you, it doesn't follow, mind you, that I shan't have something to write about to Hubert himself.'

(Continued on page 527.)

THE BIRTH OF THE MODERN KINGDOM OF ITALY, 1859-1861.

By HENRY JOHNSTONE

I.

'IT is a strange error,' says the gallant and eloquent Napier, in his *History of the War in the Peninsula*—'it is a strange error to think the Italians have not a brave spirit.' Yet to this day many people persist in the error, perhaps for this reason—that, just as a man in old age forgets much of his middle life, but retains vivid memories of his childhood and early manhood, so that general memory which is called 'history' usually presents us with vivid pictures from the more distant past, while, for most of us, the events of fifty to a hundred years ago are dim and confused, so that, if we try to marshal them into definite order, we wonder at the vagueness of our knowledge, the extent and variety of our ignorance. Napier was writing of the Italians who served under the great Napoleon and suffered and died for a cause that was not their own. From the close of Napoleon's wars to the year 1859, whatever active courage, whatever passive courage the Italians showed—and they showed the former in a high, the latter in a quite extraordinary degree—they did not succeed; and nothing is easier than to sneer at the unsuccessful and deny the reality of those virtues upon which the stamp of success has not been set. But in 1859 they began to succeed at last, and—though the world hardly yet believes it—they owed their success in large measure to themselves. The impossible dreams of 1848 and 1849 became, within twelve years, to a great extent accomplished facts.

After the revolutions of 1848 and 1849 the King of Naples, the Pope, and the other dispossessed princes returned to their capitals. It was to be expected—and it was the fact—that, however little any of them had ever resembled Solomon, they all returned in the likeness of Rehoboam; the little finger of oppression, after 1849, was thicker than its loins had been before. In the Pope's dominions, and even in Tuscany, where the steel hand had hitherto worn a velvet glove, 'order,' as the phrase ran, 'was vigorously enforced'; that is to say, reaction and oppression prevailed. In the north-east the Austrians ruled by naked force: death, cruel flogging, imprisonment, or at least exile and poverty were the lot of all who offered, or were suspected of offering, resistance. But not even the Austrian rule was so cruel as that of the hated King 'Bomba' in the south. For seven months, in 1850 and 1851, a great state-trial dragged on at

Naples: forty prisoners, the ablest and noblest of those who had put their hands to the work of constitutional government in 1848 and 1849, were tried for treason. The means employed to secure conviction were false witness and forgery; the sentences passed were of imprisonment for life, or for long terms of years. And the horrors of this imprisonment were worse than those inflicted by the Austrians on the northern patriots confined in Spielberg. Every circumstance of physical squalor and misery was intensely aggravated for these high-minded men by enforced association with the vilest criminals. In some cases patriot and criminal were chained together; the imagination shrinks from picturing this hell. Yet when a rescue was proposed, one of the patriots, Spaventa, to his undying honour, declined the hope of deliverance, because an unavoidable part of the scheme would have been the release of the criminals also to prey upon society. Another, the Duke of Morciano, has told how his one fear was lest he should be pardoned—since to be pardoned by 'Bomba' meant indelible disgrace in the eyes of all who loved liberty. All this time Naples was nominally a constitutional kingdom; for it was not worth while to repeal a constitution which could be disregarded with impunity.

II.

William Ewart Gladstone played many parts in the public eye, and the most opposite views are still taken of his long and strenuous career. Perhaps no act of his has been more generally approved than the publication, in 1851, of his *Letters to Lord Aberdeen*. He had recently been in Italy, had witnessed a part of the proceedings against the Neapolitan patriots, and had visited the prisons where they were confined. Mr Gladstone was not then a Liberal, and the party with which he acted were disposed to regard Italian patriots as dangerous revolutionaries; but he had looked on tyranny at close quarters, and all that was best in him compelled him to denounce the loathsome thing. He quoted the words of an Italian regarding it: 'This is the negation of God erected into a system of government.' The sympathy which our countrymen showed towards the Italian cause from 1851 onwards is largely due to Mr Gladstone.

In the kingdom of Sardinia, and nowhere else in Italy, there was good government. More and more clearly all who loved Italy began to see that the one hope for her lay in union under the Sardinian Crown. Mazzini may still have

dreamt of a republic, but not Garibaldi, nor the wise Venetian exile, Manin. Victor Emmanuel had concluded a peace with Austria, not dishonourable nor wholly disastrous, and was maintaining the Sardinian constitution granted by his father. Cavour had emerged from the study of economics and the management of a patriotic newspaper, had been a member of the government from 1850, and became its head in 1852. He insisted that Sardinia should ally herself with France and Britain in the Crimean War, in which it might have been supposed that she had little enough concern. But Cavour knew what he was doing. Austria was too strong for Italy in the oppressed and divided condition in which Italy then lay; she had to find an ally against Austria. Cavour would have preferred British help; failing this, he meant to secure the aid of France, knowing well that Napoleon III. would exact a price for that aid. It was due to Cavour's policy, and to a strange turn of events that followed, that, while the revived French republic had been the enemy, the revived French empire was now to be the friend—up to a certain point—of Italian liberty and unity.

In 1858 an Italian refugee, Orsini, tried to blow up the Emperor of the French. Later in the same year a meeting took place at Plombières, in the Vosges, between the emperor and Cavour. Napoleon was the least calculable of monarchs or of men; and Orsini, though a murderer, was also an ardent lover of Italy, and displayed—like so many Italians of last century—a high devotion to his country, only intensified by the approach of death. During his trial he was allowed full opportunity of revealing this devotion, and his letter to the emperor asking, not mercy for himself but help for Italy, was printed and read all over France and the kingdom of Sardinia.

Not only had Napoleon the magnanimity to allow the appeal to be published in his dominions, but he meant to listen to it—from what mixture of motives who can say? Cavour, on first hearing of the attempt on the emperor's life, had exclaimed, 'If only this be not the work of Italians!' Within six months he was to find that this apparently worse than useless crime had after all helped to loosen the fetters of Italy.

III.

The agreement made between the emperor and the statesman at Plombières was this: France (with 200,000 men) and Sardinia (with 100,000) were to drive the Austrians from the Lombard and Venetian territories; in return France was to receive Savoy, the cradle of the Sardinian royal family, and possibly also Nizza, the birthplace of Garibaldi.

In December 1858 Cavour sent for Garibaldi, who had returned from America in 1854 and

was living quietly in the little island of Caprera. 'Write me a hymn for my volunteers,' said Garibaldi to his friend Mercantini, who wrote what became the anthem of Italian liberty. Garibaldi began to enroll the 'Alpine Rangers,' who became famous in the liberation of Lombardy. Mazzini hated the French alliance, and foretold from the first that Venice would not be set free.

On New Year's Day 1859 Napoleon said to the Austrian ambassador that he was sorry the relations between the two countries were not better, but that his sentiments towards the Austrian emperor were unchanged. All Europe was startled. Austria, France, and Sardinia pushed forward preparations for war. Victor Emmanuel declared that he could no longer remain deaf to 'the cry of suffering that rises to our ears from so many parts of Italy'; and Cavour undertook to make Austria declare war on Sardinia in the first week of May. The actual order to invade Sardinian territory was given on the 27th April, and the Austrians began to cross the Ticino, but did not move briskly enough to achieve anything decisive before the French could come into line. The Sardinians and French united, and won a first success at Montebello.

One of the steps by which Cavour had at once provoked the Austrians and made ready to meet them had been to encourage volunteers from all parts of Italy—including those under Austrian rule—to enlist in the Sardinian army; a large proportion of these came under Garibaldi's command. Poorly equipped as they were, his 'Alpine Rangers' did good work; serving a king whose active allies the French were, they could not, of course, wear the 'red shirt,' so famous before and afterwards.

Garibaldi moved independently with his little force of 3500 men, operating as an advanced left wing well to the north of the main armies. Crossing Lago Maggiore into Lombardy, he was everywhere welcomed by the Lombards, who hastened to put themselves under Victor Emmanuel's rule. He was now far ahead of the regular armies, and the Austrian general, Urban, tried to crush him at Varese, but, though his artillery at first gave him an advantage, his men could not face the bayonets of the Italian volunteers. Urban was reinforced, and resolved to hold Como against Garibaldi, whose numbers did not amount to half his own. But on the 27th May he failed to hold the pass of San Fermo against the volunteers, who that night were received with a wild welcome as they entered Como, already evacuated by the enemy. By the end of the campaign Garibaldi had pushed as far east as the Val Tellina, had taught his men the secrets of that partisan warfare of which he was so great a master, had impressed upon the Austrians the conviction that his volunteers were more than a match for

their best regulars, and had shown to the world that the 'brave spirit' of the Italians was not to be held cheap.

But the campaign was actually decided farther to the south. At Magenta, on 4th June, the French beat the Austrians, though not very decidedly. Next day the Austrians evacuated Milan, which was thus restored to liberty in the tenth year of renewed oppression, and on the 8th June the Milanese welcomed their king and his ally, Napoleon. 'How these people must have suffered!' said the emperor, on witnessing their delight at being set free. Already the rulers of Tuscany, Modena, and Parma had fled, or were fleeing, from their dominions, leaving these parts of Italy, as well as Lombardy, free to unite under Victor Emmanuel's sovereignty.

On the 24th June was fought the second important battle of the war, at Solferino. Both sides seem to have been taken by surprise, and among the Austrians confusion reigned. From eight in the morning the French were attacking the heights of Solferino, by two o'clock they had carried them, but it was near six when the Austrian retreat began. A separate action went on all day between the Sardinians and the Austrians at San Martino, of which the issue was still doubtful when orders from the field of Solferino compelled the Austrians to retreat.

IV.

And now Napoleon resolved to stop the fighting. It was said that the carnage at Solferino had shaken his nerve, or had shocked his humanity; that he feared to enter the 'Quadrilateral' of Austrian fortresses which now lay before him; that, bravely as his men had fought, perilous defects had appeared in their organisation. But apart from all these things, he had for once a simple and intelligible motive for his conduct. The Prussians were making warlike preparations, and he feared for his north-eastern frontier. Though he had been so far successful, he proposed an armistice. The Austrian emperor accepted the proposal and Victor Emmanuel assented to it. Cavour hurried from Turin, had a furious interview with his king—such as, perhaps, has never passed before or since between a sovereign and his minister—and resigned office.

Preliminaries were settled at Villafranca; the Austrians gave up Lombardy, but retained the Venetian territories, as Mazzini had foretold. It was understood that Napoleon would not claim Nizza or Savoy. His hope now was to see an Italian confederation under the Pope—a union which would not be a real or effective union at all. But the newly-freed peoples of Tuscany, Modena, Parma, and Romagna were resolved to become one with Lombardy and Sardinia, and neither France nor Austria could say them nay. Delay there was, but the union was accomplished; whereupon Napoleon claimed

and received Savoy and Nizza, not as the reward of his assistance in freeing Lombardy, but as the price of his assent to the union of Central Italy under Victor Emmanuel.

The king and Cavour were soon on friendly terms again. It is the measure of the passion with which both men loved Italy that it made inevitable a reconciliation which must otherwise have been impossible. After Villafranca Cavour had said, 'They have cut me off from making Italy from the north by diplomacy. Very well; I will make it from the south by revolution.' This was the great adventure which the year 1860 was to see tried.

A great difference between Mazzini and Garibaldi was this: that Mazzini thought even hopeless insurrections of value as protests against tyranny, while Garibaldi would never deliberately be a party to throwing away men's lives where success was impossible—though his standard of possibility was not that of other men. A new king, Francis II., had lately come to the Neapolitan throne; he had been invited, but had refused, to join in the war against Austria. Sicily, it was believed, was ready to rise once more if a leader could be found; now the only possible leader was Garibaldi. He was ready to head an insurrection on two conditions—that the Sicilians should start it themselves, and that they should rise in the name of 'Italy and Victor Emmanuel.' Even Mazzini recognised at length that it was 'no longer a question of republic or monarchy,' but of national unity.

In April 1860 the Sicilians rose under Rosolino Pilo, and Garibaldi, giving up a scheme of offering resistance to the handing over of Nizza, his own birthplace, to the French, prepared to go to Sicily, knowing that if he succeeded the king and Cavour would accept his success, and caring little what might happen to himself if he failed. He speedily re-enlisted many of his old 'Alpine Rangers' of the year before. Others, untried, were hardly less eager to serve under so famous a captain. His second in-command was Nino Bixio, an officer in whom zeal for the cause seemed at times almost to reach the pitch of madness. It was necessary to avoid depleting the regular army, and committing the king or Cavour too visibly to the new adventure; but Garibaldi was no longer acting along with the French, and the famous 'red shirts' reappeared.

The force embarked at Quarto, close to Genoa, on the night between the 5th and 6th of May, 1089 strong, and landed in Sicily on the 11th; almost all were Italians. Cavour gave orders to stop the expedition, but in such terms as made it clear that they were not to be obeyed. Two British war-vessels happened to be lying off Marsala, the Sicilian port where the landing was to take place, and their presence and the red shirts of the volunteers

—which suggested British uniforms—puzzled the officer of the Neapolitan navy who should have hindered the landing. When at last he opened fire it proved totally ineffectual, and not the least difficult part of Garibaldi's enterprise was safely accomplished.

v.

Next day, 12th May, the 'March of the Thousand' began. There were over 20,000 Neapolitan regulars in Sicily. Garibaldi was joined by 200 volunteers, who remained under his command, and by varying numbers of islanders, who were useful as guides, and did better under fire than was to be expected. On the 15th the Thousand carried the hill of Pianto dei Romani. It was a stiff fight. The Neapolitans did well. The advance of the volunteers from terrace to terrace was slow, and even Bixio at one point counselled retreat. The chief's answer was, 'Here we make Italy or die.' But the enemy began to run short of cartridge and to throw stones. One of these hit Garibaldi, and revealed the condition of things to him. His men carried the hill-top with a final rush. He pushed on for Palermo, by skilful strategy drawing off a considerable body of the enemy, who followed his apparent traces far inland and returned to find him in the city.

There was a fierce struggle when the volunteers broke into Palermo on the 27th, and street-fighting and bombardment from the castle and the fleet filled Palermo with sounds and sights of horror. On the 30th Garibaldi had hardly a cartridge left, and on the 30th the Neapolitan commander proposed an armistice of twenty-four hours. Garibaldi met two Neapolitan generals on board the British flag-ship, and returned to announce that he would renew hostilities next day. The people illuminated the city that night, and the Neapolitan commander, who seems to have doubted the spirit of his men, agreed to evacuate the place. Garibaldi, by unfaltering coolness, had made up for his want of ammunition, and so induced the enemy to quit a place from which he had no means of ousting him by force. The freeing of Palermo, the capital of Sicily, was the crowning achievement of the Thousand. Fresh bodies of better equipped volunteers, to the number of 5000, now joined them, yet it was with difficulty that the rest of the island was liberated, and the citadel of Messina did not surrender till March 1861.

Victor Emmanuel now wrote to Garibaldi that, if the King of Naples gave up Sicily, it would be reasonable to abandon all further attempts upon his kingdom. The general replied that, once he had made His Majesty King of Italy, he would be delighted to obey him for the rest of his life. He induced 8000 men who had gathered in the island of

Sardinia for an attack on the Pope's dominions to join him instead in the invasion of Calabria, and prepared to pass the Strait of Messina. Cavour said that this was the most difficult juncture in his public life—so much had been gained in the last year and a half, and the danger was so grave of losing it all again, especially if Garibaldi passed on from Naples to attack Rome, which was certain to arouse Napoleon's open hostility, for the French had had a garrison in Roman territory ever since 1849.

Cavour's first hope, that the Neapolitans would rise against Francis II., and adopt Victor Emmanuel as their king before Garibaldi crossed the strait, was disappointed. On 8th August the crossing began. Feints and false starts baffled the Neapolitan naval officers, and by the 21st Garibaldi had some 19,000 men on the mainland. Reggio fell on the 21st. Near Salerno there were 30,000 Neapolitans. Colonel Peard—known as 'Garibaldi's Englishman'—made use of the telegraph to despatch such alarming messages that these troops were withdrawn towards Capua, and the king left Naples for Gaeta.

Garibaldi, taking with him only thirteen officers, entered Naples, still garrisoned by the king's troops. 'Drive slower, slower yet,' he said, and stood up in the carriage as he passed in front of the guns which commanded the Toledo. The artillerymen saluted, and Naples was virtually free, the king's troops marching out on 11th September, and the ships in the bay being surrendered to Persano, the admiral who, earlier in the year, had received Cavour's nominal instructions to stop the Thousand on their way to Sicily.

vi.

And now Garibaldi was preparing to spring from Naples upon Rome. But Cavour had rightly decided that this must not be. France, Austria, and other Powers were threatening; there were French troops on Roman soil, and the danger was too great. When a forest-fire is raging, a better-controlled fire is sometimes started to burn a gap which the first fire cannot overleap. Our Highland sheep-farmers sometimes make use of a similar plan when burning the heather in spring. This was the method now adopted by Cavour. To keep Garibaldi from advancing on Rome from the south, he directed an advance into the Pope's territories from the north—dangerous, indeed, but not so dangerous, as direct conflict with Napoleon's troops might be avoided, and at least Rome itself could be let alone. The northern army entered the Pope's dominions, defeated a mixed force of Frenchmen and others in the papal service near Ancona, and pushed on towards the kingdom of Naples.

Garibaldi and the Neapolitans now faced

each other, with the river Volturno between them. On 1st October the Neapolitans crossed the river; up to midday they had the advantage, and actually pierced Garibaldi's centre; but finally they were thrust back across the river, or had to surrender where they stood. The following day the army from the north and Garibaldi's men touched hands. On the 26th the king and Garibaldi met. The general dismounted, walked up to his sovereign and said, 'Hail, King of Italy!' The king replied with the one word, 'Thanks!'

The kingdom of Naples, including Sicily, was now united to the kingdom of Italy, though Gaeta held out till January, the citadel of Messina till March, of the following year. The Italian kingdom thus included all that

was known as Italy up to the year 1919, except the territory of Venice, still held by the Austrians, and the Pope's remaining dominions, much shrunk since the beginning of 1859. Savoy and Nice had been given up to France. Early in 1859 Cavour had said, 'I am leaving the last sitting of the Piedmontese parliament; the next will be that of the kingdom of Italy'; and this kingdom of Italy, though not yet complete, had now come into being.

The king wished to make Garibaldi a duke, thus raising him to the rank of the king's cousin, and to shower wealth upon him. He declined these offers, and returned to Caprera, 'to dig up the potatoes which he had planted in the spring.'²

THE TRAGEDY OF THE SEVEN HUNTERS.

By J. G. LOCKHART.

I.

OUT in the North Atlantic, uninhabited, seldom visited and often storm-bound, lie the Seven Hunters, better known, perhaps, as the Flannan Islands. They are little more than rocks, for the largest of them measures only five hundred by two hundred yards; and they are among the loneliest spots in the world. Seventeen miles to the east of them is the island of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides; but to the west there is no land between them and the coast of North America.

The seven islands differ little in appearance. Gray cliffs of gneiss tower above the waters to a height that varies from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet; and the tops are crowned with smooth stretches of turf, starred with sea-pink and buttercup and ragged-robin. They have always been a great haunt of sea-fowl, and especially of puffins, which, orange-beaked and orange-footed, sit in row on solemn row about the cliffs. Except for these the islands remained for long years untenanted, though in bygone times, when the grazing was poor in Lewis, sheep used to be taken across and left on them to fend for themselves for a month or two.

To talk of the history of such rocks as these is perhaps a misuse of language; yet the islands¹ possess both a ruin and a tradition. The ruin, which is on Eilean Mor, the largest of the group, is that of a little chapel; and the tradition has it that there, in the seventh century, St Flannan, the bishop of Killaloe, made his home and dwelt for many years in seclusion from the world.

In the nineteenth century, however, the

Flannan Islands began to have other associations, which were far from saintly; they became a minor problem. Situated, as they are, on or close to the route of vessels bound by the Butt of Lewis for the north coast of Scotland, or through the Pentland Firth for some Scandinavian port, they were a dangerous obstacle on a dark night or in thick weather. Many a ship crashed on to those unlighted rocks; and small was the chance of escape of those aboard when they found themselves caught between the fury of the waves and the gray cliffs of Flannan. Even if they were so fortunate as to reach the shore and to clamber up onto one of the little grassy plateaus, in certain seasons of the year they might remain there undiscovered for days and even weeks, until, perhaps, they exchanged death by drowning for death by exposure or starvation.

Towards the close of last century, therefore, as the result of a good deal of representation and of more than one disaster, it was decided to build a lighthouse on the Flannan Islands. The task of constructing it was both laborious and dangerous; the sea was seldom really calm, and it was necessary to blast landing-places out of the solid rock, to erect cranes, and to hoist all the materials required to the top of the cliff. Consequently the work, which was put in hand by the Northern Lighthouse Board in 1895, was not completed until the month of December 1899. The lighthouse was placed on Eilean Mor, close to the ruin of St Flannan's chapel, and two hundred feet above the sea; and in the tower, which was seventy-five feet high, was installed a light of 140,000 candle-power, visible for a distance of forty miles. Such was the station that had been established for exactly a year

¹ See *Behold the Hebrides!* by Alasdair Alpin MacGregor.

² Countess E. Martinengo-Cesaresco.

when the extraordinary tragedy took place which cost three men their lives, baffled every attempt at investigation, and still remains an unsolved mystery of the sea.

II.

The lighthouse was manned by a staff of four men, one of whom was always away on leave; so that the work was arranged in a continuous shift, each man doing six weeks on and then taking a fortnight off. In order to work the reliefs the Northern Lighthouse Board's steamer, the *Hesperus*, visited the station, weather permitting, once a fortnight.

On 26th December 1900, when the *Hesperus* appeared off the Flannan Islands, the fortnightly relief was some days overdue. Probably it had been delayed by the stormy weather; at all events the islands had last been visited on 6th December, nearly three weeks before. The men left on duty at that date were James Ducat, Thomas Marshall, and Donald M'Arthur; and the fourth man, Joseph Moore, was now returning to the islands in the *Hesperus* to relieve one of the others, whose turn it was to take a spell of leave. The programme was according to routine. After landing Moore with letters and provisions for the station, and embarking the other man, the steamer was to return to Loch Roag in the afternoon.

Some account has already been given of the general character of the islands: a few details about Eilean Mor, the rock on which the lighthouse was built, may be added. It is, as has been said, the largest of the group. It is egg-shaped in appearance, and has been described as like a larger edition of the Bass Rock. At its highest point is the lighthouse itself, from which a grassy slope stretches to the edge of the cliffs. When the construction of the station was begun, it was found necessary to cut two landing-places out of the rock; one of these was on the west and one on the east side of the island, so that on most days, if there was not actually a gale blowing, it would be possible to land materials, stores, or reliefs, at one of them. At each landing-place a zigzag stair had been cut up the cliff, and a crane and a trolley tramway had been installed.

On this particular day the *Hesperus* hove-to off the east landing and hoisted the usual signals. To the surprise of those aboard, however, no answering signals were shown from the lighthouse; and, what was more significant, it was evident from the appearance of the landing that none of the usual preparations had been made for the reception of the steamer. It was possible, of course, that the ship, being overdue, was not expected; yet she should have been sighted while still at some distance from the island, and it was surprising that not one of the three keepers should be visible.

At first, however, the deserted appearance of the island aroused no apprehension of any

disaster. A boat was manned, and put off for the east landing with Moore, the assistant keeper, who was returning to duty. Still no one appeared. In the absence of anyone at the landing-place to lend a hand, Moore had a difficult jump to make in order to reach the shore. He managed it, and, leaving his companions in the boat, set off at once up the zigzag path leading to the station. When he arrived there he found the entrance-gate and outside doors closed. Pushing them open, he entered. The place was empty. In the living-room the clock had stopped, and, although it was mid-winter, no fire was lit. He looked into the bedroom, thinking that perhaps the men had overslept themselves; but there was no one there.

Puzzled, and by this time more than a little alarmed, he hurried back to the landing-place to obtain assistance, and on hearing his account of his experiences two more men scrambled ashore and joined him. The three men then made a thorough and systematic search of the island and the lighthouse premises. But they found no one. There was not a trace of the missing keepers; there was scarcely a hint of their fate. The Seven Hunters had claimed and taken them, as though resenting the invasion of their long solitude; the men had simply and completely disappeared.

The search did not take very long, and though nothing was found to indicate an explanation of the tragedy, certain points of interest and significance were noted. In the first place there was the slate on which the records were kept by Ducat, the principal keeper. The last entry had been made at 9 A.M. on Saturday, 15th December. It was, therefore, fairly safe to assume that the calamity, whatever its precise nature might have been, took place some time in the course of that day. But a further investigation of the premises enabled the time to be fixed more closely. The morning's work had evidently been completed. The big lamps had been trimmed, the oil fountains and can-tees were full, and the lens and machinery had been cleaned since their last night of work. In the kitchen, too, everything was tidy, and the pots and pans had been washed. Thus it was pretty clear that the mysterious tragedy must have taken place during the late morning or the afternoon of the 15th. We may mention that this conclusion was subsequently supported by Captain Holman of the steamship *Archer*, who stated that he had passed the Flannan Islands at midnight on the 15th/16th of December; that he had been surprised not to pick up the light; and that the course he followed was such that, in the prevailing weather, he could not have failed to see the light if it had been burning.

That point, therefore, was established. But it did not bring a solution much nearer. One

further discovery was made in the lighthouse. On a careful examination of the missing men's possessions, it was found that Ducat's and Marshall's sea-boots and oilskins were missing; and Moore, who was, of course, acquainted with his comrades' habits, declared that the men only wore these articles when they were visiting one of the landings.

III.

Since the key to the mystery was not to be found in the lighthouse building, the searchers next turned their attention to the exterior, in the hope that the landing-places might supply the clue which they were seeking. They took the east landing first, the one at which they had come ashore. Everything there was in perfect order, and the ropes, which had been coiled and stored there after the relief on 6th December, were all in place.

At the west landing-place, however, traces of the recent gales were found. The crane, which had been installed on a concrete platform seventy feet above the sea, was, it is true, undamaged. The jib was lowered and secured to the rock, the canvas covering the wire-rope on the barrel was securely lashed, and there was no sign that the men had been attempting to do anything there. Nevertheless, during the late storms the waves must have piled themselves up against the cliff at this spot, for a wooden box, containing ropes, crane-handles, and odds and ends, which was kept in a crevice of the rocks forty feet above the crane platform and 110 feet above sea-level, had been washed away. In the process it had been torn open: several of the ropes had been flung down and scattered over the rocks near by, and some of them had been caught and entangled in the crane. There were other signs of the violence of the storm: the iron railings running round the platform and up the zigzag stair had been displaced and twisted, and a block of stone, weighing upwards of a ton, had been dislodged and swept some distance to the left, coming to rest on the concrete path just above the landing-place.

On examining the railings protecting the path the searchers thought for a moment that they had found a clue to the fate of the missing men. The lifebuoy, which was always kept fastened to the railings against an emergency, was gone. But on closer inspection it was observed that the ropes securing it had not been touched, and that pieces of canvas were still adhering to them; so that it seemed more likely that the sea, pouring through the railings, had torn the lifebuoy bodily from its fastenings and carried it away. We get some idea of the force and fury of the storm when we recall that this happened at a height of more than a hundred feet above the level of the sea.

If what was found at the west landing provided no clues, at least it gave certain indications, which, when combined with the results

of the search of the lighthouse premises, pointed to a possible explanation.

December had been a month of storms: during one of these the waves off Flannan had risen so high as to damage objects a hundred feet above the sea; when the disaster occurred the keepers—or two of them, at any rate—had been dressed to visit one of the landings. On this rather meagre foundation a theory was constructed: the men, it was assumed, fearing that all was not made fast on the west landing, had attempted to reach it during one of the storms; and they had been blown off the rock by the power of the gale, or swept away by an exceptionally high wave.

IV.

Such a theory, though it received some support when first the news of the disaster reached the mainland, was not seriously tenable. To anyone with any knowledge of lighthouse work it was inconceivable that three experienced keepers should have ventured onto one of the landings when a storm was raging. But there was a stronger objection than this. The important point, of course, is the weather, and of this we have a complete record in the log kept by Ducat and found by the search-party. From this it appears that on 12th and 13th December a gale blew from the west, but that on the 14th, the day before the disaster, the wind dropped appreciably, and was scarcely more than a stiff breeze. It blew a gale again on the 20th, as we know from other sources, but on the 15th the weather must have been by comparison calm. When, therefore, the men disappeared, the damage had probably already been done, and certainly the storm was over. There was no direct connection between the storm, the damage on the west landing, and the disappearance of the keepers.

But, having rejected this explanation, let us put forward another, and, in the light of such evidence as is available, try to reconstruct the tragedy as it may have happened. On the 12th and the 13th the men were storm-bound within the lighthouse building. They could hear the roar of the tempest outside; they could, perhaps, see something of the tremendous seas that were running; their little fortress, high though it was perched, must have been lashed by the spray of those mountainous seas; and possibly the keepers guessed that some damage would be done on the west landing, which was exposed to the full violence of the gale. But so long as the storm lasted they could do nothing. On the 14th the wind moderated, but probably the sea was still too rough for the landings to be visited in safety. On the morning of the 15th, however, the weather had become calmer, and all three men went down to the west landing to see what had happened there during the storm.

So far our task has been easy. But at this point we reach the crux of the problem. The men are at the landing-place. What disaster can overtake them there on a comparatively calm day? Conjecture, of course, is possible. One of the men may have slipped and fallen into the sea, and the others may have lost their lives in attempting to save him. Yet, if we recall that the crane platform and the path were littered with ropes from the wooden box which had been swept away by the waves, it is hard to believe that the men would have jumped into the sea, when they could more easily and safely have thrown a rope to their companion. But perhaps he was disabled? Even so, why did both men follow him? Surely one of them would have remained on shore with a rope.

Having brought the matter to a deadlock, let us now produce a possible solution, which, though it may not commend itself to everybody, does cover most of the facts. At the time the explanation did not suggest itself; the lighthouse had been completed only a year when the tragedy occurred, and consequently no one knew very much about the island and its ways. Later,

however, when the post had been established for some time, a curious phenomenon was discovered. It was found that off the west landing, in quite calm weather, the sea would suddenly and unexpectedly rise to a very high level. Whatever freak of the tides may be the cause, the effect is remarkable; it is almost as though a volcanic upheaval had taken place in the depths of the ocean, or as though some huge marine monster was convulsing the waters. At one moment the waves will be washing idly round the base of the rocks; at the next they will surge forward and upward; and, if there is anyone standing within their range at the moment, they will catch him and drag him back and drown him. On several occasions this strange upheaval has been observed, and more than once since 1900 the keepers of Flannan have narrowly escaped being caught in it and drowned.

This, then, we may conjecture to have been the fate of the three lost men. Unwarned, and deceived by the fairness of the weather, they went down the path towards the west landing-place; and the quiet ocean rose swiftly and engulfed them.

THE CENTURY PLANT.

By M. WILSON BEVERIDGE.

A CENTRAL AMERICAN plant, of remarkable beauty and appearance, the Maguey, or Agave, is one of the wonders of the plant world. Owing to a superficial resemblance to the aloe it is popularly known as the American Aloe, but is not related to the Old World plant.

The agave has either no proper stem, or a very short one, bearing at its summit a crowded head of large fleshy leaves, which have spiny margins. These leaves are inclined to be blue rather than green, and have a whitish bloom, which gives the plant the appearance of being made from painted tin. A single leaf, when fully grown, sometimes weighs about twelve pounds.

In Mexico the plant usually flowers in its seventh or eighth year, and sometimes in its fifth or sixth year. In poor soils or under exposed conditions it may not flower till it reaches its twelfth year, and in our hothouses not until it has reached a very advanced age, sometimes eighty, or even a hundred years. Whence arises the gardeners' fable of its flowering only once in a hundred years, and the name Century Plant.

During the development of inflorescence there is a rush of sap to the base of the young flower-stalk, which springs from the centre of the leaves, sometimes at the rate of one and a half feet per day, until it may reach the height of even forty feet. Horizontal branches spread out

from the upper portion, bearing thousands of golden blossoms, which become a feast for bees, butterflies, and other insects.

This tremendous effort exhausts the plant, and as soon as the flowers make their appearance the huge leaves, which have taken many years to grow, begin to droop and wither. The gigantic flower-stalk draws all the life-fluid from the roots and leaves, and ultimately causes the death of the plant. After the blossoms fade the dying stalks remain a long time, and when planted along a railway line, as they often are, agaves have the appearance of a line of telegraph poles.

The agave has served the inhabitants of Mexico for many widely different purposes from the earliest times. The leaves furnished a strong, impenetrable thatch for the roofs of their houses; the thorns from the extremity of the leaves made a fair substitute for pins and needles; the root, when properly cooked, became a palatable and nourishing food; a fibre was produced from the roots and leaves, which was made into a sort of coarse material and thread; the Aztecs made from the leaves a kind of paper—somewhat resembling the Egyptian papyrus—specimens of which still exist in their original freshness and brilliancy of colouring; and the national liquor, *pulque*, was made from the sap. In short, the plant provided food, drink, clothing, and writing material to the early inhabitants of Mexico.

Legend tells us that many centuries before Europeans visited the New World a woman of the Toltecs, a race which inhabited the land before the Aztecs, showed the king how to extract a wonderful nectar from the heart of the plant. He was delighted with the discovery, and later married the woman. When their son came to the throne he thought that the liquid might be much finer in a fermented condition. He tried the experiment, the result being *pulque*, and in consequence the Toltecs deteriorated rapidly.

To-day in Mexico the flower shoot is cut out, and the sap, which contains a considerable amount of sugar, is collected daily. Subsequently fermented, this becomes *pulque*, which is a milky, sour, and ill-smelling liquid resembling thin buttermilk; but in face of this even Europeans soon find it agreeable and refreshing.

The liquor has become a curse to the lower-class Mexican. Of it he sings:

Know ye not Pulque?
Liquor divine!
The angels in heaven
Prefer it to wine;

and he will neglect his family and steal from his employer to obtain it. *Pulque* does not contain

a large percentage of alcohol, but when taken in large quantities, as the Mexicans are accustomed to take it, it produces a dazed condition, which they are obliged to sleep off. The amount of the liquor consumed will be readily understood when it is said that there are over sixteen hundred *pulque* saloons in Mexico City alone, and that a complete trainload and various other quantities enter the capital every morning. By distillation a kind of brandy of highly intoxicating quality is prepared.

The plant is still used in Mexico, and also in the West Indies and southern Europe, for its valuable fibres, variously named Pita fibre, Pita flax, and Pita hemp, from which twine, matting, netting, and paper are made. But the uses to which the agave is put have not yet been exhausted. When dried and cut the flowering stem forms natural razor strops; the expressed juice will lather in water like soap; and in many different parts of the world the plant has been extensively used for hedges.

Recently, in Pasadena, California, three specimens of this extremely versatile plant, which grew beside each other, decided to burst into blossom at the same time. One of them succeeded in reaching a height of thirty-five feet.

JOHN MACNAB: A COMEDY FOR POACHERS.

CHAPTER XV.—HARIPOL—THE ARMISTICE.

THE great drawing-room had lost all its garishness with the approach of evening. Facing eastward, it looked out on lawns now dreaming in a green dusk, though beyond them the setting sun, over-topping the house, washed the woods and hills with gold and purple. Lady Claybody sat on a brocaded couch with something of the dignity of the late Queen Victoria, mystified, perturbed, awaiting the explanation which was due to her. Her husband stood before her, a man with such an air of being ready for any emergency that even his kilt looked workmanlike. The embarrassed party from Crask clustered in the background; the shameful figures of Lamancha and Johnson stood in front of the window, thereby deepening the shadow. So electric was the occasion that Lady Claybody, finically proud of her house, did not notice that these two were oozing water over the polished parquet and devastating more than one expensive rug.

Lamancha, now that the worst had happened, was resigned and almost cheerful. Since the Claybodies had bagged Leithen and Palliser-Yeates, and detected the complicity of Sir Archie, there was no reason why he should be left out. He hoped, rather vaguely, that his captor might not be inclined to make the thing public in view of certain episodes, but he had got to the

pitch of caring very little. John Macnab was dead, and only awaited sepulture and oblivion. He looked towards Johnson, expecting him to take up the tale.

But Johnson had no desire to speak. He had been very much shaken and scared by the Bluidy Mackenzie, and had not yet recovered his breath. Also a name spoken by his father as they entered the room had temporarily unsettled his wits. It was Lord Claybody who broke the uncomfortable silence. 'Who owns that dog?' he asked, looking not at Lamancha but at his son.

'The brute's mine,' said Archie penitently. 'He followed the car, and I left him tied up. Can't think how he got loose and started this racket.'

'But how did you come here, my lord? You look as if you had been having a rough journey.'

Lamancha laughed. Happily the waning light did not reveal the full extent of his dirt and raggedness. 'I have,' he said. 'I'm your son's prisoner. Fairly caught out. I dare say you think me an idiot, unless Leithen or Palliser-Yeates has explained.'

Lord Claybody looked more mystified than ever. 'I don't understand. A prisoner?'

'He's John Macnab,' put in Johnson, whose breath was returning, and with it sulkiness. He

was beginning to see that there was to be no triumph in this business, and a good deal of unpleasant explanation.

'Well, a third of him,' said Lamancha. 'And as you've already annexed the other two-thirds, you have the whole of the fellow under your roof.'

Lord Claybody's gasp suddenly revealed to Lamancha that he had been premature in his confession. How his two friends had got into the Haripol drawing-room he did not know, but apparently it was not as prisoners. The mischief was done, however, and there was no going back. 'You mean to say that you three gentlemen are John Macnab? You have been poaching at Glenraden and Strathlarrig? Does Colonel Raden—does Mr Bandicott know who you are?'

Lamancha nodded. 'They found out after we had had our shot at their preserves. They didn't mind—took it very well indeed. We hope you're going to follow suit?'

'But I am amazed. You had only to send me a wire and my forest was at your disposal for as long as you wished. Why—why this—this incivility?'

'I assure you on my honour that the last thing we dreamed of was incivility. Look here, Lord Claybody, I wonder if I can explain. We three—Leithen, Palliser-Yeates, and myself—found ourselves, three months ago, fairly fed up with life. We weren't sick, and we weren't tired—only bored. By accident we discovered each other's feelings, and we decided to have a try at curing ourselves by attempting something very difficult and rather dangerous. There was a fellow called Tarras used to play this game—he was before your time—and we resolved to take a leaf out of his book. So we quartered ourselves on Archie—he's not to blame, remember, for he's been protesting bitterly all along—and we sent out our challenge. Glenraden and Strathlarrig accepted it, so that was all right; you didn't in so many words, but you accepted it by your action, for you took elaborate precautions to safeguard your ground. . . . Well, that's all. Palliser-Yeates lost at Glenraden, owing to Miss Janet. Leithen won at Strathlarrig, and now I've made a regular hat of things at Haripol. But we're cured, all of us. We're simply longing to get back to the life which in July we thought humbug.'

Lord Claybody sat down in a chair and brooded. 'I still don't follow,' he said. 'You are people who matter a great deal to the world, and there's not a man in this country who wouldn't have been proud to give you the chance of the kind of holiday you needed. You're one of the leaders of my party. Personally, I have always considered you the best of them. I'm looking to Sir Edward Leithen to win a big case for me this autumn. Mr Palliser-Yeates has done a lot of business with

my firm, and after the talk I've had with him this afternoon I look to doing a good deal more with him in the future. You had only to give me a hint of what you wished and I should have jumped at the chance of obliging you. You wanted the thrill of feeling like poachers. Well, I would have seen that you got it. I would have turned on every man in the place, and used all my wits to make your escapade difficult. Wouldn't that have contented you?'

'No, no,' Lamancha cried. 'You are missing the point. Don't you see that your way would have taken all the gloss off the adventure and made it a game? We had to feel that we were taking real risks—that, being what we were, we should look utter fools if we were caught and exposed.'

'Pardon me, but it is you who are missing the point.' Lord Claybody was smiling. 'You could never have been exposed—except perhaps by those confounded journalists,' he added as he caught sight of Crossby.

'We had the best of them on our side,' Lamancha put in. 'Mr Crossby has backed us up nobly.'

'Well, that only made your position more secure. Colonel Raden and Mr Bandicott accepted your challenge, and in any case they were sportsmen, and you knew it. If they had caught one or the other of you they would never have betrayed you. You must see that. And here at Haripol you were on the safest ground of all. I'm not what they call a sportsman—not yet—but I couldn't give you away. Do you think it conceivable that I would do anything to weaken the public prestige of a statesman I believe in, a great lawyer I brief, and a great banker whose assistance is of the utmost value to me? I'm a man who has made a fortune by my own hard work, and I mean to keep it; therefore in these bad times I am out to support anything which buttresses the solid structure of society. You three are part of that structure. You might poach every stag in Haripol and I should still hold my tongue.'

Lamancha, regardless of the condition of his nether garments, sat down heavily on an embroidered stool, which Lady Claybody erroneously believed to have belonged to Marie Antoinette, and dropped his head in his hands. 'Lord! I believe you're right,' he groaned. 'We've all been potting at sitting birds.—John, do you hear? We've been making godless fools of ourselves. We thought we had got outside civilisation, and were really taking chances—but we weren't. We were all the time as safe as your blessed bank. It can't be done—not in this country anyway. We're in the groove and have got to stay there. We've been a pretty lot of idiots not to think of that.'

Then Johnson spoke. He had been immensely cheered by Lord Claybody's words, for they had seemed to raise Haripol again to that dignity

from which it had been in imminent risk of falling.

'I don't complain personally, Lord Lamancha, though you've given me a hard day of it. But I agree with my father—you really were gambling on a certainty, and it wasn't very fair to us. Besides, you three, who are the supporters of law and order, have offered a pretty good handle to the enemy, with these infernal journalists advertising John Macnab. There may be a large crop of Macnabs springing up, and you'll be responsible. It's a dangerous thing to weaken the sanctities of property.'

He found, to his surprise, a vigorous opponent in his mother. Lady Claybody had passed from mystification to enlightenment, and from enlightenment to appreciation. It delighted her romantic soul that Haripol should have been chosen for the escapade of three eminent men; she saw tradition and legend already glorifying her new dwelling. Moreover, she scented in Johnson's words a theory of life which was not her own, a mercantile creed which conflicted with her notion of Haripol and of the future of her family.

'You are talking nonsense, Johnson,' she said. 'You are making property a nightmare, for you are always thinking about it. You forget that wealth is made for man, and not man for wealth. It is personality that matters. It is so vulgar not to keep money and land and that sort of thing in its proper place. Look at those splendid old Jacobites and what they gave up. The one advantage of property is that you can disregard it.'

This astounding epigram passed unnoticed save by Janet, for the lady, smiling benignly on the poaching trinity, went on to a practical application. 'I think the whole John Macnab adventure has been quite delightful. It has brightened us all up, and I'm sure we have nothing to forgive. I think we must have a dinner of everybody concerned to celebrate the end of it. What Claybody says is perfectly true—you must have known you could count on us, just as much as on Colonel Raden and Mr Bandicott. But since you seem not to have realised that, you have had the fun of thinking you were in real danger, and after all it is what one thinks that matters. I am so glad you are all cured of being bored. But I'm not quite happy about those journalists. How can we be certain that they won't make a horrid story of it?'

'My wife is right,' said Lord Claybody emphatically. 'That is the danger.' He looked at Crossby. 'They are certain to want some kind of account.'

'They certainly will,' said the latter. 'And that account must leave out names and—and other details. I don't suppose you want the navy business made public?'

'Perhaps not. That was Johnson's idea, and

I don't consider it a particularly happy inspiration.'

'Well, there is nothing for it but that I should give them the story and expurgate it discreetly. John Macnab has been caught and dismissed with a warning—that's all there is to it. I suppose your gillies won't blab? They can't know very much, but they might give away some awkward details.'

'I'll jolly well see that they don't,' said Johnson. 'But who will you make John Macnab out to be?'

'A lunatic—unnamed. I'll hint at some family skeleton into which good breeding forbids us to inquire. The fact that he has failed at Haripol will take the edge off my colleagues' appetites. If he had got his stag they would have been ramping on the trail. The whole thing will go the way of other stunts and be forgotten in two days. I know the British Press.'

Within half-an-hour the atmosphere in that drawing-room had changed from suspicion to something not far from friendliness, but the change left two people unaffected. Johnson, doubtless with Lamancha's behaviour on the hill in his memory, was still sullen, and Janet was obviously ill at ease.

Lamancha, who was suffering a good deal from thirst and hunger and longed for a bath, arose from his stool. 'I think,' he said, 'that we three—especially myself—owe you the most abject apologies. I see now that we were taking no risks worth mentioning, and that what we thought was an adventure was only a *faux pas*. It was abominably foolish, and we are all very sorry about it. I think you've taken it uncommon well.'

Lord Claybody raised a protesting hand. 'Not another word. I vote we break up this conference and give you something to drink. Johnson's tongue is hanging out of his mouth.'

The voice of Janet was suddenly raised, and in it might have been detected a new timidity. 'I want to apologise also. Dear Lady Claybody, I stole your dog. . . . I hope you will forgive me. You see we wanted to do something to distract Macnicol, and that seemed the only way.'

A sudden silence fell. Lady Claybody, had there been sufficient light, might have been observed to flush. 'You—stole—Rogueie,' she said slowly, while Janet moved closer to Sir Archie. 'You—stole—wee Rogueie. I think you are the—'

'But we were very kind to him, and he was very happy.'

'I wasn't happy. I scarcely slept a wink. What right had you to touch my precious little dog? I think it is the most monstrous thing I ever heard in my life.'

'I'm so very sorry. Please, please forgive

me. But you said yourself that the only advantage of property was that you could disregard it.'

Lady Claybody, to her enormous credit, stared, gaped, and then laughed. Then something in the attitude of Janet and Archie stopped her, and she asked suddenly, 'Are you two engaged?'

'Yes,' said Janet, 'since ten minutes past twelve to-day.'

Lady Claybody rose from the couch and took her in her arms. 'You're the wickedest girl in the world. Oh, my dear, I am so pleased.—Sir Archibald, you will let an old woman kiss you. You are brigands both of you, so you should be very, very happy. You must all come and dine here to-morrow night—your father and sister, too, and we'll ask the Bandicotts. It will be a dinner to announce your engagement, and also to say good-bye to John Macnab. Poor John! I feel as if he were a real person who will always haunt this glen, and now he is disappearing into the mist.'

'No,' said Lamancha, 'he is being shrivelled up by coals of fire. By the way'—and he turned to Lord Claybody—'I'll send over the stag in the morning. I forgot to tell you I got a stag—an old beast with a famous head, who used to visit Crask. It will look rather well in your hall. It has been in Archie's larder since the early afternoon.'

Then Johnson Claybody was moved to a course which surprised his audience and may have surprised himself. His sullenness vanished in hearty laughter. 'I think,' he said, 'I have made rather a fool of myself.'

'I think we have all made fools of ourselves,' said Lamancha.

Johnson turned to his late prisoner and held out his hand. 'Lord Lamancha, I have only one thing to say. I don't in the least agree with my mother, and I'm dead against John Macnab. But I'm *your* man from this day on—whatever line you take. You're my political leader, for, by all that's holy, you've a most astonishing gift of getting the goods.'

EPILOGUE.

CROSSBY, from whom I had most of this narrative, was as good as his word, though it went sorely against the grain. He himself wrote a tale, and circulated his version to his brother journalists, a tale which made a good enough yarn, but was a sad anticlimax to the return of Harald Blacktooth. He told of a gallant but frustrated attempt on the Haripol Sanctuary, the taking of the culprit, and the magnanimous release by young Mr Claybody of a nameless monomaniac—a gentleman, it was hinted, who had not recovered from the effects of the War. The story did not occupy

the first page in the papers, and presently, as he had prophesied, the world had forgotten John Macnab, and turned its attention to the cinema star, just arrived in London, whom for several days, to the disgust of that lady's agents, it had strangely neglected.

The dinner at Haripol, Crossby told me, was a hilarious function, at which four men found reason to revise their opinion of the son of the house, and the host fell in love with Janet, and Archie with his hostess. There is talk, I understand, of making it an annual event to keep green the memory of the triune sportsman who once haunted the place. If you go to Haripol, as I did last week, you will see above the hall chimney a noble thirteen-pointer, and a legend beneath proclaiming that the stag was shot on the Sgurr Dearg beat of the forest by Lord Lamancha on a certain day of September in a certain year. Lady Claybody, who does not like stags' heads as ornaments, makes an exception of this; indeed, it is the one of her household treasures to which she most often calls her guests' attention.

Janet and Archie were married in November in the little kirk of Inverlarrig, and three busy men cancelled urgent engagements to be there. Among the presents there was one not shown to the public or mentioned in the papers, and a duplicate of it went to Junius and Agatha at their wedding in the following spring. It was a noble loving-cup in the form of a quich, inscribed as the gift of John Macnab. Below, four signatures were engraved—Lamancha, Edward Leithen, and John Palliser-Yeates, and last, in a hand of surprising boldness, the honoured name of Benjamin Bogle.

THE END.

TO MY AIN FOLK.

OH! London's streets are unco bricht, an' London
hooses graun';

But tho' sae mony folk I pass, there's ne'er a
ane I ken,

An' it's oh! ma he't is sair tae see the moorlan'
heath an' bracken,

An' tae hear the whaup's wild cryin' ower the
lochan an' the glen.

Thae London nichts fair deave a mon wi' clash, an'
sang, an' ongaun—

It's I wad hear the soughin' win's amang the
norlan' trees,

Whaur black an' awesome fa's the nicht on mony
a lanely cairn,

An' neibors meet wi' freen'ly clash around the
hamely bleeze.

There's nane o' them wad ken me noo, an' nane
tae bid me hame,

But I fain wad see the lochan, an' the woods
ahint the Ben;

An' I'm wae tae see the wimplin' burn I dooked
in as a bairn,

An' for the few mair years I hae, tae bide in
yon wee glen.

MONA MACLEOD.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

APPALUCY.

By ROY SNIDER.

PART I.

I.

A MAN of decidedly obtuse moral sense deliberately closed and locked the door of the vault of the Snowshoe Branch, Second State Bank of Helena, Montana, while manager Maxwell Brant was within the burglar-proof chamber, and while the only other employee of the institution was conveniently absent on an errand by Brant's direction.

After locking the heavy steel door the man of blunt morals walked out of the bank, mounted the best-known and most easily identified horse in Montana, and rode away at an easy lope.

When the only other employee of the branch bank returned to his place of employment he was naturally surprised to find the premises apparently unoccupied, and it took him several minutes to locate and subsequently release the imprisoned manager.

Manager Brant promptly established a long-distance telephone connection and notified a detective who represented the interests of the American Bankers' Association that the bank had been robbed of twelve thousand dollars. He also gave the detective much additional detailed information, and requested him to set out immediately in pursuit of the perpetrator of the outrage. Next, the county attorney's office was notified; then the manager of the parent Second State Bank at Helena. After that Mr Brant told the town marshal of Snowshoe what had happened, and discussed the affair in all its possible elaborations of detail with several of his business associates. Last of all he called up the sheriff's office, having purposely postponed this proceeding as long as possible for three well-defined reasons—first, because county sheriffs generally have a disconcerting way of insinuating themselves just when and where they are least wanted; second, because he didn't like Sheriff Harvey Fyffer of Lewis and Clark county; and third, because for other reasons politic he wished to keep the said Harvey out of the affair as much as possible.

When Maxwell Brant finally got into communication with the sheriff's office he was laconi-

cally informed by a deputy that 'Harvey knew all about it, and was gone to get the guy;' whereupon he slammed the telephone receiver viciously on the hook, and kicked his mahogany desk to demonstrate that he was peeved. 'Damn!' he said, and, finding it a satisfying expletive, he said it again more emphatically.

II.

Half-an-hour or so later, in an upper room of Durkee's Place at Marysville, Montana, certain devotees of the noble game of stud poker also found Harvey Fyffer's activities distinctly annoying.

The state of Montana, at the urge of its sovereign people, had successively legislated against gambling, red-lights, and whisky; but all three still flourished surreptitiously at Durkee's, and the resort was unequivocally a worse place in 1922 than it had been at the time of its establishment in the wide-open days of 1882.

Five sophisticated gamblers sat in the game which Harvey interrupted. One, whose faced-up cards were the respective eight spots of spades and clubs and the sixes of hearts and diamonds, had successfully afflicted his features with the vacuous expression known as 'poker face,' and was staring stupidly at the man who had been dealt the six spots of spades and clubs and the eights of hearts and diamonds. This gentleman registered utter absence of intellect, and said, 'I check.'

Harvey Fyffer stepped suddenly into the room and said, 'You're pinched,' which shows what an unfeeling sort of sheriff he was.

The man who had declared his position as being checked greeted the officer carelessly. 'Hello, Harvey,' he said, 'we're just——'

'Yes, I know,' Mr Fyffer interrupted him. 'I've heard it so often it hurts my ears. You're just having a little game of freeze-out among yourselves, and in a minute or two a waiter will bring in five glasses of soda pop that nobody wants to drink. Nothing to it, Johnson. I don't want you for gambling. Cash in your chips and come along. You other roosters can do as you like.'

While Harvey was speaking he glanced from one gambler to another, studying each man's features. His olfactory senses detected a faint odour suggestive of essential oils, and a speculative sniff or two apprised him of the fact that the odour emanated from the person of a tough-looking individual who sat at the left of the man he had called Johnson.

'It happens that I'm runnin' the game, Harvey,' Johnson stated shamelessly. 'I'll cash these boys' chips, if that ain't what you want me for. What was it outside of that?'

'A talk and considerable advice,' answered Fyffer. 'Mostly the last. I'm asking for it, not giving it, understand.'

Johnson cashed the chips of the other four gamblers, then arose and accompanied the sheriff from the room without a word to or a backward glance at his companions.

III.

Several loungers occupied the benches in front of Durkee's Place. At the hitching-rack stood that rarest kind of equine, an Opalouzas pony.

In an occasional freakish mood Nature sprinkles a few small dark spots over the coat of an otherwise white or light-coloured colt. Once in a century or so she is lavish with her spangles, and produces the true Opalouzas horse by dotting a light-coloured coat with hundreds of dark spots of the approximate size of a twenty-five cent piece.

The colour scheme of the hide of the pony which stood at Durkee's hitching-rack was distinctly, and impressively, jet black on a ground-work of milky white.

'Leave your cayuse there, and we'll walk around a while,' Harvey suggested to Johnson. 'We won't go very far, and the exercise may do us good. Now,' he said, when they were beyond earshot of the more or less curious loungers, 'tell me straight out where you got money enough to run that game.'

'Had my month's wages from Jackson Clark to-day,' Johnson answered without hesitation. 'Ed Shattuck was dealing black-jack when we hit town. I was lucky, and cleared him out of a hundred and fifty in less than an hour. I started the stud game with that. We'd been playin' about ten minutes when you busted us up.'

'I see,' said Harvey thoughtfully. 'You gambled the Triangle-J away to Jackson Clark's old man. Now it looks as though you were going to get it back from the son. I see he was in the game there, just now.'

'Not a chance,' declared Johnson. 'He plays 'em right against his breast bone one minute and wide open the next. He's as good as the old man, only hasn't quite as much nerve as he had.'

'Not in any tight fix for money, then, is he?'

'Flush as a bank,' announced Johnson. 'He'd get credit for twenty thousand if he needed it.'

IV.

Harvey shrugged his shoulders and abruptly changed the subject. 'I called in at the Triangle-J on the way up from Helena,' he said. 'Riley told me that you and young Clark had lit out for town for the afternoon. He said that your speckled cayuse strayed away this morning with his saddle and bridle on. I thought he would always stay put?'

'It's the first time I ever knew him not to,' said Johnson. 'Usually I don't even throw the reins on the ground. Don't know if I did this time or not. They were hanging on the saddle-horn when he came kitin' back at noon.'

'How did he happen to ramble?'

'I rode out with Jackson Clark this morning to fix up the woven fence at the back of that pasture where he keeps the poll Angus yearlings. We left our horses in a patch of quakin' asps, and was gone maybe an hour, mending the fence. When we came back my Spot horse was gone, and Jackson's horse was right where we left him. Spot came tearing back to the ranch at noon like he'd been chased by a flock of angels.'

'Which he'd naturally want to avoid, having such a hellish disposition himself,' Harvey commented dryly. 'Outside of that,' he added, 'the bank at Snowshoe was stood up for twelve thousand dollars this morning, and the man that did it rode your speckled horse. Now, what do you make out of that?'

'Rode my speckled horse?' Johnson repeated wonderingly. 'Harvey, are you sure about that?'

'Reasonably so,' said the sheriff. 'He's the only Appalucy that I know of, and I'm fairly well posted on such things. I don't suppose there's a dozen of them in North America.'

'No,' Johnson agreed; 'an Opalouzas isn't the commonest breed of pups in the world, even if people *do* call 'em "Appalucys" and show their ignorance. It's likely my old Spot was the victim all right. Some sport's been layin' for a chance to borrow him for the purpose, and lifted him this morning when I left him at the quakin' asps; then rode into Snowshoe. It's less'n seven miles across the hills if a man knows the bridle trails.'

'After he did the job at the bank, he rode back near to the Triangle-J and turned Spot loose. A smack with a stick would make him hike out for home like the mill-tail of hell. That's that, but I don't see the sense of it yet.'

'I think I do . . . partly,' Fyffer stated thoughtfully. 'Looks like somebody sort of borrowed the idea about the darkest place being under the lamp. Anybody that saw that cayuse at all would think of you right away.'

You've got a first-class alibi all right . . . four reliable men can swear that you were at the ranch when the game was pulled off at the bank . . . but the dodge of using your spotted horse drags a red-herring across the trail, and balls things up about as effectively as anything I could think of.

'Besides, there's one or other two hitches in the play that are hard to get around. Spot's the toughest and strongest horse for his inches that I ever heard of, and what little twenty-one jewel meanness he didn't have the day he was foaled, you've taught him since you've had him.'

'I don't think I've ever neglected his education any to get excited over,' Johnson admitted naively.

'You certainly haven't,' the sheriff agreed. 'He kicks, bites, and strikes on general principles, and you're the only man in the county who is sure that he can ride him for more than a minute at a time. Most others know better than to try. Now, how could some stranger just naturally walk up and fork that fightin' demon of a bronc and ride away on him?'

'He couldn't,' said Johnson shortly. 'He could have made friends with Spot for the last few days and had no trouble at all about forking him off. Some horses take to oil of rhodium like a cat does to catnip. It's an old trick that nearly everybody knows. Spot loves it like a hobo loves his beer.'

'Oil of rhodium,' the sheriff repeated slowly while he puckered his brows in an effort to interpret an evasive idea. 'Oil of rhodium? Now where . . . my heck, I know!' he cried suddenly. 'Who was that hard-boiled mug that sat at your left-hand side in the game back there?'

'Stranger,' Johnson answered. 'I never saw him before.'

'I want you for a deputy,' Harvey stated crisply. 'Hold up your hand till I swear you in.'

v.

Johnson was sworn in in the hurried, unintelligible, mumbling manner that seems to be orthodox with sheriffs, and, after he had stated indifferently that he desired the Almighty to help him, the two men hastily retraced their way in the direction of Durkee's Place.

When they reached the door of the resort a man stepped forth aggressively and seized Johnson's arm. 'You're under arrest,' he cried harshly. 'You'll come along—'

'No, he won't come at all,' Harvey interrupted. 'He's my deputy.'

'The county isn't handling this,' the aggressive man retorted, exhibiting an imposing looking badge.

'I am,' said Harvey grimly. 'Take your hand away or I'll arrest you. Understand?'

Evidently the aggressive one understood. At any rate, he released his hold on Johnson's arm.

Sheriff and special deputy mounted Durkee's stairs, and re-entered the room they had left but a short time before.

Three men sat at the table playing freeze-out. The hard-boiled mug was gone. 'He left here a couple of minutes after you and Johnson went out,' one of the gamblers told the sheriff. Inquiries amongst the occupants of benches in front of the dive elicited the information that the stranger had travelled eastward when he quitted the premises.

At Harvey's suggestion, Johnson took his spotted pony to the nearest feed-barn, and left him there with instructions to the proprietor of the place that he was to be fed hay but no grain if he were not called for in the evening. The sheriff's motor-car was parked not far from Durkee's Place, and, when Spot had been temporarily disposed of, Harvey and Johnson got into the car and started eastward in search of the man they wanted.

'The whole game looks off colour to me,' declared Johnson. 'I confess it's got me beat, but I'm dashed if I can say just why.'

'It certainly has some queer turns in it,' agreed Fyffer. 'I want to find that hard-boiled mug badly, but I must say he doesn't act a bit like a man that's robbed a bank. He wouldn't stick around playing poker within fifteen miles of where it happened; now would he?'

'The whole thing looks to me like a bunch of men startin' up a freeze-out game to fool the sheriff when he's caught them playin' for money,' said Johnson—'sort of unreal and done for show.'

Harvey pondered silently for several minutes. 'You've hit it,' he said at last. 'That's just the idea that I've been figuring out, but I couldn't quite frame it all up. A man robs a bank, and advertises it by using the most conspicuous horse he can find; then flies to the toughest joint in Montana—and gets into a poker game—where he knows he's sure to be seen. That isn't true to form. When I dropped in I guess I side-tracked his plans, whatever they were, and he lit out. That looks as though he's been acting under instructions from some one else, and, as the instructions didn't take me into consideration, he made a move on his own account. He's acting natural now, and on his own initiative. But where does that get us if it's right? And we've no way of knowing whether it is or not.'

'I suppose I *could* say what I said before and feel like I'd said something important, only I don't just see where a man shows more'n average brains by sayin' that he doesn't savvy, so I guess I'll just leave it unsaid.' Johnson's words were spoken to himself rather than for his companion's benefit. He had considerably less idea

of what was forward than he believed his chief to have.

VI.

'We'd better stop at some of these shacks and see if anybody's seen our rabbit goin' this way,' suggested Fyffer. 'He hasn't a great deal of a start.'

They stopped at several places to ask for intelligence of the man they sought. At a shack near a forking of the road they learned that he had asked to be directed to a small near-by town known as Butler, and had been seen following the road which led in the direction in which he had expressed a desire to go.

They drove for a couple of miles along the road to Butler; then decided that they had either passed the man in hiding somewhere along the way, or that he was not travelling in that direction. The car was turned around, and they drove back to the forks of the road.

'I really believe that I've got an idea, now,' Johnson declared. 'I usually do get 'em when they're no use or too late. This joker we're after probably figured somebody'd be looking for him, and made them inquiries about the way to Butler purposely to get the pursuing parties off on a dead trail. I'm bettin' that he's headed up the other road as fast as he can hike.'

'So will we,' Harvey Fyffer assured him.

'I might have thought of that dodge, only I didn't.'

Reaching the branching of the road, they turned off into the trail which they believed they ought to have followed in the first place. At the first shack at which they stopped they were informed that a man answering the description of him whom they sought had purchased a horse and a dilapidated saddle at the place about half-an-hour before, and had straightway ridden off, after making some inquiries about the trails which led into the mountains. He had given the impression of being in something of a hurry, and the price required for the horse and saddle had been made accordingly high.

'We can't catch up with him afoot,' averred Harvey, 'and the car wouldn't travel a hundred yards into the hills from here. It looks like we've lost him for the present.'

'It also looks like he was heading for the good hiding-places over on the head of the Snowshoe Creek between the Triangle-J and Snowshoe,' Johnson opined. 'The way not to lose him for the future is to get back to Marysville, cross the divide by the M'Donald Pass road, and work up the other side of the range and head him off. We'll need horses for that job. How does it look to you?'

'The clear M'Coy,' replied the sheriff. 'Just watch me raise some dust.'

(Continued on page 539.)

ST BERNARD'S MONASTERY.

FROM HOSPICE TO HOTEL.

By HORACE WYNDHAM.

I.

WITH the passing years everything changes.

Like other institutions elsewhere the world-renowned Hospice of St Bernard, perched remote and solitary, high up among the mountains between Switzerland and Italy, has had to march with the times. The change there is one that breaks the tradition of nearly ten centuries. Instead of free food and shelter being given as a prescriptive right to all who demand it, a charge is to be levied. In short, the hospice is to become a hotel with a fixed tariff. Still, whatever the tariff, it is certain to be a moderate one, for 'profiteering' has no part in the economic system of the monks who spend their lonely lives in succouring travellers.

Of course, the monks would much prefer to continue in the long-established practice of their pious founder, St Bernard of Menthon, and make no charge. But it is a matter of stern necessity, not choice. The Hospice has scarcely any revenue, and the annual army of

tourists and others who visit it imposes a heavy drain on its slender resources. As to the size of this army, carefully registered figures show that it now approximates 20,000 a year. More than half of these are Italians and Swiss, who cross the Great St Bernard Pass in the spring to look for work, and the remainder are tourists from all over Europe. Sometimes as many as five hundred are lodged within the walls during a single night. The provision of food and beds for such a number is a big toll to meet. It is true that the guests have always had the opportunity of making some return for the hospitality thus accorded them by contributing to an alms-box. Of late, however, the voluntary offerings have fallen off to such an extent that it has become imperative to adopt a new system.

The accommodation furnished in the Hospice is necessarily rather primitive. According to their social standing visitors are divided into various categories. These are composed of tourists, workmen, and paupers. The second and third classes are required to sleep in dormitories, while the first have bedrooms.

Each bedroom, however, contains several beds, and, except under special circumstances, nobody is allotted a room to himself. The guests are of all degrees, and where food is concerned everyone—rich and poor, gentle and simple—is treated alike. A prince may find himself sitting next an artisan, and a millionaire next a pauper. It is a matter of indifference to the cook. He serves up the same menu for all. This consists of soup, meat, vegetable, bread, and wine. One of the monks is always present as host.

The signatures in the visitors' book (a volume which would probably fetch a big price among collectors) show that the Hospice has welcomed many distinguished guests. Royalty has several times entered its portals. The King and Queen of Italy have motored there from Aosta more than once; and, in long bygone days, Queen Victoria was a guest. King Edward VII., when touring the Continent as a young man of seventeen, had a meal there, and took away with him the wooden cup and spoon he had used on this occasion. On leaving, escorted by some of his hosts, he was presented with a St Bernard puppy. When he returned to London, the Prince of Wales (as he then was) had a cottage piano despatched to the Hospice. Years afterwards he was informed that this had perished from damp and decay. He therefore sent out a second one, 'to prove that he still retained a grateful remembrance of the hospitality he had received.' Other royal guests have included the Emperor and Empress Frederick, who, when Crown Prince and Princess of Germany, visited this part of the world in 1883.

II.

On account of its remote position the Hospice of St Bernard is not very accessible. This is chiefly due to the fact that, for ten months in the year, the whole district is wrapped in snow and fog and mist and crashing avalanches. The road across the Pass is one of memories, and history has been made along every yard of it. The winding track echoed in ancient days to the legions of Rome and Gaul, and in modern times to the rumble of guns and wagons, and the tramp of marching feet led by Napoleon. The whole region is bare and bleak and desolate. No trees can grow within two hours' walk of the summit, and there are no flowers or vegetation anywhere beyond occasional thin patches of grass and a few pale pansies sheltering under the rocks. Everywhere a chill and brooding silence.

As for the Hospice itself, this lies in a hollow. The buildings composing it, high and square and ungainly in appearance, rather suggest a barracks. They are of stone, solidly constructed to withstand the fierce winter storms. On this account the massive walls are

further strengthened by Romanesque arches. Upstairs are the dining-rooms and bedrooms for visitors, and at the end of a long passage is the kitchen. There is also a small salon on the first floor, where, as evidence that a touch of modernity has crept in, picture-postcards are on sale. Another connection with the outer world is a telephone, by means of which warning is given when travellers are coming. At the back of the Hospice is a picturesque little lake. Beyond this, only a short walk along the path, the valley reaches down to Italy and thus into a gentler climate.

Fifteen monks, all of whom are Canon Regular of the Order of St Augustine, are housed in the Hospice at a time. The average age of them is under thirty. There is, however, a reason for this. It is that they begin their work at eighteen or twenty, and seldom survive the climate beyond ten or twelve years, falling victims to rheumatism and heart trouble. The little band once numbered an Englishman in their ranks, James Thomas by name, who stopped with them for two years. 'But,' so it is recorded, 'as he was the only son of his parents, and his mother loved him so much that she could not live without him, he reluctantly left us for his own country, much to our regret.'

The monks do not appear to find the time hang heavily on their hands. The fact is, they are all well occupied, each having his appointed task. Thus, one acts as the Father Aumonier and receives the guests; a second keeps the accounts; a third attends to the kitchen department; and a fourth is librarian. The others, on the rare occasions when the weather permits, look after a small pasturage. The day begins and ends with a short service in the chapel. This, built in the sixteenth century, has some good carvings. For relaxation there is a library, well stocked with ancient and modern works in various languages.

III.

Where the average tourist is concerned, the chief interest of the Hospice is connected with the famous St Bernard dogs that are traditionally maintained there to rescue travellers lost in the snow. The pack, which was first established at the beginning of last century, usually consists of fifteen. They have been gradually evolved from short-haired Newfoundlands crossed with Danish and German mastiffs. It is imperative that they should be short-haired, as otherwise they would not be able to get through the snow. The kennels are installed in a separate building adjoining the Hospice. Originally, however, so the records declare, 'the dogs were kept in the entrance hall, to prevent quarrels and fights among the guests.' They could certainly do this, for they are strong enough to carry a man if necessary, and reach a considerable size.

Some of them, indeed, measure six feet from tip to tail, and weigh up to 150 lb.

The young puppies are taught their work by taking them some distance from the Hospice, and then turning them loose with an experienced dog to lead them back to the kennels. After a time they pick up the path for themselves, even when it is hidden by snow and fog. When sent out to search for travellers they are driven off in pairs. One of them stops at the point where the wayfarer is discovered, while his companion returns and brings up a rescue party. By the way, the popular idea that each dog carries a keg of brandy slung round his neck is a fiction. What he does carry is something much more useful, viz., a warm blanket. The brandy does not arrive until a monk appears on the scene.

Of late years the telephone that is now installed between the Hospice and the village of Bourg St Pierre has saved so many lives, by giving timely warning of bad weather, that actual rescues by the monks and dogs do not often occur. In the past, however, the case has been different. A memorable instance took place in 1875. At dawn one morning a band of Italian workmen set out for the Hospice from a hamlet in the district. Snow began to fall heavily soon after they started. Presently they were met by a couple of monks, who, with a dog, had come to help them. As they tramped along a fierce whirlwind suddenly sprang up and buried five of the workmen, both the monks, and the dog in a snow drift. The rest of the party attempted to dig them out, but had to abandon the effort and return to Bourg St Pierre for assistance. While they

were away one of the two monks managed to crawl, bruised and bleeding, up to the door of the Hospice. He lay there for twenty-seven hours, unable to reach the bell and let his comrades know what had happened. They discovered this only the next evening, when the dog made his way back there. It was then too late. Every soul had perished, and the bodies were not found until a week had passed.

There was another sad chapter in the annals of the previous year. This was caused by the occurrence of one of the avalanches, which are more to be dreaded than the snow. Eight Italians looking for work were given a night's shelter in the Hospice one wintry evening. The next morning, although pressed to stay, they left to continue their journey, being accompanied on the first stage by six monks and a dog. After walking for three hours, an avalanche swept three of the monks, five of the workmen, and the dog into a drift. By great efforts the others managed to dig out one of the monks and four of the workmen. The dog also contrived to extricate himself and get back to the Hospice. Perceiving from its appearance that a catastrophe had occurred, the other nine monks on duty there, together with the rest of the dogs, hurried to the rescue. It was five hours before they reached the scene of the accident. There they found one of the monks and a workman dead, and the remainder of the little party in the last stage of exhaustion. To bring them back to the Hospice through the snow and fog was perilous work. It was, however, cheerfully accomplished, for no peril has ever yet caused the monks of St Bernard to shirk the task entrusted them.

THE FIGHTING PLANES.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN, F.Z.S., Author of *Habits and Characters of British Wild Animals, Tracks and Tracking*, &c.

IN the rugged face of Mount-o'-Cairn, a hundred feet from the brow of the cliff and three hundred feet from the surf below, the three little peregrines were hatched. Of nest there was none, only a hollow scraped out in the sandy shelf, and so overhung by the ledge above that they were shielded from sun and rain, and—most important of all—from human eyes, and the missiles of death certain humans might have showered upon them. To such cliffs as Mount-o'-Cairn the peregrine owes its scant survival, for here, about those towering shelves, the rocks were set in crumbling sand, so that even the alighting of a gull might set a landslide moving. For the human spoiler, then, the nest was inaccessible.

One had only to see that place to know that here, if anywhere, the peregrine might be found,

for with its scowling grandeur and its inexpressible solitude, it was a fitting place for the fittest of our birds of prey. Rugged in character, peregrines love such rugged haunts, and for centuries past they had bred in Mount-o'-Cairn. Year after year they returned to this stronghold, and at one time the peregrines of that cliff were reserved for the kings of Scotland. "Those days are long since gone, and from the lofty position the peregrine then held he has sunk to the status of vermin. Yet the peregrines of Mount-o'-Cairn still belong to the Crown, for the ancient law has never been rescinded.

They were not the only tenants of the place; indeed, they shared it with thousands of others—kittiwakes, lesser black-backed gulls, herring gulls, fulmars, rock doves, and rabbits, while in the lower sea-washed caves, dingy and dripping, where no man had ever trod, a colony of

shags had their nests, and could be seen coming and going like the business-like folk they are. No, the peregrines were not alone, but certainly they were aloft and aloof from the vulgar rabble on the shelves below.

The visitor to the place would at first see nothing of them, but presently he would hear a metallic chattering note, harsh and defiant, which he would know at once as the voice of a royal bird. Separate and apart it seemed to ring, while anon the gulls screamed and croaked, filling the air like silver confetti as they soared and glided about their nesting shelves, and below the surf thundered. Hollow booming sounds came up, stabbed now by the shrieks of a frightened woman, now by peal after peal of crazy laughter, and as a thousand gulls filled the air, dazzling the eyes as they flashed in the sunshine, there, behold, was milord, gliding in immeasurable space!

He was not difficult to locate—a black darting speck, now sweeping skywards, now darting in and out amidst the giddy throng, cutting rings round the rest and making the swiftest of them slow by his meteoric flight. Moreover, he was rendered conspicuous by the fact that everywhere he went he was pursued by the vulgar crowd, first one, then another, plunging headlong after the master flyer; and when one of them came too near, the falcon would scream warningly as he swerved in his flight, then rise up, up, in colossal, mile-eating bounds.

This had gone on since the peregrines arrived several weeks previously, and now to-day, the chicks were hatched. Within an hour of their hatching a man and a girl descended the green slope beyond the cliff to the ruins of the castle which jutted out on a headland. And there, with the face of Mount-o'-Cairn in view, they stayed awhile, watching the bird life. The tercel resented their presence, and was constantly a-wing. Now he would glide overhead, uttering his fierce harsh note, then seawards he would dive through the scintillating host, never failing to draw the angry mob in pursuit, but in a moment he was up and away. Then at intervals he would fly full tilt at the cliff, as though to dash himself lifeless; but, gaining his look-out shelf above the eyrie, he would stop dead and land—lightly as thistle-seed.

One big herring-gull, which evidently had its nest near to the falcon's shelf, was particularly persistent in its attacks upon him, and the man remarked to his companion—'That gull will go a little too far one of these days.'

Exactly what happened the two people did not see, because it occurred just beyond their line of vision. That morning, I say, the chicks had left the eggs, which perhaps accounted for it, for hitherto the fighting planes had avoided dispute with the greater gulls.

When the two visitors finally left the headland and sauntered up to the cliff they found,

lying in a wash-out, at the end of a train of its own feathers, a great herring-gull, which looked almost the size of an albatross. Very beautiful it was in its springtime plumage, and, as they raised the warm body in their hands, more feathers fell. They saw that the strong neck was almost severed, while the patch between the wide shoulders was denuded of feathers.

'How did it die?' The girl asked the question, for on account of its beauty she was sorry for the bird.

'Gulls,' the man answered, 'are the Bolsheviks of the bird world.'

'How was it killed?' the girl repeated, and presently her companion, turning to offer his hand on the steep ascent, answered indirectly—for he loved the peregrines—'If one were mobbed by a vulgar crowd every time on leaving one's ancestral home, it would surely be permissible if at length one knocked down the ring-leader?'

'It was the peregrine, then?' she demanded.

'I'm afraid so,' he answered. 'Yes, undoubtedly.'

'What a pity,' she said, 'that such beautiful things should be so cruel.'

II.

As the days continued, and the needs of the growing chicks increased, the peregrines still stuck to their principle of leaving the wild bird-life about them undisturbed. This was not perhaps because they were anxious to keep on good terms with their neighbours, for in their dashing glory they cared not a jot for any living thing. It was, I fear, mainly because the birds which shared their cliff did not appeal to their epicurean tastes, because, generally speaking, the peregrine eats only what man would eat. Truly there were rock doves in the lower caves, but the rock doves knew that the peregrines were there, and when they came and went they dropped almost to the surface of the sea, and skimmed out of sight along the water, for they knew well that the headlong plunge of the fighting planes necessitated open air below, and that, therefore, the peregrine will not stoop at a bird flying low.

At first, when the chicks were very small, the tercel hunted for them and for his mate, while she protected her fluffy brood from the cold east winds, and the chill sea damps, which for days on end smote the cliff face. One morning an artisan, going to his work at five in the morning (summer time) down the High Street of the nearest market town, was surprised to see the pigeons rise from the square and fan up hastily into the church tower. But his surprise was short-lived, for now he beheld milord in blue, progressing along the High Street about a yard from the ground—so low, indeed, that his tapered wings cast up a little scurry of dust. He passed within five yards of the human

observer, then suddenly he corkscrewed and pinwheeled skywards. Wheeling round the tower, he knocked the proudest, plumpest pigeon into giddy space. As it smote the cobbles and rebounded, the man ran forward to secure the prize for himself. His hands were within a yard of it, when the peregrine alighted on the dead bird. Seeing him, evidently for the first time, it uttered a shrill 'kree' of surprise and defiance, and 'sucked' up, under his very eyes. And there on the polished cobbles it left only a little heap of feathers.

The tercel's look-out tower on Mount-o'-Cairn was high above the eyrie, to which he rarely descended. Cutting the air above, his prey in his talons, he would utter a cackling call, then let fall his lifeless load. And as it fell through space, the hen bird would launch herself from the eyrie, turn keel upwards, and catch the prize in mid-air, to dart back instantly to her young.

Soon, however, the demands of the chicks were too great for the tercel to cope with, and since the weather had improved, the hen bird left them at intervals to feed herself and to bring back food for them. So ere long both parents were a-wing from dawn till dusk, and many a hundred leagues they traversed. Once or twice the hen bird, which was the larger—her wings designed for greater lifting power—returned to the eyrie with a hen ptarmigan, and the nearest ptarmigan height was thirty miles away. Plovers, pigeons, puffins, teal, and once a young brown hare, were brought and laid beside the chicks to devour at their leisure; and sometimes, after sunset, when the sky was still aglow and the sea was clear, and the thunder of the surf and the cries of the gulls seemed to enhance, rather than to break, the mighty quietude, both falcons would soar upwards into the blue—up, up, till the gossamer clouds were reached, and they were the merest specks in the unlimited glory of space. Then, as though for the joy of it, they would drop to earth in a sheer, unbroken plunge, swift as thunderbolts, to wheel and scream and sweep and glide, scattering wide the gulls, finally to alight, the tercel on his look-out shelf, the hen bird by her brood.

Once two wild ducks came wheeling round the headland, two hundred feet or more from the surface of the sea, and the human spectator watched, knowing now that the band would play. The ducks were flying down wind, swift even for their kind, and the man saw the hen peregrine shoot from her shelf. Down she came towards the ducks, straight down. They swerved and quacked and doubled in the air, but too late! There was a heavy thud, and one was spinning seawards in a cloud of its own feathers. The other dived headlong, straight down into the sea, and so escaped with its

life. But the peregrine did not descend for the duck that she had killed. She left it floating on the surface, and in a minute or so a hundred screaming gulls descended upon it. When at last they rose from the surface there was no trace left of the peregrine's kill.

I have said that sometimes the hen falcon visited the distant ptarmigan hill, and one evening on the lower slopes of that hill the keeper was busy digging peats when he heard a swish of wings above his head. He looked up to see a hen peregrine descending—not in a straight nose-dive, after the manner of her kind, but at an angle of forty-five degrees across the glen. He turned for his gun, but she was far out of range ere his fingers reached it. The keeper saw her alight in the heather about a hundred yards away. She seemed puzzled, for she sat there looking about her, and meantime the keeper, armed now, quickly stole up. He knew very well that the falcon had descended in pursuit of a covey of grouse in the heather she had seen from afar, and that the grouse had huddled down, hiding themselves as she approached. As the man came up, he saw the hen falcon walking about, looking for her prey. He saw her suddenly strike her armed feet deep into the ling roots, and next moment she would have been a-wing but that—the keeper fired.

He fired—yes, and killed. So there was yet another little freebooter less, no more to take her deadly toll, nor yet to delight the heart of man by her wonderful powers. When he got up she lay very still, her wonderful wings outspread, her claws still fast upon the grouse she had struck deep down in the ling. And from the man's very feet five more grouse rose, to skim the ling-tips scarcely a foot from the ground, then to pitch again and bury themselves not twenty yards away.

The keeper laughed. This had been a lucky day for him, for it was not often a peregrine came his way; and from that day on it has been the man's boast that he is the only keeper who has ever shot a peregrine hunting its prey on foot.

III.

That evening the tercel lingered long in the sunset glory, rising and wheeling, calling, calling—those sharp metallic notes, to which no answer came. Till after darkness the sound rang above the bedlam of the gulls, and when she did not come, the tercel seemed to understand, because he descended to guard his chicks from the chill sea wind.

Possibly she was not the first mate he had lost, for in this land of ours the life of such as the peregrine is one of hourly peril. He has many friends, but they cannot show their friendship by defending him from his foes—and his foes are everywhere. So one day the tercel himself would fall, unless those wings bore him to some far-off land where the boom

of the shot-gun rarely breaks the mountain quietude.

There was no keeping pace with the growing hunger of those chicks, and before the first dawn-light till darkness closed upon the sea, he was a-wing. He fed them largely on puffins, which were nesting in thousands about a cliff only two miles away, though it was often remarked that the pigeons in that neighbouring town were perceptibly decreasing in numbers. It was said that the tercel came before there was sufficient light to see things clearly, and, indeed, there were grounds for this belief, for almost every morning a litter of pigeon feathers lay upon the cobbles down below the church clock.

Be that as it may, the peregrine ably carried on the task which was now his lot in life. He did his very best, blind, we have reason to think, to his own needs.

A little varmint! Yes, yet true to his colours—royal blue, touched with the ermine of kings.

The young peregrines soon left the nest, and, able to fly a few feet, they moved from shelf to shelf. This, if anything, increased the tercel's labours, for he could locate them only by their cries, and since each of the three screamed its loudest every time he appeared, he had no way of telling which was the hungriest—which he had fed last. But this difficulty soon solved itself, for one of the chicks, falling, alighted at length on a great rocky outcrop fifty yards out at sea. Another succeeded in gaining the castle ruins, and took up its perch on the topmost pinnacle thereof, while the third, the least adventurous, remained near to the eyrie. Thus the tercel knew them by their positions, and fed them each in turn.

Another two or three days and the young falcons were a-wing with their parent. It was a pretty sight to see them circling after him—clumsy, indeed, compared with his supreme mastery of the air, though already there was a gliding ease and swiftness in their flight which marked them out amidst the glistening horde. Up and up they climbed, the tercel encouraging them to follow by his shrill calls overhead, and all that evening, rejoicing in their newly found powers, the young falcons flew and screamed from shelf to shelf.

The following day a strange thing happened. It was a Sunday—a clear breathless Sabbath morn; and at the appointed hour the inhabitants of the little market town filed along the hot sidewalk to the parish church. Soon the bells ceased to clang, and, save for the hushed and intermittent droning of the organ, there was no sound about those gray walls, with their stained glass windows.

Aloft on the weather-vane a jackdaw sat idly chipping his comrades as they scurried by in shuffling flight; but all at once the jackdaw let go his hold and fell, as though shot, from his lofty perch. He simply let himself fall, ricocheting down the ancient tower, from tile to draining spout, then down again, calling wildly as he fell, to the very vestry porch. Then through the open doors he hopped, into that quiet shady place, and the old minister, looking up, saw the bird enter by the aisle, to seek sanctuary at last beside the font. So, indeed, have others, less worthy than God's wild children, sought sanctuary in their hour of need.

When the good citizens came out of church they found a little knot of people standing out in the High Street gazing up at the wind-vane, impaled on the topmost spike of which, and moving limply in the wind, was the body of a bird with long tapered wings. Some one said it was a falcon, that he had seen it descend from the blue in pursuit of a jackdaw, which had fallen to earth in the ace of time.

Later the old beadle went up to remove the body, which was no easy task, since the spike had passed clean through it, and was bent almost double by the impact. Taking the bird in his hands, he was surprised at its lightness. Indeed, it weighed only a few ounces, and the man held in his hand a mere shattered pulp of skin and bone—a beautiful bird all the same, though the lustre of the feathers had already faded. Later the taxidermist announced, 'Starved! Possibly a pinner. Must have gone hungry for several days, since there was no food in the stomach, and no trace of anything having been taken for some considerable time.'

The why and the wherefore of which only those could have told who had found the dead herring-gull, and who had watched the falcons day by day.

THE SANTA CATARINA.

I.

THE wild rocky coast of Buchan in Aberdeenshire is rich in attraction, whether for its sea-lore, its tales of storm and shipwreck, its reminders of smuggling days, or the unique features with which nature has

endowed it. At no point does interest reach a higher level than at St Catherine's Dub, a tiny cove on the northern outskirts of the quaint village of Collieston, where, in a V-shaped creek, behind some dangerous rocks, and distant only a few yards from the shore, lies a wreck which tradition asserts is a

ship of the Spanish Armada of 1588, the *Santa Catarina* (apparently a corrupted form of *Santa Catalina*).

No early accounts of this tradition appear to exist, and it is not till 1858, when Dr Pratt alludes to it in his *Buchan*, that we have anything definite to go upon. The substance of his statement (brought up to date in a recent reprint) is to this effect: 'The tradition receives support from the fact that Lt. Paterson, R.N., then on the Coastguard Station, Collieston, raised two guns in 1840. Mr Rust, Parish Minister of Slains, raised another in 1855, which was not even corroded. It was over 7 feet in length and 3½ inches in diameter of bore, and the ball, weighing 4 lbs., and the wadding were in perfect condition. It is now in possession of the Earl of Aberdeen at Haddo House. A diving party employed by the Countess of Erroll in 1876 raised two more guns and an anchor, which were sent to Queen Victoria at Balmoral. The largest and most complete gun was got in 1880, and is now in the possession of a London firm.'

Tales of Armada wrecks are so numerous and plausible that it is necessary to approach a tradition of this kind with extreme caution, and to apply as many tests as possible, which we are the better able to do by the rapid advance that has taken place in historical research within recent years.

II.

Let us first examine the name. In the fleet of 130 ships composing the Armada, there were three named *Santa Catalina*, one being a galleon of Castile 882 tons, another in the squadron of Andalusia 730 tons, and the third a tender without guns. The first two succeeded in limping back to Spain, and both arrived at the same port, Santander, while the third may be dismissed as not conforming to our quest.

Next as to environment. When the English abandoned pursuit opposite the Firth of Forth a review of the Spanish Fleet was held on the day following, about a hundred miles off the north-east coast of Scotland, at which time urgent repairs were carried out, and sailing directions issued. There was thus no need for any ship to make towards the coast at this stage, and the fleet appears to have sailed forward intact to the rendezvous north of Orkney.

Then, as to weather conditions. The English admiral satisfied himself, when giving up the chase, that no enemy ship could reach an eastern port in Scotland, for the reason that there was then a strong south-westerly wind bearing vessels away from land; while, for days thereafter, an approach to the coast was still more hopeless, because of 'squalls, rain and fog with heavy sea.' But even if a stray ship had battled her way inwards, it was impossible, with the swell then running, that she could

have rounded the obstructing rocks to the nook where the wreck lies, for only a small vessel in moderate weather could have found sea-room in the confined area.

Lastly, reports of wrecks even on the remote western coast travelled so speedily and accurately that any disaster within such easy distance of Edinburgh would certainly not have passed unnoticed, the more so as the whole country was in a state of high tension.

No serious writer has put forward a claim to more than four wrecks of ships of the Spanish Armada in Scottish waters, one at Fair Isle, another at Salen, one at Lochaline, and the much-discussed ship of doubtful name at Tobermory.

III.

From what has been stated it would seem that we must discount the theory that our wreck has any direct connection with the Armada. But that does not shut out the possibility of an indirect link, and we shall now discuss various side-lights that may help us to a solution. Spain, although crippled by her disastrous failure, was still a force to be reckoned with, and her king was still active in forming new plans for the conquest of England. In Scotland the small but influential Catholic party maintained a ceaseless agitation for the overthrow of the Reformed Church, and urged on King Philip by every form of argument to come to the rescue of the cause.

The north-east was the centre of this movement under the hereditary overlord, the Earl of Huntly, who was supported by members of the powerful Gordon family and many leading men of the day. Huntly's chief associate was the Earl of Erroll, a young man just turned thirty, full of spirit and daring, whose Castle of Slains lay a mile along the coast, north of Collieston, making it a convenient centre for the direct communications which were taking place between the leaders of this Scottish movement and their supporters in Spain. That there was this direct traffic appears clear, for we learn of a foreign vessel having landed a party of Jesuits in Aberdeen; and on another occasion we read of an emissary bearing a papal donation to the cause, who intimates his intention to land between Aberdeen and Peterhead, meaning in disguised language Slains Castle. For the carrying on of secret missions such as the foregoing there was no coast more suited to the purpose anywhere, especially as it was in a friendly country and directly in touch with most of the interested parties.

If we bear these facts in mind, it would appear reasonable to suggest that our wreck was one of certain ships sent by Spain as her answer to the many appeals for help which she had received, and that the vessel contained guns, ammunition, and other war equipment,

with possibly funds for the payment of an armed force. Incidentally, the ship would appear to have been capable of using guns, if we judge by the recovered gun which was loaded ready for action. But her evident small tonnage would not have admitted of more than very few mounted guns; so that if as many as six have been already raised without any serious attempt to explore the full possibilities, it could only mean that the surplus guns were in the nature of cargo.

Whether, in making for Slains Castle on the starboard or Collieston on the port side, the *Santa Catarina* had taken a wrong turning, or whether in the effort for privacy she had worked her way to the head of the dangerous creek, where some mischance had caught her as in a trap, is a question that we need not stay to consider. Being in effect an echo of the Armada, she would come as years passed by to be regarded as an integral part of that historic episode, and, viewed in that light, the tradition would have been handed down with a semblance of truth in it. With the keen demand for historical inquiry which is abroad, and in view of the encouraging results which have been attained here by the most simple equipment, there appears to be better scope for an effort on a large scale than in places which are now receiving attention, where the conditions are far less suitable or inviting. While it is little likely that any documents bearing on the question have escaped notice at home, there might be possibilities in the Archives of Spain, since doubtless a record of any transactions of this kind would have been kept either by the Treasury or by the Admiralty.

IV.

The outcome of all this Scoto-Spanish activity was the growth of a state of rebellion, chiefly in the north-east; and in 1594 King James VI. saw the necessity for departing from his double-dealing attitude, and of taking a definite line if he were to keep himself in the running for the English succession as well as retaining his throne at home. A force of 8000 was got together to cope with the rebellious intrigues, and the Earl of Argyle, a youth of eighteen, was placed in command. The Catholic host, although numbering less than a quarter of the government muster, was splendidly fitted out, mostly in the form of cavalry, and it had the advantage of three brass field-pieces, an equipment that was no doubt the reward of the long effort to interest Spain, and the explanation of the presence of ships like the *Santa Catarina*. After playing for position the two armies at length met at the foot of a range of hills in Glenlivet on 3rd October 1594. The combat began at noon, and two hours sufficed

to end it, the king's army with its inferior arms, its bows and arrows, being no match for the compact, well-equipped forces of Huntly and Erroll.

Argyle is said to have lost five hundred men. The Catholic Earls had only twelve of their number killed, but they were depressed because amongst the slain was Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendoun, one of their best leaders, who, in contrast to his notorious brother and predecessor, was a man of piety and virtue. The van of the Catholic army was led by Erroll, who had to bear the brunt of the conflict till Huntly came to his relief, but not before he had sustained arrow wounds in the foot and the arm. The victory was a barren one, for King James, having meantime become seriously alarmed, marched north in force, and the prospect of fighting in a hopeless cause soon led to the break-up of the rebellion. The king passed an edict that certain castles 'salbe cassin doun in signe and memorie of unnatural defection and rebellious,' and he saw to it in person that the work of destruction at Slains was thorough, for there now remains but one desolate wall of the tower to indicate the massive stronghold which was then thrown down, to rise no more.

Erroll consulted safety in flight to Holland, where during the next two years he passed through various trials and hardships. He then obtained the king's pardon after having made a form of submission on the question of religion, although it is obscure whether he thereafter remained a Protestant. He built a new home about four miles farther north on the coast, and this in turn gave place to the later castle, which was made notable by the visit of Johnson and Boswell on their Hebridean tour, as recorded in their Journals. We may best learn what manner of man was Francis, ninth Earl of Erroll, if we judge the stormy outset in the light of the peaceful ending, when he had reached the three score years and ten: 'Upon Saturday the 16th July 1631, the high and mighty lord Francis, Earl of Erroll, is in his own place of the bounds departed this life, and was buried within the Church of Slains, upon the night, convoyed quietly with his own domestics and country friends with torch light. It was his will to have no gorgeous burial, nor to convocate his noble friends with making great charges and expences, but to be buried quietly, and such expences as should be wared prodigally upon his burial, to give the same to the poor. This was a truly noble man, of a great and courageous spirit, who had great troubles in his time, which he stoutly and honourably still carried, and now in favour died in peace with God and man, and a loyal subject to the king, to the great grief of his kin and friends.'

C.

THE POLITICAL AGENT.

AN EPISODE IN THE ANNEXATION OF NATAL.

I.

THE Political Agent did not expect visitors. So much could be deduced from the inadequacy of his attire. He had built himself comfortable quarters overlooking the bay, and he now sat in the shelter of the stoep composing dispatches to send to Sir George Napier at Cape Town.

Spasmodic jerks of the quill suggested mental hesitation, and after making several erasures it finally trailed off into inactivity. The mind behind the instrument had wandered into that dream realm of absorbed speculation in which it was neither asleep nor awake. Was it the subliminal self which kept asking, 'What are you, Mark Durnford?'

Question and answer went on revolving in what he had been accustomed to call his brain until he became more than half mesmerised by the very velocity of the process. Was he a spy or an honest Intelligence Officer, a mere popinjay or a real representation of British prestige?

With the Amazulus he was on the best of terms; he was trusted by the Trek Boers. It was his business to be all things to all men. He could flatter himself that he did his business well. Nevertheless, his position was unenviable. As diplomatic agent he had an undisputed social standing, for was he not supposed to know the mind of that capricious entity called the British Government?

But did he? He thought not.

The assumption of knowledge involved him in a thousand unrealities, and in not a few real physical dangers. He felt at times like a man who had invited a friend to dine at an expensive hotel without the wherewithal to pay the bill. There were trying hours when he envied the mouse under the claws of the cat.

To-day his Janus-headed lord spoke with the mouth of peace, and to-morrow with the harsh accent of war. In one mood South Africa was the apple of his lord's eye, and in another, a mote which had to be extracted at all hazards. And who was he, Mark Durnford, to presume to know better than the embodied essence of British wisdom what thing was good for Natal?

This dispatch was a morsel of cheese which the British Lion might roll on the tip of his tongue, leaving his shoulder of mutton for that inducement, or he might disdain to see it with the tail of his eye. Indecision and disgust finally kissed each other, and with a vicious stab of the quill in the inkpot Durnford left it there, and rose to look across the waters of the bay. Familiarity had dimmed his eye to the magnificent prospect, and so the

involuntary 'phew' which raced at the heels of his vision was caused by an unexpected detail in the scene.

A frigate had just dropped anchor and lay with a stately languor upon the placid water. Durnford picked up a telescope that lay on a table near, and, after a prolonged look, murmured, 'The *Isis*! But where are the tin men with the shooting-irons? Must be under hatches to keep out of the heat. Not a quiver of an eyelid anywhere. Lord, yes; there swings a cutter on the davits, with a middy glued to the tiller. What's up?'

II.

For a time, and unconsciously, the agent's body moved rhythmically to the long swing of the oars, and he watched the eager propulsion of the boat till an intervening sandhill restored the characteristic inaction of the scene. 'What vim these beggars have,' he ejaculated. It was the landsman's tribute to marine fitness.

The hour was 11 A.M., the heat 110 in the shade, a steamy heat in which man gasped and the tropical vegetation rejoiced.

A conspiracy of silence lay on the land. And away out in the bay H.M.S. *Isis* lay as if becalmed in a great circle of rippling light and glitter caused by the vertical and pitiless rays of an unclouded sun.

Suddenly little points of light began to dance among the aloes, and a moving shadow fell on the plumbago which lined the path to the agent's residence. It was the sunbeams making free with the brilliant spots upon the uniform of the middy as he ascended the long tortuous path up the hill, followed at heel by an able-bodied mariner, diligent and watchful as a faithful hound.

Durnford stepped from the stoep to meet the visitor. 'Good-morning.'

'Morn-ing,' replied the representative of the *Isis*, in a quick, jerky manner, saluting as he spoke. 'D'spatches, Mr Durnford.' With a side glance he indicated the blue apparition, who advanced and presented a bulky white packet.

'Heat trying?' suggested Durnford.

'Heat!' gasped the parboiled sailor. 'Call this heat? It's hell!'

'Come in and have something to drink.'

'Thanks—sorry—can't—must get on to the fort,' said the middy. He saluted again and wheeled off with a wooden pomposity, and a semi-conscious indifference, as if he detected a watchful eye at the end of a spyglass far out on the sun-bleached bay. The blue shadow moved after him at the regulation distance. The

whole performance suggested the unreality of a marionette show.

III.

For a while Durnford toyed with the packet. But to those versed in such movements it was an eager hesitation, for in the unostentatious bulk of this white packet lay the lives of men and, it might be, the future of a sub-continent.

Britain had acted toward Natal with the wilful indecision of a child that could at will keep or break its latest toy.

Dingaan, the Zulu chief, had treacherously immolated Piet Retief, demolished in blood the camps of the emigrant Boers, and had paid for it in the slaughter and reprisal of Blood River. The successful commando returned to the coast, only to find that the British Governor had put Major Charteris in command of a company of the 72nd Highlanders, and that he had proclaimed a protectorate over the colony. And, as this followed a definite abandonment of the country, the Boer reply was a warlike attitude.

Fifteen hundred Dutchmen, armed with swords, pistols, and double-barrelled guns, men inured to battle and splendidly united by common suffering, turned and faced the handful of Highlanders.

The result could not be in doubt—not unless the Cape Government, moved by the intelligence forwarded by Durnford, sent a ready and effective reinforcement. In the hand of the agent was the answer to hope deferred; was it to be a new departure, and at length the assertion of a strong hand?

With simulated deliberation he cut the cords and broke the seals, carefully rolled back the sheets till they were flat, and then began to read.

He followed the words with the impatience of one intent upon the fact. 'Whereas . . . heretofore . . . notwithstanding . . . in pursuance of'—would the meaning never emerge from the forest of words?

The only sound that broke the stillness of the hour was the ceaseless chorus of the insistent mosquito in the room, and, without, the raucous whirr of a guinea-fowl in the bush. To these at length was added an exclamation that sounded like the explosion of several forceful adjectives in the English language. To the accompaniment of the sound the manuscript fluttered to the floor, and the Political Agent rose to his feet in visible excitement.

'His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has been pleased to appoint Captain J. C. Smith, 24th Regiment, Commandant of Port Natal. Captain Smith will march with his detachment to Port Natal,' &c., &c.

This was the tenor of what he had read. The room swam, Durnford folded his arms to hide his emotion, went over to the window and

looked out as if intently, but his eyes were fixed on vacancy.

IV.

So there was to be fighting. Smith was on the march. There had been no delay. He was off at an hour's notice—no meandering down to Algoa Bay to wait for a troopship. Up and off at the first call, the men inspired by the zeal of their captain, singing as they marched, 'We fight to conquer.' And he, Durnford, had called them. But they were marching in fighting order through a territory infested by savage tribes, foes who gave no quarter. What might happen by the way? There were a hundred and fifty rivers to cross; the weather had been bad, and these rivers had to be crossed at their widest and deepest, for the march was along the coast-belt. They were marching with artillery and with an extended line of wagons. It was a forced march, a journey of at least forty-two days, with the sand cutting the feet to pieces, with the rays of the sun reflected from the interminable beach till the eyes swam in liquid pain and the flesh became puckered with blistering heat. Roads would have to be made by day, and during the night a ceaseless watch preserved, for, in an hour, a charge of elephants or an onslaught of savages might reduce the camp to chaos.

Durnford knew what it meant, and he looked into that vacancy which, to the inner eye, is full of kaleidoscopic events; and as he looked the patriot and the man thrilled to the fact that here was one of the heroic journeys in the annals of empire-building.

But he did not realise all the toil nor the pathos of that march, for the day after leaving Faku's territory Mrs Giligan was delivered of a son, and the next day the Commissariat Issuer's wife of a daughter. And even as the Political Agent paced his room, girding inwardly at the seeming hopelessness of it all, James Devitt of the 2nd Company was being interred with military honours by the Umkomanzi River, a victim to the ardour of the march and the fatigue of the way.

It must be confessed that the agent had no mind for the minor events of the progress. He was strongly moved by the heroism of the deed, and no less by the fatuity of the thing; this last struck him like a buffet.

'Two hundred men and two field-pieces!' He repeated the statement mechanically, over and over again, as if it were the quotient of a sum. Two hundred men, mostly from the slums of the cities of Britain, unable to shoot straight in the South African atmosphere, and most of them unable to sit a horse. What experience they had so far gained in the art of war was against foes that entrenched themselves in the bush and scattered at the first sign of defeat. And these men were on the way to

meet an enemy who could shoot the head from a korhaan¹ at a hundred yards without soiling its body feathers, to whom riding was second nature, the bush like a highway, and the veld familiar as a back garden!

It had all the appearance of incredible folly. And the dispatches had not encouraged the Political Agent.

V.

The little force, however, came in on the 12th of May 1842, travel-stained and weary, and yet next day it was fresh enough to march to the Fort, haul down the Dutch Tricolour, spike the gun which supported the flag, and raise the Union Jack.

When the Boers saw by demonstration this British estimate of Dutch prowess, they were exasperated to the pitch of instant attack and speedy annihilation.

But forces were at work to weaken the Boer strength and to inspire caution. Between Durban and the inland town which they had founded under the name of Pietermaritzburg there lay the Zulu hosts of Panda. This astute savage realised that the easiest way to ingratiate himself with the British Governor was to harass the enemies of Britain, and no sooner did he proceed to carry out this policy than the Boers, to save their homes and families from desolation and butchery, found it necessary to scatter their commando.

At the same time the valiant Captain Smith, ever ready to act on the principle that a blow struck at once is equal to two struck later, prepared to bring the issue to a speedy decision.

The Boers were in laager, under the command of the celebrated Pretorius, at Congella, three miles from the British camp. And Captain Smith made his arrangements for a moonlight attack. He fitted a howitzer into a boat, and gave instructions that this floating battery should drop down channel and demoralise the foe by its discharge of shells. But the hopeful landsman had miscalculated the tide, and the boat grounded too far off to be of service.

The fatal nature of this miscalculation became evident when, eight hundred yards from the point of attack, the troops had to form without the cover of this important howitzer. The Boers opened fire from an adjacent mangrove bush, giving painful evidence of the superior carrying power of their arms, and also of their preparedness for what Captain Smith had regarded as a surprise attack.

The British oxen stampeded under fire, mixed the two six-pounders in inextricable confusion, and created a partial panic in the ranks of the soldiers. It became the story of an experiment

which failed. The decisive blow became a victory for the enemy, and the attacking party returned under the silence of the stars, with the moon acting as a searchlight for their foes.

Thirty brave men lay dead or wounded on the shore, and the advancing tide soon placed the disabled in the category of the lost. Next day the victorious farmers entered the town and took, without much resistance, the military position at the Point, annexed all the stores, and sent the soldiers, together with the hospital residents, as prisoners to Pietermaritzburg. So ended that historic march from the Umgazi Post in Faku's country to Durban. The intrepid Captain Smith with his handful of men were trapped in their own camp.

The Boers decided to starve them out, and in fact so acute were their privations that within a short period, having exhausted the food-supply provided by the horses, they were reduced to the consumption of crows and stirrup leathers.

VI.

Now that fighting was forward the Political Agent took his badge of office, a small Union Jack, and retired to the camp, where, if he did little execution on the enemy, he could at least record the quantity of round shot which the foe fired into the lines—in one day 122, in another 124, exclusive of the discharge from the 18-pounder, which they had captured and mounted at the Point.

There were also dispatches of real moment to be sent to those in authority, among them the urgent demand for reinforcements to extricate the lost regiment. With the Boers in command of the beach and of all the outlets to the Cape, the distracting problem was how to send such dispatches without their falling into the hands of the enemy.

This problem was speedily solved. Richard King, an elephant-hunter and trader, volunteered to carry the messages.

It is a story unique in the annals of daring, a fit theme for a South African epic. With two horses this intrepid man stole off in the darkness and silence of the night, with 600 miles of desolate country before him, a way made terrible by its loneliness and by the constant danger of attack from lions, elephants, or tigers, or still more savage encounter with the tribes that occupied the heart of Kaffirland.

One hundred and fifty rivers barred his way, and these, being mostly in flood, had to be crossed by swimming. By day and night his life hung upon the exercise of watchfulness and caution. Every bush might hide a foe, every open space betray his presence, each halt might be his last, and every advance a nearer approach to death.

¹ *Korhaan* or *Knorhaan* (Dutch, 'scolding-cock'), a South African species of bustard.

But, nothing fearing, never halting save for necessary rest, his eyes fixed forward, his heart steeled by the memory of the clamant need behind, Dick King pressed onward. At the end of ten days he entered Grahamstown in the last stage of exhaustion. The heroic messenger's tale stirred men to such activity that within thirty-one days the frigate *Southampton* dropped anchor in Natal Bay with reinforcements; and on their arrival they found that they had been preceded by a detachment of the 27th Regiment from Algoa Bay.

Captain Smith was liberated not a day too soon, and the Boers wisely submitted to the argument of superior numbers. A general amnesty was granted, and the Political Agent

came up smiling. He is reported to have said at a social function, subsequent to the amnesty, 'The Dutch are a great people; it is a delight to state on the authority of my Government that every assistance will be given the emigrant Boers against the depredations of Um Panda.'

He finished a speech remarkable for its conscious want of lucidity by saying, 'England never commits itself to the line of abandonment till it has bound its gallant foes by the ties of amity.'

'Sounds all right,' said the wooden midshipman to an ancient lieutenant of inscrutable demeanour, 'but I'm blessed if it don't feel jolly like saying that you pay the piper without hearing the tune.'

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

CHAPTER IV.

I.

THE next day saw me not only in London, but at Lennox Gardens.

The young lady, concerning whom I made particular inquiry of the butler, was not at home; but the butler affably informed me that Colonel and Mrs Chichester were in, and likewise Sir Thomas and Lady Weston.

I had decided, however, upon my course of action, and before handing the butler my cards, I scribbled upon one a message for Miss Weston that I would call at twelve o'clock on the morrow, upon the chance of finding her in.

This was so far successful that, before breakfast at my club the following morning, I had a note from Vera, containing a message from Colonel Chichester inviting me to luncheon.

And so to lunch I went. No sooner was the meal over than, forthwith, I proposed a walk, with Vera for my companion; and in due course away we went.

It seemed to me incredible that Hubert should be so foolish as to run the risk of losing her. Great charm of voice and manner, an alert upright figure, pretty brown hair and an attractive face, an intelligent mind, and a good heart—all these were a very part of her. No one could wish for a more pleasant companion; and I discerned in her certain qualities which seemed to me to distinguish her above her fellows, the girls of the present day.

That her happiness was bound up with that of Hubert became more and more evident as we talked about him. But it also was easy to see that she was a girl of a high spirit, and that, if once her self-respect took alarm, Hubert, however much he might sigh for her in the future, would sigh in vain.

II.

To return, then, to our walk. We had gone some distance, and were emerging from Hyde Park at Stanhope Gate. 'Let us now drive back,' I said; 'you have walked enough.' And then, presently, as our taxi glided smoothly along, 'I am reminded,' said I, 'of the last time that Hubert and I were together, in that twelve mile drive from Richmond.'

She did not answer me.

'I have long wanted to ask you, Vera, whether that unfortunate Major Spicer was the man who came up to us; do you remember?'

'Oh yes! that was his name,' she hurriedly answered. 'I really can't bear to think of it; and it was all that, I am sure, which upset poor Hubert so thoroughly, and made him so unsettled.'

'Now tell me,' I said, 'why should Hubert feel more upset about it than myself or any one else? We were all upset.'

'He felt it, I think'—and here her voice faltered—'chiefly on my account.'

'Do you mind telling me?' I asked.

She paused. 'Well, if you will promise me not to repeat it—'

'My dear,' I said, 'let my love for Hubert be the pledge of my loyalty to you.'

'You are so kind to me,' she said, 'and I really do feel I want a true adviser just now. Father and mother, I know, are beginning to be quite annoyed about Hubert's continued absence. I used to stand up for him; but oh! how can I say it?'—and here her pretty lips trembled.

'Wait a bit,' I said. 'I'll tell our chauffeur to take us round by Queen's Gate and the Albert Hall, so just take your time about telling me; and if you would rather say nothing, I will only say this: if at any time you want my help or advice, do not hesitate to write to me.'

'I would rather tell you now,' she replied, as with one hand ungloved she half veiled her troubled eyes. 'I am not surprised at father being vexed, for he thinks that Hubert has slighted me; and he said the other day that no girl of proper spirit would put up with it. And I certainly do feel'—and here I could not but notice that a tear was stealing down her cheek—'I feel that something has come between us. He writes so seldom, and his letters are so different; and I know quite well that he is unhappy.'

And very woebegone the maiden herself looked, as she thought of Hubert's unhappiness, and her own.

'And the cause?' I gently asked.

'Well, what I'm going to tell you seems to me a sort of reason why I ought to be patient, and try to make every allowance for him.'

III.

I waited, and then she proceeded. 'I have never told mummie or dad, but (you see) you were at the ball that night, so you will be able to understand. Of course, every event of that evening is graven on my memory——'

'And so it is on mine,' I interrupted.

'You will remember, then,' she went on, 'how angry we were with poor Major Spicer when he tried to force his company upon us; and I recollect telling you how he had persecuted me for a dance.'

'Yes,' I nodded.

'Well, after I had left you I told Hubert, and he was furious about it; and I laughed to think how well-off any girl was with such a gallant cavalier to protect her. All at once when we were standing outside on the lawn, who should come up to me again but this same man! I felt sorry, then, I had ever said a word to Hubert about him, for there's no doubt Major Spicer had had too much champagne; and there was quite an unpleasant scene. And after that I did not see Hubert again until he came up to say "good-bye"; and then you both went away together.'

'Yes,' I said; 'we drove back to town together; but he was singularly silent, and never told me a word of all this. He said he felt rather seedy, and so when we parted I offered to call round at his hotel to see how he was next morning. But that was really the last I saw of him, for I returned home next day, and then he went off to Canada. I gather, Vera, from what you tell me that after we parted from you at Sussex Lodge you never saw him again.'

'No! never again,' she sighed.

'Well,' I said, turning to her, 'I fail to see in what you've told me any reason for coldness on his part now.'

'Is that really your opinion?' she asked. 'I attach so much importance to your opinion

about this, because, you see, you are a man, and look at things from a man's point of view. You don't know how I have questioned and questioned myself a thousand times whether there was anything—not in my actual conduct, you know, but in the view Hubert might take of my conduct that night. You don't think it possible, then, that he might have imagined that Major Spicer would not have behaved as he did towards me unless—unless I had given him some encouragement?'

'I know exactly what you mean,' I said, 'and I'm sure that no one who has any knowledge of you at all could dream of supposing that you would wish to attract a man like Major Spicer. But if you attach importance to a man's point of view, let me confess that you were looking quite splendid that night; and what man alive could help but admire you! I myself am one of your admirers, but then I am also privileged to be one of your friends. But in Hubert, remember, we have to consider not merely the friend but the lover; and it seems to me, still looking at it from the man's point of view, that every lover is liable to fits of jealousy, periods of insanity, and all sorts of vague alarms and overwhelming emotions.'

'No! Don't interrupt me,' I continued. 'Sometimes the lover is furious if any one ventures to glance at his fiancée; and then, perchance, he is still more furious if she is not the cynosure of all eyes.'

By this time I had brought a smile to Vera's face.

'Oh, he's not so foolish as all that,' she said, laying her hand upon my arm.

'At any rate,' I rejoined, 'he belongs to that "genus"—the "genus" lover! And now, here we are at your front door; and I have only this last word, dear—shall I do my best to get him back to this country, and see if I can't convince him that he must be head over ears in love with you, or else he would never have acted so foolishly as he has done?'

She placed her hand in mine. 'You are such an old dear,' she said, 'you will know what is best to be done.'

And so, when I got back home again to my old rectory in the country, I had nothing very particular to report to Hubert's mother; but I wrote what I earnestly hoped was a diplomatic letter to Hubert himself.

I was old enough to be his father, and I loved the boy; and I think he knew it.

As for Vera—well, if there had been no Hubert in the case, and I had not been so confirmed a bachelor, or if a thousand other ifs—why, I would—— But there's no use thinking what I would have done. I only know that for the sake of both those dear hearts, I felt it to be my duty to try to bring Vera and Hubert together again.

(Continued on page 533.)



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday*.

TRADE is seriously and dangerously bad.

Because the case of the nation in whole and of each one of us as units has become as critical as in the worst years of the war, the most thoughtful and sensitive men and women in this month of August will seek the seashore and the hills, not in the careless mood which is usual and helpful in less abnormal times, but as those who long for a ~~sense~~ sense of tranquillity, affording opportunity for the most serious reflections, the discovery of truth, and inspiration for action. For it is apparent that unless a change sweeps over the disposition of our people, their attitude towards work and life, they, as a great nation, will perish. In August here it is a custom to write gently upon the ease of holidays and the occupations of pleasure and relaxation; but Britain generally, whatever its outward mien, will surely be taking its vacation this time with an inward solemnity, yearning for encouragement and a new determination. Warnings clang upon the ears from every quarter. The high authorities are all turning towards pessimism. At the beginning of this year strong optimism was blown through all the public trumpets. The great trade revival was declared to be at hand; the dawn of the new prosperity was breaking at last. At it proved, this was but a fancy of the kind that is born from longing. Having no roots in fact and truth, it withered soon. By March it was known that the crisis, perhaps even the final crisis of our commercial status as a nation, was at hand. Company chairmen and the directors of the big banks expressed their anxiety in plainer terms than ever before. Individual authorities spoke out boldly. 'There is no hope whatever of translating into fact the delusion that Great Britain can once more become supreme as an industrial country,' said one of them. 'To put it bluntly, we must either export our goods or our population,' the Master Cutler of Sheffield declared. 'I fear thriftlessness, even a certain contempt for carefulness about money, is a characteristic of our generation,' the Deputy Public Trustee reflected. And, by way of stating that all the troubles of trade did not owe their origin to a single class, Mr Philip Snowden exclaimed, 'Let British em-

ployers of labour spend less time on the golf-course and attend to their own business; let them organise their business in a better way.' I do not side with anyone who suggests that in this Mr Snowden was speaking nonsense. Whatever be the cause—and there is probably a real cause in severe discouragement both by Government and Labour—some observant outsiders believe that our business men are losing in energy, acumen, inspiration, and ideas. Upon that matter of games Sir Frederick Lewis reflected some months ago that it was a remarkable thing that greater attention had been bestowed upon the reason for the defeat of an English polo team by Americans than to the cause of the defeat of British shipbuilders by the Dutch. Afterwards Britain was defeated at many other games, chiefly by Americans, and in the spring our trade and commerce received a staggering blow when a considerable British shipbuilding contract passed to Germany. Since then our industries have been further taxed, and now when we are preparing for the celebration of a very great industrial centenary, the establishment of railways, in which we led the world, the threat of a gigantic strike of the railway workers hangs upon us, and the quoted values of the railway stocks, which for many weeks past have been steadily and ominously falling, is lower than anyone remembers them to have been before. But at the beginning of the summer the nation was congratulating and priding itself—through the newspapers—upon the fact that in one week there were more great sporting events of the first class than ever before, championships galore the whole time, and the bulk of space in the newspapers given up to sport, and we were delighted to think that, however else we failed, we were a nation of sportsmen still! Has this sporting pride of ours not been overdone? And are we justified in it as once we were? The multiplicity of sporting events and the immensity of the crowds who witness them do not make us great sportsmen; and, even if they did, business came before sport when Britain was at her very best, and she will never rise to the heights again while the order is reversed. Yet with a large section of the community it seems verily to become a principle of life that

sport and pleasure are better than work and business.

* * *

No statement has struck the thinking section of the people more sharply than that by Dr Arthur Shadwell in the *Times*, in which he said that from pioneers we have become imitators, and slow at that. He sought to show that 'the present generation of young men took no interest in their work, and thought of nothing but their amusements,' and that the 'transference of interest from work to play is far more general to-day than it was twenty years ago, and it is common to all classes.' Then he said that 'the point is not that they play as a relaxation in leisure hours, or even that they watch others play, but that they think of nothing else. It is no longer recreation, but the chief preoccupation of life. And yet at these very sports and pastimes to which their whole attention is given—all invented in this country—they cannot hold their own against rivals who come from other countries, which a few years ago were thought incapable of any athletic prowess. . . . There is really something wrong with the present generation; they neither work well nor play well. They seem altogether lacking in energy and serious purpose. Those who are not go off to some distant region.' What rescued the country from its difficulties and perils a hundred years ago was work and economy. 'Until they are applied again,' says Dr Shadwell, 'there will be no recovery. There is much whining about German competition, but the lesson is not learnt. The Germans succeed because they work all round; not workmen only, but all of them.' We suffer in these days from a careless, negligent optimism, or an unreasoned confidence in the future. I think we need one million pessimists with imagination and constructive ability, and we could deal amply with the Germans then, and the Americans and French and all the others. Cabinet ministers, who have regularly sought popularity by dwelling upon the golden future that awaits us, and proclaiming the principle that all will come right in the end, have lately been compelled to face the truth and introduce a little warning pessimism into their speeches. Governments do little but talk and tax. It is remarkable that we have held the position so well for seven years after the war in face of all such difficulties; but the rest of the world is now preparing for a grand industrial campaign, and he who thinks that by sport, spending, and speeches we can still hold it, and that, in seven more years of such, England, Scotland, and Wales will stand where they did or ought to do, is wrong. In some form a cataclysm worse than war would have overtaken us. I have not quoted from these warning people because they have seized upon excess of sport—with failure at it—and of pleasure

as a key to our troubles. Any Briton who inveighs against honest sport and the healthy practice of it at the proper time might as well complain against the ordering of the universe. He would be a ninny and a nuisance.

* * *

Yet we should better understand what we mean by sport, and cease such nonsense as the talk about improving our foreign relations through its agency in the form of international matches. If statesmen cannot better these relations, how shall it be done by cricket, football, and golf? And the suggestion is humbug, for the history of the last half-century is strewn with bitter feelings and expressions instigated by international sport, culminating in the Olympic Games last year, which nearly collapsed through this cause. The world is not yet of sufficiently even temperament for the perfect success of international games. No people has yet reached that stage of simple unselfishness when it is indifferent to its own defeat in anything, and few of us think it desirable that it ever should. None likes to be beaten if victory or defeat is considered as a main issue in international games, while intense press propaganda forces and exalts this issue. But the best moral principle of all games is surely that they should be played purely for the love and the enjoyment of them—a lofty ideal which is approached, or, indeed, fully realised, regularly in our private play. It is neither realised nor even distantly approached in international games, or in professional shows for the attraction of spectators. Cricket and football with the Colonies are excellent; but cross-seas games might very well be left at that. We do wrong in forcing international sport in our present manner, announcing each bout with a proclamation of our own sporting strength and enthusiasm, and closing it, after defeat, with a measured expression of our sporting virtues. I am one of those who have loved sport keenly all their lives and have practised it in various forms regularly and with enthusiasm from schooldays until now. (I might claim—aver, if you permit—that I was the first in two countries to strike a golf ball.) So, with a multitude, I sicken at a new form of humiliating resignation that is being continually adopted by ourselves as losers towards our conquerors, and more especially—we must not fear to say it—the Americans. We are apparently afraid to offend these people—who are indeed now marvellously good at games, and in a certain way more efficient than ourselves, but possessed of an entirely different attitude towards them and understanding of them. British and American sport are oil and water. Much fearing to offend these Americans possessing so much power, we pay their players fulsome, adulatory compliments, in which I state, as one who knows, there is less than a full measure of

sincerity; and we praise our conquerors at times (I do not definitely refer to the Americans here) when we know beyond doubt that they have done sporting wrongs, upon which we feel compelled to be silent. For if we did not thus be humbugs, there would be trouble! For ourselves we are in danger of a great sporting decadence through too much publicity—much greater in our country even than in America—too much professionalism, too much spectatorship, too thin spine, and too little work, for the best sporting quality will never be produced in an individual or a nation that does not work in such manner that the pleasure flavour of the games is intensified thereby. However good we were at games, it would be foolish to expect us to retain any considerable degree of general supremacy now that they have become almost universal in the world. It is better that for a while we should move more slowly in these matters, especially in international sport, and lay ourselves well to work. So here we may pass to business.

* * *

A maxim of business enterprise is that the eyes should be 'kept open,' that the mind should be alert, acute, instantly receptive of fleeting impressions, to register them, to examine them, and to profit by them. The mass of business men believe with the full strength of their pride and conviction that they do thus keep open their eyes. Yet observation of them in many places and various circumstances leads one with some reluctance to the conclusion that this is a traditional and smug delusion. On their full establishment in business life they assume the virtues they should possess, and then in due season with self-satisfaction complain against governments, bewail the state of trade, and lament their unfortunate lot if they do not make satisfying profits. Such gloomy contemplations are commonly followed by spells of rest and recreation, or even prolonged holidays. The vision of a business man taking arms against a sea of trouble is rare, though not unknown. Disliking such warfare, he soon abandons it. And in the matter of hours of work, and days and weeks of rest and holiday, he is often an amazing humbug. Circumstances vary, but especially when things go well, it may be assumed, I think, that when the business man closes his office at five o'clock or earlier he has finished for the day, and usually leaves all work behind him as he meanders home. If he holds to his office from ten to five on five days a week—ten to one on Saturdays—for two months without a lapse he sometimes complains of overwork, and a sympathetic doctor suggests a sea-voyage. But professional men, including artists and writers—and I would say particularly these two—often work through fourteen or sixteen hours a day for seven days a week, and for many consecutive weeks, as I

very well know, yet complain not nor hanker after holidays. The humbug of business is great, and it is costly to the individual and the nation. The schools of commerce, which have been springing up everywhere in recent years, endeavouring to create a science of business and to define principles with details and methods with variations, should establish a Department of Ethics and Realities, designed to rid the business world of all the fungus of humbug that sticks upon it. Now, as already suggested, one of the features or principles of the general commercial humbug is that the business man is always 'keeping his eyes open.' For sweet tranquillity's sake I will accept and believe an assurance that all who are reading now do thus, to their good credit and for the enhancement of their deserts, keep open their eyes and are always alert, but the others do not. Were it not otherwise with those latter miseries trade would be better than it is, our commerce would not so much falter, the many splendid opportunities that still exist would not be missed. Observe the gigantic rewards that even now are being achieved in manufacture and commerce by those who keep open their eyes, are sufficiently alert and energetic, watching and taking the tide of fortune.

* * *

The schools of commerce and other business preceptors should teach the principles of acute, analytical, and applied observation. They should urge the necessity of refining the general wide and lazy vision to a sharp concentration on points, as in the game of golf, wherein the player finds that it conduces better to gaze intensely at a particular part of his ball rather than to slop a vacant vision on the whole of it. The old Red Indians were famous for a peculiarly acute trained manner of vision, by which they would examine with a microscopic minuteness, one by one, the most distant points, so that they could detect men and things on far horizons that the Palefaces could scarce discern through telescopes. It seems to some of us, their critics, that our business men should add to their abundance of merits this one of observing more acutely, and then pouncing like the hawk. Too often they fail to see wood for trees. They look, but they do not perceive that which is meant for their own case. I think of a story that was told of the artist Whistler by Sir James Rennell Rodd, who knew him well. The eminent diplomat said that there was a worthy and conscientious painter in water-colours who won the warm approval of Ruskin and achieved some mid-Victorian repute by spending years of his life on a camp-stool in front of St Mark's at Venice and carefully reproducing with a telescopic sight every detail, crevice, and tessera of mosaic in that astoundingly harmonious whole. Whistler

one day stood behind him, pretending to take a deep interest in his miniature brush-work, while with a piece of chalk he wrote in large white letters on the back of the poor man's coat, 'I am totally blind.' Having seen the chances missed by our business people abroad, listened to their admissions thereon, their faint excuses, with always their melancholy dirge, their gloomy accompaniment in the keys of Labour and Taxation, I think they are a little blind. Sometimes they still send out their catalogues solely in English to foreign communities who know not a word of our language. They do not readily offer to adapt themselves to the foreigner's conditions or to suit his convenience. They ask that the foreigner shall make round holes suit the square pegs they desire to sell him. The German and the American send him good round pegs on easy business terms, and nice pictures of their manner of fitting in attractive catalogues in the proper native language. Our consuls at many foreign places tell me that our manufacturers and traders have become too slow and lethargic; but then, also, I think there is often something to be said against the consuls and their old-fashioned ways. The American consuls are sharper and more enterprising. In search of inspiration I should like our business people to consider the Phœnicians. How wonderful was the enterprise, the perception of those ancient traders who came along the Mediterranean in search of markets! How they pounced upon every opportunity! They permitted no grass to grow under their Phœnician feet.

* * *

Are business houses, trading institutions in general, not too faithful still to some old forms and conventions? Like religion are some of these old ways in business. Once in my life, for a few months only on leaving school, I had a turn in the ancestral business, and the conventions wearied me. It appeared that unless a sheet of letter-paper were folded most precisely in the proper way it would never reach its final destination and never be read. I presumptuously proposed a new shape of paper and folding on the ground of attracting attention, and it was realised then that I had indeed but lately left my school. The heads of this concern seemed to feel it were better to be familiar with the gods than omit 'Messrs the' from the official title of a firm being addressed as the 'Something Coal and Iron Company.' However, I retired from business shortly after. I lost something then, but I sometimes feel in the least modest moments that business lost something too. I showed a certain promise. I recall most clearly my first trading adventure. I was then about eight years old, and played in a youthful community much addicted to the study and maintenance of the cheaper forms of live-stock. I bought a young rabbit one month

old for fourpence. The circumstances of the purchase are as clear in remembrance now as the happenings of this morning. A month was the earliest age at which the young rabbits could be taken from their homes; at six months they would breed. This was a very beautiful young white rabbit; it had pink eyes. It kicked with splendid vigour when I held it up for examination. Having paid the fourpence, I took it home, fed it at no cost whatever for the ensuing five months, and then sold it for one and sixpence. Perhaps in commerce it would not all work out like this; but it is easy to perceive that translated to mass production, as it were, this form and rate of business would yield the most gigantic dividends. It seems to the hero of this adventure that many good business men, old and well-respected, have too much conceit for their own old-fashioned forms, their 'yours of to-day's date,' their mock respect, their peculiar verbiage. A favourite joke of one of my business ancestors was that a firm he knew had such a large correspondence that it saved a substantial sum through omitting to dot the i's and cross the t's in the letters it sent out. But what might be saved by plain directness in most of the business correspondence of these times? What is meant by the old phrase 'business habits' is often something of a myth. Those habits are sometimes slow and stodgy. The business man often affects a fine superiority in sense over artists, writers, and other classes of persons who are supposed to deal only with films and fancies, and not to understand the grand realities of the business life as compounded in rows of figures. But is not something of the imagination of the artist and writer sorely needed in much of our commerce in these days? Surely imagination is more wanted than any other thing? It is imagination that has created that fine new industry in artificial silk which is now attracting more attention than any other. The business man has indeed called in the artist and the writer for his propaganda work. Pictures and paragraphs in advertising work are making great effect. Some years ago an old firm of seed merchants, disappointed with results, invited an eminent journalist of my acquaintance to their advertising assistance. He told me that he found that their only advertisement was the simple legend, 'Blank's Seeds,' which they thought most dignified and impressive. He strongly advised them to add two more words to it—'come up.' They were staggered at the idea; they resisted, but at last consented. The public looked and smiled—and bought. So the profits were increased. More artists and writers are needed in business—more new keen non-business blood. Years ago I had occasion to listen at times in court to the handling of commercial and patent cases by that acute scientific lawyer, the late Lord Moulton, and

was enormously impressed by the absolute mastery of every detail of complicated manufacturing businesses that he, not a 'business man,' acquired in the few days of the preparation of his case. Half-way through a hearing he was teaching the business experts, telling them of their faults, suggesting remedies. He

humbled them. The mysteries of business are not so deep as they are supposed to be; its difficulties are less exacting. Our trade must strike out with a new imagination and enterprise and freedom from old convention. Let us think of the Phœnicians, but keep in mind that we live and work among Americans and Germans.

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

CHAPTER V.

I.

A MONTH went by, and still no letter from Hubert, and I began to feel nervously anxious about the result of my endeavour. And then one morning there it lay on my breakfast table, an envelope with the handwriting I knew so well.

The letter was brief.

'I have considered most carefully your letter urging me to return to England, and by the time this reaches you I shall be well on my way. The s.s. *Duke of Connaught* should reach Liverpool on Wednesday, the 3rd prox.

'As I am coming entirely in response to your letter, and to see you, and you alone, could you add to all your past kindnesses this last great favour and meet me in Liverpool?

'I shall go straight to the Lime Street Hotel, and await you there. You will understand from this that I am most anxious that not another soul shall know of my coming until after I have seen you.

'I shall value a talk with you more than I can say, for my difficulties, like a black cloud, blot out the light of heaven, and are a sore burden, too heavy for me to bear.'

'Poor boy!' I ejaculated; 'it looks as if he had got himself into some horrible mess, and can't find a way out.'

I wondered whether he had over-specified in land purchases, or anything else, and the very thought of the possibility of his appealing to me for a gift or a loan of money filled me with considerable anxiety; which was not allayed when I mentally took a peep at my bank pass-book. I earnestly hoped his difficulties were not financial, as any help I might give in that direction could only be very small—and yet my desire to help him was great.

However, it was no use surmising. I should know all about it on Wednesday the third; and if everything else were doubtful, there was no question but that I must be at Liverpool to meet him on his arrival. Unfortunately I had a church service and choir practice on that day, but these must be put off. I confess that I am a great stickler for the fulfilment of duties of this kind, when I have undertaken to do them; but I wasn't going to allow any friend of mine

to go hang at the end of a piece of red tape, if it was in my power to save him.

Therefore it was that on the following Tuesday evening I ate my dinner at the Lime Street Hotel in Liverpool, with a pleasing consciousness of being on the spot.

Next day an Express Service messenger awaited the coming in of the big liner *Duke of Connaught*, and succeeded in delivering my message to Hubert Carrington at the earliest moment, telling him that I was at the hotel, and that he would find me there.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the intensity of the expectation which possessed me while I waited at that hotel. The arrival of the Allan liner was duly reported, but it must have been an hour and a half later ere I set eyes on my friend Hubert.

II.

There is something mysterious in any changes to be noted in the appearance of a friend whom one has not seen for some time; and one's own mental attitude may be described by a note of interrogation.

Hubert appeared strong and well, for he had lived an out-of-doors life, and was tanned by exposure to the air; but what I immediately noted was that he looked very much older than I had expected.

Only nine months had passed over him since I last saw him; but from his appearance it might have been nine years.

In my desire to cheer him up—and to hearten myself as well—I shook him very warmly by the hand, and bade him welcome back to old England.

'It is unspeakably good and kind of you to meet me here,' he said; 'as soon as I got your letter, I felt that the only thing was to come.'

'All right!' said I; 'we'll have a real good chat this evening—but not a word about your affairs now until after dinner. Table d'hôte is at seven.'

'Oh!' he rejoined, and stood looking at me in rather a confused and uncertain kind of way. 'Do you know,' he added, 'I think I would rather not appear at table d'hôte. You see I'm not supposed to be in England, and it's just

possible some one here might know me, and—and—'

'Quite so,' I interrupted; 'then I'll tell you what we'll do—they've plenty of rooms here, and we will dine snugly together in one of their private rooms.'

During the dinner a good many questions on both sides were asked and answered, but we studiously avoided the subject which presently was to engage all our attention.

In the course of our conversation, however, it transpired that, so far from his investments in land being a failure, he had achieved remarkable success. All my fear, therefore, about his financial position had been groundless.

What, then, could be that 'sore burden' to which his letter had referred as being 'too heavy' for him to bear?

The waiter had now brought us our coffee, and we had selected our 'smokes.' Hubert moved his chair closer to mine. 'That waiter fellow won't come in again,' he remarked; 'so may I begin?'

'Certainly, my dear fellow,' I replied. 'Fire away.'

'I come to you as my best friend,' he began; 'and the fact is, I am in terrible trouble. What I am about to confide to you is something of the utmost consequence to myself, and—to others as well.' He paused. 'You are a clergyman, and I am taking it for granted that everything I tell you will be regarded as absolutely confidential.'

'You wish me,' I asked, 'to consider your communication as being under the seal of confession?'

'Yes, yes!' he assented.

'Then may I take it for granted,' I said, 'that

what you wish from me is such counsel or advice as a clergyman may be expected to give?'

'Yes! that's just what I want,' he replied; 'but of course you won't mind my saying that I can't pledge myself beforehand to act on your advice.'

'Oh! I quite understand that,' I said; 'for just as I can't give you any advice until I've heard what you have to tell me, so you can't say you'll act on my advice until you know what it is. And there is one thing more,' I added, 'which I ought, perhaps, to mention. If, unhappily, a man has done anything wrong, and is longing for absolution and forgiveness, the condition, as you know, is true repentance. That is to say, he has to prove his repentance to be genuine, by doing his utmost to put right what has been done wrong.'

'Oh! God knows I do repent,' he murmured, 'but it is quite impossible for me ever to undo it.'

'Well! now, Hubert, tell me what it is,' I gently said; 'and you may be sure I will do my utmost to help you.'

He paused for a moment or two to recover himself; and then, 'Have you noticed that I tie up the sleeve of my coat now? I used, you know—'

'Yes,' I interrupted (for, as a matter of fact, I knew what he alluded to). 'That steel hand of yours, what made you give it up?'

'You remember,' he said, 'that fatal night at Sussex Lodge? Well, it was after that!'

I waited for him to say more, and presently he went on. 'That poor fellow, Major Spicer,' he said in broken tones—'it was I who caused his death, and it was with that hand.'

(Continued on page 557.)

LARGE FAMILIES.

By Rev. WILLIAM WATSON, B.D., D.Litt.

I.

ONE of the largest families on record, even of the mythical variety, must be that of the Indian god Krishna, who, in the Bhagavad-Gita, is credited with having had eighteen thousand sons. He, of course, was a polygamist to an extraordinary degree, with thousands of wives. In countries where polygamy prevailed large families were naturally not unusual. Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, for example, is said to have had eighteen wives, and to have begotten 'twenty and eight sons and threescore daughters.'

But not so very long ago in our own country the arrival of troops of children seems to have been counted a blessing. Susan Ferrier, our Scottish novelist, makes Mrs Violet Mac-Shake say to a young lady as she presented her

with a pair of diamond earrings, 'Hae, bairn, they belanged to your father's grandmother. She was a gude woman, an' had *four-and-twenty* sons an' dochters, an' I wuss ye nae waur fortin than just to hae as mony. But mind ye, they maun a' be Scots.' Large though many of the families were in the old days, it is difficult to beat that record without appealing to cases where there were at least two wives. Thus provided, a provost of Kirkwall in the eighteenth century had thirty-six children; and David Gregory, laird of Kinairdy, maternal grandfather of Professor Thomas Reid, the philosopher, had twenty-nine. George Bannatyne, whose name is famous in Scottish literary annals, was one of a family of twenty-three. In the kirk of Moneydie, in the eighteenth century, the same father had twenty-four children baptised; and the parish of Parton rejoiced in a man to

whom his four wives bore twenty-one children, the youngest of whom was baptised not a year before the death of his (or her) father at the age of over *ninety* years. There are several instances in which one wife bore twenty-two children. This feat was accomplished by the mother of Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius II.; by Dame Christian, wife of Sir Henry Colet, and mother of the celebrated Dean Colet; and by the wife of a clergyman in the Synod of Kirkwall. It may be added that in the place last mentioned, over a hundred years ago, large families were the rule. Families of ten, twelve, and even fifteen children were not uncommon. In other parts of Scotland also children were numerous. The parents of Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine had fifteen, as had also the Rev. W. Mackay, minister of Wick. David Grieve, great-grandfather of William and Robert Chambers, had fourteen children. So, too, had Ralph Erskine, with two wives, and the parents of Dr Thomas Chalmers. Kenneth Mackay, the landless heir of Meikle-Torboll, afterwards a successful farmer, was equally blessed.

Conditions seem to have been much the same in England. The wife of John Speed, the chronicler, had eighteen children. The wife of Richard Bowes, whose fifth daughter was the first wife of John Knox, had fifteen—a number which was equalled by Milton's Earl and Countess of Bridgewater, and by the parents of the celebrated Robert Boyle. The parents of the famous preacher, Robert Hall, had fourteen. The poet Waller's second wife bore him thirteen children; and the mother of George Herbert had ten, as had also Milton's daughter Deborah. In other countries large families were not uncommon. Tycho Brahe, Zwingli, and Francis II. all belonged to families of ten; as had been the case with the great Greek Fathers, Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, in the fourth century.

The mortality in the case of large families was often very great—not a mere seventy or eighty per thousand. The mothers of Pius II. and Dean Colet, as we have seen, had each twenty-two children; in the one case only ten grew up, in the other only the Dean. The parents of Philip Doddridge, the original author of the 2nd Paraphrase, had twenty children, but only Philip and a sister survived their infancy. Thomas Gray, the poet, was the sole survivor of twelve. Of the fifteen children of the Earl and Countess of Bridgewater, famed in connection with Milton's *Comus*, five died young. Of the twelve children of Richardson, the novelist, all died young except four. Three of Ebenezer Erskine's ten children died in two months, and later he lost his favourite daughter. Of the eleven children of Edmund and Catherine Nelson, parents of Lord Nelson, three died. It thus appears that even in favourable circumstances children died at an alarming rate. The heavy

mortality was not always due to poverty. Dean Colet's father was twice Lord Mayor of London, and quite able, therefore, to bring up a large family. In the case of Ebenezer Erskine's children lack of proper sanitation was largely the cause.

II.

Have the children of large families much chance of success? Those of us who are acquainted with educational affairs know how frequently claims for exemption are advanced by the parents of large families, with the plea that poverty prevents them from keeping their children longer at school. But poverty may prove to be an incentive as well as an obstacle. Thomas Campbell, the poet, the youngest of eleven surviving children, was born when his father was sixty-seven years of age and had met with misfortune in business, the family having thereafter to be brought up on an income partly derived from boarders. Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine belonged to a family of fifteen children, and their father, suffering persecution, was very poor. Peter Cooper, the founder of the Cooper Institute in New York, was one of a family of nine children, and from early childhood was compelled to assist his father in making hats, his education being so neglected that he attended a poor school for the short period of one year; yet in spite of all he became a most successful manufacturer. Sometimes in a large family efforts may be made to push forward one child at the expense of the others, but probably few parents have recourse to the method adopted by an ancestor of our present Royal Family. William the Pious of Lüneburg, having fifteen children and not much property, received *by lot* a successor in Duke George, the sixth son, who was thus able to marry and continue the race of the Guelphs.

Has the eldest or the youngest in a large family more chance of success? Philip Doddridge, the celebrated divine, was the youngest of twenty, but only he and a sister had survived. Robert Hall, the famous preacher, was the youngest of fourteen; the poet Campbell, of eleven. Susan Ferrier, the Scottish novelist, was the youngest of ten. S. T. Coleridge was the tenth child of his parents, as was also Bishop Griswold (born 1766) of the 'Eastern Diocese,' U.S.A., who, in his youth, was alarmed by being told by a neighbour that when a child he had been led to believe that after bishops came to America they would claim from the people a tenth of everything, children included. Bishop Butler and John Fletcher, Wesley's designated successor, were the youngest of eight. Tycho Brahe, Lord Herbert of Cherbury ('Father of English Deism'), and Professor James Robertson (at one time minister of Ellon) were the eldest of ten. The Benjamin of the family may often be the favourite of his parents, but parents cannot

always 'command success.' Any member of the flock may be the genius. George Banuatyne, the collector of Scottish poetry, was the seventh of twenty-three; the celebrated Robert Boyle was the seventh son in a family of fifteen children. Zwingli, the reformer, and George Herbert, the poet, were respectively the third child and the fifth son in a family of ten. Thomas Chalmers was the sixth of fourteen.

III.

Large families have often produced distinguished men, but the converse is far from being always true. Dean Inge, in one of his *Outspoken Essays*, points out that, according to Mr and Mrs Whetham, 'before 1870, 143 marriages of men whose names appear in *Who's Who* resulted in 743 children, an average of 5.2 each; after 1870 the average is only 3.08.' Tycho Brahe (born 1546), the scientist, himself one of ten, had a family of nine. The poet Waller (born 1605) had by his second wife a family of thirteen. D. M. Moir ('Delta') had eleven children. If, however, we take men who were distinguished for their position rather than for their genius, we may easily add to the number. At the present time large families seem to be produced chiefly by slum-dwellers, miners, and probably farm servants.

A large family is not easily brought up under any circumstance, but circumstances are rendered doubly adverse if the father dies. What are we to think of the mercy of a king who 'reduced to a poor and desolate condition,' by putting to death their father, the twelve children of Archibald Johnston, Lord Warriston? George

Buchanan, the humanist, ever remembered with gratitude the fact that, when his father died before his family of five sons and three daughters had grown up, their mother, Agnes Heriot, successfully accomplished the heroic task of rearing them. In more modern times men who have attained to positions of distinction have sometimes a similar tale to tell of maternal devotion. The father of Governor Thomas Talbot of Mass., U.S.A., died when Thomas was only six years of age, leaving seven sons and one daughter to be brought up by their mother, on whom they were entirely dependent.

The chief care of a large family naturally falls upon the mother, and she has, therefore, usually a heavy burden to bear. Elizabeth Hall, mother of Dr Thomas Chalmers, and of his thirteen brothers and sisters, was 'a grave, methodical, and anxious-tempered woman.' Ebenezer Elliott, addressing his wife in *The Excursion*, says:

Bone-weary, many-childed, trouble-tried!
Wife of my bosom, wedded to my soul!
Mother of nine that live, and two that died!
This day drink health from nature's mountain bowl!

But the mother may live to enjoy a cheerful old age. The wife of John Speed, the chronicler, in spite of having had eighteen children, lived to celebrate her golden wedding. Dean Colet's mother, in spite of having borne eleven sons and eleven daughters, and lost them all save the Dean, reached her ninetieth year, and, says Erasmus, 'looked so smooth, and was so cheerful, that you would think she had never shed a tear.'

THE FOOL'S ERRAND.

By ALISON YOUNG.

I.

WHEN Henrietta Thornley married a man thirty years her senior she basked in a doting admiration that was abruptly terminated by her husband's death ten years later. She found that the effects of adoration are relaxing, and realised with difficulty her position as an independent woman. Her only child was a daughter, so the estate went to a cousin of her husband's, and she removed to the Dower House, in which she was life-rented, and proceeded to educate Mildred.

Mrs Thornley took herself very seriously. She plodded valiantly through a series of governesses. She went to London for the winter, and Mildred was sent to classes and had music lessons in bewildering variety. At eighteen Mildred was a charming child, in spite of the purposeful upbringing, with a curious old-fashioned composure and a wistful expres-

sion that Mrs Thornley liked to think was appealing. There was a strong vein of sentimentality in her own make-up, and Arthur Thornley had openly rejoiced in her dependence.

It was with a warm glow of self-satisfaction that Mrs Thornley forced herself to decisions and planned out her daughter's education and future. With busy fingers she smoothed out the creases of budding adolescence and worked herself into Mildred's every thought. She ruled the girl completely, and her strongest weapon, with the daughter as with her husband, was her obvious self-sacrifice.

There was a certain look that Mildred dreaded when she dared to make plans or suggestions; rather than risk its appearance she allowed her mother to arrange every detail of their comfortable life.

There was one person who was not quelled by that look, as Mildred was, nor irritated into hastiness, as Henrietta's own family had been.

Harold Jennings, the younger son of a neighbouring squire, had been a great friend of her husband's, and realising a 'good life' in the devoted and practical young man, Arthur Thornley made him one of his trustees.

When Mrs Thornley played her strong suit with Harold Jennings he merely met it as a matter of course. He had urged her to send Mildred to school, or at least to allow her more freedom with her own contemporaries; but in vain. The maternal eye was vigilant, and Mildred's friendships were carefully chosen and never allowed to become too intimate. The child, she declared, was the mainspring of her life, and she saw to it that no influence but her own should carry weight.

II.

For the last four years Harold Jennings had been lucratively employed abroad; his family made no secret of the fact that Harold had done well for himself at last. Mrs Thornley felt a faint flutter of excitement as she learned that he was once more in England.

'Harold is coming to-day,' Mrs Thornley said one morning. 'He writes to say that he would rather come here, as the Grange is filled with people for the dance and he has arrived unexpectedly.'

Mildred's eyes brightened suddenly. Cousin Harold had been a powerful ally once. 'Is he going with us?' she asked. 'Cousin Harold never cared for dances long ago. . . .'

Mrs Thornley smiled indulgently (one of her most irritating habits). 'Long ago, Mildred? Only four years. Well, I expect Jane would be greatly annoyed if he didn't go, but I quite understand his not wishing to arrive in the midst of one of their bear-garden parties.'

Mrs Thornley rarely spoke with such heat, but she missed the momentary frown in Mildred's clear eyes. She had been vexed lately by the revival of a childhood friendship between Harold's nieces and Mildred. Clare and Daphne Jennings had been away at school, and Mildred spent only the summer at the Dower House till now; wintering in London was an excellent check on the intimacy of her youthful companionships. But Mildred loved the Dower House and was anxious for a 'country Christmas.' Besides, Mrs Thornley had no mind to take the child about much in London, and, having completed the education, she intended to reap the benefit.

The Jennings family were disreputably modern, according to Mrs Thornley. The fact that two sons and their friends were constantly coming and going gave her a feeling of insecurity.

In her heart she dwelt on what she herself had given up for Mildred. Not very much, if the truth were to be faced; merely avoiding the tentative love-making of Harold Jennings

with such skill that matters never really came to a head. But the thought of losing Mildred was unbearable, and she had already broached the subject of a sojourn in the south of France as a means of breaking the friendship with the Jennings girls.

Mildred acquiesced with precocious wisdom and a mental vow to fight the matter out later. Mrs Jennings had already asked her to join a party in Switzerland after Christmas, and Mildred knew that her mother would be asked about this at the dance. The Riviera project hung like a cloud over her present happiness.

Herein lay Cousin Harold's possibilities.

III.

'Well, Henrietta, not a day older, I declare,' was Harold's genial, if tactless, greeting later on in the day. 'And where's my godchild?' He scrutinised Mildred. 'Somehow I'd overlooked the fact that she would be so grown-up.'

Then Mrs Thornley clinked and rustled at the tea-table, and Mildred was prettily interested in his rather annoying god-paternity, while Mrs Thornley mentally noted how bald Harold had become. Later on Mildred was sent upstairs to rest, and went obediently; but there was an argumentative set about her back, Harold thought.

'Remember, Harold, I strongly disapprove of Jane's methods with Clare and Daphne. She lets them run wild; they are so very independent. Mildred and I have always been so much to each other. . . . We are very old-fashioned, perhaps, but I still think that a girl's best friend is her mother.'

Mrs Thornley's satisfied smile crystallised into surprise as she realised that Harold was simply not listening.

'Yes,' he answered absently, 'she's a delightful child; does you credit. Now, Henrietta, about this matter of oil shares. I saw a man in the city the day before yesterday and he says—'

Harold talked oil shares for fifteen minutes by the clock, and it was Mrs Thornley's turn to lend an inattentive hearing; she pondered on the fickleness of man. Four years ago oil shares would not have supplanted a promising confidential talk, though, she reflected, Harold had done very well for himself and looked thoroughly prosperous. A nice safe person with money.

'You will send me the papers marked where I must sign them, Harold. And now I will show you your room. We promised to arrive punctually; dinner is at eight,' she said at last with a brave, weary sigh that was lost on Harold.

IV.

The Grange was an ideal house for a dance, Mrs Thornley remarked, with her striking originality. Certainly the old-fashioned double

drawing-room, with its empty shining floor, glowed an invitation to the crowding boys and girls.

Harold Jennings was as little introspective as successful business men are wont to be, but he found himself wondering vaguely if he too had ever known the care-free enthusiasm of these nephews and nieces. He watched them curiously, and then Johnny, his eldest nephew, claimed Mildred for the first dance, and he suddenly became aware of the reason for his god-daughter's suppressed rebellion. It had puzzled him again during dinner. They made a pleasing picture. She was fresh and slight, and her dark head was well set on; and Johnny was unmistakably British, with the reddish complexion that an open-air life brings to fair men.

Harold remembered Henrietta's remark before dinner—something about being old-fashioned. Evidently Mildred had been painfully old-fashioned enough to fall in love.

He sought for Mrs Thornley. She was serenely employed in roaring commonplaces to old Lady Falche, who would *not* use an ear-trumpet, and whose opinion of her as a 'good woman, and a devoted mother' was always a source of satisfaction to Henrietta. When they danced, he whirled her desperately round the room, suddenly reversing in as energetic a fashion. Henrietta did not care for dancing, and decided that Harold's style was painfully fatiguing, so she was relieved when they subsided on to a sofa under the staircase.

Harold immediately set to work to find out if she knew Mildred's secret. His methods were like his dancing—of a somewhat abrupt order—and Henrietta was not expansive. She was longing for an opportunity to criticise his sister-in-law's arrangements. Jane Jennings had the unpleasant and unusual effect of making her feel worthless. It was, therefore, an undeniable pleasure to disapprove.

But Harold had other views. He persistently talked of Mildred, even asked if she was fond of anyone.

'Certainly not. Mildred and I share every thought,' retorted Mrs Thornley, and made some pretext for returning to the ballroom, vaguely uneasy.

v.

Later on Harold took Mildred to the same retreat. He had decided that the dance of to-day was not suited to his robust interpretation; besides, he was intent on finding out how matters stood.

Mildred was anxious to tell him of the invitation to Switzerland, and he realised dimly that she dared not broach the subject herself and wished him to help her. In her eagerness she forgot that the dance was over long ago, and that Johnny Jennings would be waiting.

Mrs Thornley prepared to leave. Her larynx protested against further conversation with Lady Falche. Harold had disappeared, and Mildred, too, was nowhere to be seen. Never before had she regarded the girl as a separate entity, nor had the actual possibility of losing her thrust itself into her serenely satisfied mind. She crossed the hall, expecting to find Mildred in the 'schoolroom,' a haunt sacred to Clare and Daphne, since she was not to be seen among the dancers.

As she moved towards the staircase she was startled to hear Harold's voice: 'But she can't expect to have you always, Mildred. . . .'

And Mildred's wistful answer: 'No; but I simply can't leave her. She would hate to be alone. . . .'

Mrs Thornley's heart seemed to miss a beat, but she went slowly up the stairs.

vi.

Harold! The thought seared her brain. She had vaguely schemed to circumvent these Jennings boys, and now Harold, her own familiar friend, was the one to be dreaded. His clumsy inquiries and Mildred's absence for the last few dances pointed, in her opinion, to one conclusion.

She wandered to a dim corridor, stacked with the ghostly débris of the turned-out drawing-room furniture, and sat down in a gilt and brocade chair that was jammed between a William and Mary cabinet and a lacquer screen.

Mildred, too, whose every thought she shared! Her pet phrase brought a shudder. So it was for this that she had planned and schemed. Waves of self-pity chased each other in her mind, till suddenly the thought of Mildred's wistful eyes turned her self-engrossed thoughts to the child herself. 'At least,' she murmured, 'she showed great devotion.'

Then she leapt to a decision. She would accept Jane Jennings's offer made to-night. The child should go to Switzerland. She herself would pursue a lonely course to Cadenabbia, where her honeymoon had been spent. Clothed in resignation, she decided it was a fitting conclusion. Also, she hoped, Mildred would soon come to her senses, left with the young Jennings, and Harold would be forgotten.

She rose and hurried downstairs, to find Mildred dancing with Johnny Jennings, and Harold stifling yawns and saying he had hunted everywhere for her. As she left, Mrs Thornley accepted her hostess's invitation for Mildred, and intercepted an astonished glance between the girl and Harold. 'I am so glad to think that Mildred will be with people of her own age; and you will take care of my little girl, I know,' she added. 'Good-night, dear Jane—such a successful dance.'

VII.

Time dragged abominably at Cadenabbia. Mrs Thornley found that twenty-year-old romances, however personal, lose their power to engross the mind, and that the most angelic resignation of spirit palls as a pastime if there is no audience. The place was deserted just then. There were very few English people in the hotel, and she had a righteous detestation of foreigners.

Mildred's enthusiastic letters added to her dissatisfaction, and the fact that Harold had lately joined his sister-in-law's party did little to allay it. The bustle of preparation had in some measure lulled her feelings of annoyance. Harold's few letters were to herself and concerned oil shares.

Had she been unwise, she wondered, as she sat on the verandah of the hotel opening her letters. One from Mildred; she put that aside till the others were read. One from Jane Jennings. . . . Curious, and whose unknown writing was this? She tore the

envelope with a sudden misgiving. It was from Johnny.

Then . . . Harold was *not* faithless after all. The thought persisted as she read the letters one after another; Mildred's apologetic but blissful pages last of all. She was engaged, subject to her mother's approval, to Johnny.

Henrietta had known Johnny since he was crumpled and red and in long clothes, but Mildred used four perfectly good sheets of hotel notepaper in a description of his pleasing qualities. Furtively Mrs Thornley dabbed her eyes, awaiting composure to go to her room. She made a vain attempt to find it pathetic that she should have heard this news in just this spot, but she was curiously relieved in spite of herself.

Suddenly she became aware of some one beside her. 'Henrietta, I started as soon as I knew, because I was afraid you'd hate this. Mildred's terrified that you are lonely. . . . Henrietta, there's no need for you to be—'

Harold Jennings, blundering as usual, had chosen the worst possible place for the best possible conclusion.

APPALUCY.

PART II.

VII.

IN the process of raising dust on the flying trip back to Marysville one of the front wheels of the car dropped into an unsuspected chug-hole when they were within a quarter of a mile of the town. The car slewed wildly sideways and overturned. Harvey was thrown out unhurt. Johnson was pinned beneath the car.

He was severely and painfully injured; two of his ribs were broken and an ankle badly crushed.

Fyffer enlisted the aid of townspeople for the purpose of carrying his deputy to a hotel, where a surgeon was called to attend him. Then, having done what he could for the other's comfort, the sheriff cast about him for a means of continuing his search for the hard-boiled mug. His choice fell on Johnson's spotted pony.

'I can use up two stones and only hurt one bird,' he thought; 'take the cayuse back to the Triangle-J, and get myself there too. I wonder if the speckled hyena will let me ride him.'

In his equine way the spotted horse regarded Johnson as a friend who understood and sympathised with him, and who was to be trusted to do the right thing on all occasions. All other humans he considered his enemies until they might prove themselves otherwise.

Harvey Fyffer was fairly familiar with the vagaries of the dynamic little horse, and, being an accomplished and understanding horseman,

he respected Spot's idiosyncrasies, and rated them at exactly what they were worth.

An ounce of oil of rhodium applied to hands and clothing went a long way toward ingratiating him with the peculiarly marked cayuse; soothing speeches and fearless horseman's touch won his confidence to such an extent that he allowed the sheriff to mount.

Spot was not at all certain as to what he ought to expect from his latest rider, nor how he should conduct himself. He reared on his hind-legs tentatively; then performed a few minor crow-hops in a precautionary effort to discover exactly how Fyffer was disposed toward him. As neither quirt, spurs, nor reins were resorted to in retaliation, and the sheriff exhibited no slightest symptom of either fear or hostility, the pony decided to accept him temporarily on approval. Besides, the man quite evidently wanted to go toward the Triangle-J, and Spot wished most devoutly to go there too, in order that he might renew relations with his feed-box.

The little horse took the trail out of Marysville at a swinging fox-trot, which he was capable of maintaining indefinitely. Harvey sat his saddle in the loose, slouching style which rangemen long ago found to be the easiest possible saddle pose both for themselves and for their horses.

Night had fallen. There was little or no traffic on the road. Spot swung steadily along, breathing easily, and seemingly tireless.

It was after ten o'clock when they topped a rise of the road and from its summit saw the mile-distant lights in the windows of the Triangle-J ranch house. They crossed the crest of the eminence, descended its farther side, and stopped that the pony might drink at a stream which crossed the road at the foot of the hill.

The pony lowered his nose and drank; then threw up his head and snorted. Something stirred in the bushes at the opposite side of the creek. A man crawled weakly out on his hands and knees, and collapsed in the road with a moan.

Harvey urged Spot across the creek, hastily dismounted, and ran to the fallen man. He dropped on his knees beside him to see what had happened, and then . . . the man rose suddenly to his knees; his arm swept out in a swift, short arc, and the blackjack he held smote the side of the sheriff's head. Harvey Fyffer pitched forward and lay still.

VIII.

The man scrambled quickly to his feet and, without a glance at his victim, strode toward the waiting pony. Spot leaped back with a protesting snort when the man's hand touched the bridle reins. The malefactor sprang at him, caught the horn of the saddle, and swung himself nimbly up.

Here was Spot's opportunity to assert himself. This was no friendly hand on his bridle rein; these no kindly-intentioned heels that drove spurs into his startled flanks. This was a full-fledged enemy—one of the breed whom it was his inalienable right to undo.

Any rangeman who observed the clearly-defined sign of the cross on Spot's withers, or noted the feathery tufts of hair at the tips of his pointed ears, would have known him at once for a horse of the 'whale-bone' variety, which has to be killed to be conquered.

Spot rolled his eyes and bared his teeth. His little tufted spike-ears lay flat against his head. He knew exactly what to do. He'd endure the pain of the torturing spurs for a second or two, and sulk; then, when the rider shifted his balance in the saddle ever so little. . . . Spot went into action with a characteristic snort. His back suddenly bowed in a full half-circle and he sprang three feet straight into the air with his nose between his knees. He struck the ground stiff-legged and with bone-displacing force, rebounded instantly, and right-about-faced in the air.

Harvey Fyffer rose unsteadily to his knees, then to his feet. The stunning effect of the blackjack's hasty stroke had lasted several seconds and was rapidly wearing off. His head was throbbing painfully, but his senses were reasserting their sway. He had a revolver with him, but had no wish to slay the man who had assaulted him, and to threaten him with the

weapon, engaged as he was with the madly-fighting pony, was useless and entirely absurd.

The man was certainly an experienced rider of vicious and intractable mounts. He fought the little Opalousas with quirt, spurs, and reins, and Spot fought savagely back—sunfishing, fence-rowing, swapping ends, and weaving.

The rider's nose commenced to bleed. Blood oozed from his mouth and from his ears. He lost a stirrup. Spot reared and wheeled on his hind hoofs. The man leaned forward, struggling to regain his stirrup. The pony plunged wildly, then stopped, and bucked again. The man realised that the horse had outfought him. Frantically he clutched the saddle-horn. Spot reared again suddenly and threw himself bodily backward. This is a vicious horse's trick against which no rider can guard.

The man threw himself sideways from the saddle—too late. The pony crashed down on top of him and pinned him to the ground, with the saddle-horn crushing against his ribs.

IX.

Spot was on his feet again almost instantly. Harvey Fyffer walked toward him with outstretched hand. Spot snorted and drew back, hesitated, then advanced his nose somewhat timidly and softly nuzzled the sheriff's arm. He was accustomed to being petted by Johnson after he had creditably performed.

Having partially quieted and reassured the little horse, Harvey turned his attention to the fallen rider, whom he had already recognised as the hard-boiled mug whom he sought. The man was not seriously injured, though his escape from a horribly painful death was nothing short of miraculous. A hatful of water poured over his face revived him sufficiently to allow him to sit up. 'I guess you've got me, sheriff,' he said with an uneasy grin.

'It certainly looks like it,' said Harvey. 'Do you mind telling me why you wanted that cayuse so bad?'

'My own fell and broke his leg about half a mile from here,' the hard-boiled one answered promptly. 'I killed him, and hoofed it down here to the road in the hope of getting another. I saw you coming over the hill and laid for you. I thought it was Johnson.'

'I see,' said Harvey Fyffer. 'Then you figured on hiding in these hills for a while?'

The man hesitated perceptibly, then nodded his head.

'Look here,' said Harvey suddenly; 'I believe I can do business with you. The shortest and most direct route to Canada is up over the divide through the New Hope Pass and then straight north from there. I might say that I haven't figured on riding that way for a day or two at least. Suppose you tell me what's happened; then I'll leave you here while I go on to the Triangle-J to get a wagon to haul you in.

You're awfully badly hurt, you know, and, if you haven't done anything serious, I wouldn't be afraid to leave you here alone. How about it?'

The man considered the proposal for several minutes, and eventually said, 'It's a bet.' Then he proceeded to talk, and before he had finished his narrative the sheriff's eyes were wide with wonder.

'Here,' he said, when the man had told his tale, 'I've a fountain pen and a note-book. I'll write that down and you sign it. You've given me proof enough that you're telling the truth, or else you're the best single-handed liar that I've ever listened to yet. It wouldn't be hard to pick you up again if you are, but I'm willing to bet that you're not.'

He wrote steadily for several minutes, then handed pen and note-book to the hard-boiled mug, and asked him to sign his name. The man read what the sheriff had written, and affixed his signature.

'All right,' said Harvey Fyffer. 'I'm going to the Triangle-J now and I'll have to lead that cayuse in. Nobody but Johnson could ride him now, as excited and all as he is. Take good care of yourself. I'll be back inside of an hour.'

He picked up Spot's bridle reins and led the pony away. Before he had gone fifty steps, the hard-boiled mug got hastily to his feet and commenced to run in the opposite direction—straight north.

X.

At the Triangle-J ranch Harvey's first act, after turning Spot over to the care of one of the ranch hands, was to go to the telephone and put in a long-distance call for the County Attorney.

'Hello, Chris,' he called, when he got his connection. 'Fyffer speaking. I'm at the Triangle-J. Get me a warrant for the arrest of Maxwell Brant on suspicion of conspiracy or something, and send it out to me with one of my deputies as quick as you can shake it up. What? Maxwell Brant. I said it. Notify the State Bank Examiner right away. Yes, *Bank Examiner*. Oh! I see. Yes, Brant's been using the bank's funds, and hired a tough to fake a hold-up so he wouldn't be caught twelve thousand dollars short. Get the idea? He sent the clerk out, and this chap came in and locked Brant into the vault, then rode away on Charley Johnson's pony so everybody could identify the horse. How did I find it out? Pure accident, Chris. I just got the idea somehow that it didn't look like the real thing. When I chewed it over with Johnson I began to see that this guy wasn't acting natural. I got a whiff of oil of rhodium off his clothes when he was in Durkee's Place, and something that Johnson said afterwards gave me the tip that this guy was the one who'd been riding Johnson's horse. Yes, the speckled one.

'What's that? I'd make a good detective? Say! I couldn't detect a leg on a centipede. I thought all along that poor old Johnson was mixed up in the deal, and made him a deputy because I had some kind of a Nick Carter idea that if I kept him with me and kept talking to him he'd say something that'd give him away. —Oh! yes, I got the evidence all right, but it was a clear case of the luck that does you good beside helping you. We'd have all been up in the air if it hadn't been for that Appalucy horse. —So long, Chris.'

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

REVIVAL OF DAMPERS FOR OPEN FIRES.

ALTHOUGH the open fire has been improved almost out of recognition, one accessory which our forefathers found useful has been largely abandoned. This is the damper or 'register,' which was fitted to every old-fashioned fireplace. A modern open fireplace has lately been devised in which this feature is provided in combination with an adjustable canopy. When the canopy is pulled out, a butterfly damper behind it is pulled open also, and the strong draught causes the fire to burn brightly. Should less heat be required, the damper is partially closed by pushing in the canopy. In other respects the fireplace is similar to others of the modern type which have a barless grate and an ash-tray. A good feature is that the fire-brick back and sides are easily removable from the front.

THE LAST WORD IN KITCHEN-RANGES.

Only those who remember the kitchen-ranges of last century can realise the great improvements that have been made in this important item of domestic equipment. The following description refers to a recent model in which every device is incorporated that has been suggested by the makers' long experience in coal-ranges. Of the special features the chief is a lifting bottom grate which is raised or lowered by a fire-table in front, without using a poker or a special tool. The fire-table rises and falls with the grate, and is therefore always at the same level. The front bars are of planished steel, and their upper ends are cast into a top cross-bar which rests loosely in a recess at each side. At the bottom the bars pass through holes, and therefore expand and contract freely, instead of warping with the heat. They can be lifted out

in a moment, giving free access to the boiler flue and to the bottom grate for cleaning purposes. The fall bar at the top of the front bars is mounted on a hinged frame, which can be swung aside to facilitate roasting or toasting. The oven door may be opened by means of a pedal when the cook is carrying a heavy dish in both hands. The oven can be fitted with a glass door, which is protected by an outer steel door. It is then only necessary to open the outer door to observe the progress of the cooking. A heat indicator enables the cook to keep the oven at the required temperature by adjusting the dampers, which are provided with indicators showing how far they are opened. By means of a regulator the heat from the fire may be concentrated on the top or on the bottom of the oven as desired. Another refinement is a sliding instead of a lifting fire top. A heated-air inlet is provided for ventilating the oven in conjunction with an outlet to the flue. Dust is drawn into the flue if a pedal is depressed when the fire is poked or the bottom grate is moved. A hot closet for plates and food, which has a balanced glazed door, is provided at the top of the range. One type of range, with an oven one side of the fire and a water-boiler on the other, has provision for quickly fixing in position an extra collapsible oven on the hot-plate over the permanent one.

A STAINLESS KITCHEN TABLE.

White enamelled steel is so obviously advantageous for kitchen tables that one wonders why it has only lately been adopted. A table top of this description cannot be stained or damaged by hot cooking utensils, while its surface is ideal for rolling out dough for pastry. The combined kitchen table and dresser in which this feature is embodied also possesses other good points. With a top measuring 48 ins. by 27 ins., or 41 ins. by 25 ins., the underneath part is fitted with three drawers at one end and with a cupboard at the other. A wide folding flap at one side, having a bare wood top, is supported on a frame with two legs. When the flap is folded down this frame pushes in against the side of the table, the two upper cross members sliding into square holes under the table top. This method of supporting the flap is much firmer than the device of hinged legs. Supplied with or without the flap as desired, these enamelled steel-topped kitchen tables are finished in plain wood, or with the wood stained and varnished, or white-enamelled.

OLEAN MILK.

More than a decade of the present century had passed before a scientific study was made of the problems connected with the supply of pure milk. In 1912 the National Institute of Research in Dairying was founded by the Board of Agriculture under the Development

and Road Improvement Fund Act of 1909, being established at University College, Reading. An experimental farm was acquired in 1920 at Shinfield, to which place the Institute was transferred in 1923, on the completion of new laboratories. Much useful work has been done by the staff of the Institute towards producing clean, untainted milk, and the prevention of its contamination during handling and distribution. Efforts have also been made to improve the processes for making cheese and butter. Advice on these matters is given for the asking; hence, no dairy farmer can plead ignorance as an excuse for supplying contaminated milk. With a view to indicating the constituents of fresh milk which counteract the disease of florid rickets, some interesting experiments are reported as having been carried out on young pigs. A litter of eleven were fed on dried separated milk, toppings, barley meal, and phosphate of lime, direct sunlight being excluded. All developed florid rickets. Two were cured in the same surroundings, and on a similar diet but with the addition of half an ounce of cod-liver oil daily. Two others were cured by direct sunlight without any change in their diet. The remainder were slaughtered for the examination of their bones. Among the interesting features brought to light by the feeding and examination of cows were 'the superiority of meadow hay as compared with seeds hay as a source of the growth-promoting vitamin; the influence of cod-liver oil in increasing the vitamin A content of the butter; the lack of unpleasant flavour in the milk even when eight ounces of cod-liver oil were fed daily.' Other subjects investigated were the cause of the discoloration of Stilton cheese, which results in severe losses to the makers; and the effect of heat on milk.

THE MOST POWERFUL LIGHTHOUSE IN THE WORLD.

Certain guiding lights for aircraft now far exceed in power those which warn mariners of their proximity to the shore or to dangerous rocks or sands. Visible for three hundred miles on clear nights, the most powerful lighthouse in the world has lately been completed and lit up at night on Mont Afrique, on the Plateau of Dijon in France. It has been erected for the guidance of aircraft proceeding from Paris to Switzerland, Italy, and Africa. The light consists of eight powerful electric arc lamps with dioptric lenses. These elements are divided into two groups of four, the light from each of which converges into one beam. Since the groups face opposite ways, two beams are projected in opposite directions. Having only a slight angle of divergence, the light from these beams is strongly concentrated, and amounts to something like one thousand million candle power. As the light is projected almost horizontally, aeroplanes or airships within a

short distance of the lighthouse would not be able to see the light unless provision was made for throwing some rays upwards. This is done by arranging a narrow vertical slot in the upper part of each lens, through which the light shines toward the zenith. A good idea of the size of the apparatus may be gathered from the facts that each lens is five feet in diameter, and that the lantern measures eighteen feet across. The lamps and the lenses are mounted on two circular platforms, the one above the other. Two of the lamps out of the four on each platform form one group. Under the lower platform is a third, which serves as the floor of a circular compartment in which is kept a set of spare lamps, with a small hoist for raising a fresh one into position. All three platforms are mounted on a central pivot, about which they are rotated by an electric motor, the weight being carried on a ball-bearing. Mechanism is provided for varying the duration of the flashes and of the intervals between them, although for the present a constant speed of rotation has been adopted, which gives regularly-recurring flashes. The lighthouse is a cylindrical steel structure, with a lantern round the lamps, above which is a conical roof that rises to a height of over thirty feet. Enormously powerful as is this guiding light for aircraft, it is understood that the builders, the noted French makers of lighthouse apparatus, Messrs Barbier, Bénard, and Turenne, have prepared designs for lights of still greater range.

A COMBINATION DOMESTIC TOOL.

A novelty to be seen at the Wembley Exhibition this year is a combination domestic tool, consisting of a tin-opener, a knife and scissors sharpener, and a glass-cutter. The various devices are carried by a nickel-plated iron handle. Having a tiny cutting wheel with a V'd edge, the glass-cutter is much more effective than previous tools of this type; in fact, the results appear to be equal to those obtained with a diamond, while only a light pressure is needed. It will cut glass into any form in a few seconds, curved as well as straight edges being cut with equal facility. At the opposite end of the frame is a tin-opener of the type in which a puncture-making spur driven into the middle of the top of the tin acts as a fulcrum to a radially-adjustable cutter for different diameters. A carbon steel blade of great hardness at one end of the tool projects into the apex of a V-shaped opening in the handle. With the sides of this slot the blade forms an acute angle through which a knife to be sharpened is drawn, this action causing the edge to come in contact with the sharp edge at each side of the blade alternately as the knife is drawn through, first at one side and then at the other. The other end of the carbon steel blade is of such a form that, in conjunction

with the end of the handle, it will sharpen the edges of scissors at the correct angle. Owing to the extreme hardness of the sharpening bar, this appliance is specially suitable for stainless steel knives.

ICE BY TURNING A HANDLE.

Freezing and cooling appliances may be divided into three classes: (1) Power-driven machines, in which some substance, such as ammonia or CO_2 , is used for making ice in large quantities; (2) appliances employing mixtures of ice and salt; (3) hand-worked ice machines on the vacuum principle, for household use and similar purposes. A small machine of the last-named type, of an improved design, has recently been put on the market, and with it a carafe of water can be frozen in less than three minutes, or a 2-lb. block of ice can be made in twenty minutes. It can also be used in making ice-cream, and for cooling butter, wines, and mineral waters. A special advantage is that ice can be made when and as required, and therefore there is no loss due to wastage. The machine is always ready for use night or day, and in cases of illness such an apparatus may actually be the means of saving life. The action of the machine is very interesting, as will be seen from the following brief description. The principle is based on the fact that water will freeze when rapidly evaporated in high vacuum with a powerful absorbent to take up the water vapour, the best absorbent being sulphuric acid. This acid becomes weak on the surface unless it is agitated, and this is done by means of a simple and very effective form of rocking motion, which not only agitates the acid but oscillates the vacuum pump, the whole of the rocking portion being mounted on suitable trunnion bearings. The operation of ice-making is very simple after the machine is once ready for working. For icing water, about half a pint of water is put into the carafe or decanter, which is placed on a special elevator. This is lifted up until a joint is made between the mouth of the carafe and the vapour pipe, a slight twist of the elevator keeping it in position. The mouth is then water-sealed to prevent leaking, and the wheel turned by means of a handle at approximately a hundred revolutions per minute. In about a minute it will be seen that the water is 'boiling' (due to the vacuum), and in less than three minutes sufficient ice will be formed to permit of the decanter being filled up with water of ordinary temperature, when the whole of the contents will be found to be sufficiently cooled even under tropical conditions. By slightly twisting the elevator the reverse way the carafe can be pushed a little to one side. This breaks the vacuum and releases the carafe. For making block ice or ice-cream the operation

is very similar. Care must be taken, however, that only small quantities of water or ice-cream mixture are admitted at a time by means of the special stopcock and tube supplied, and each admission must be thoroughly frozen before any more liquid is admitted. It is impossible for the acid to get in contact with the liquid being frozen. One charge of acid ($\frac{1}{2}$ gallon) is sufficient for from fifty to one hundred freezings, according to the quantities of ice made.

A PROFILE GAUGE.

In several industries the profiles of objects are often wanted. If great accuracy is needed, a gauge has to be cut from a piece of tin or of sheet-brass and filed to an exact fit, an operation that takes considerable time and demands a high degree of skill. A very ingenious profile gauge has lately been devised, that, when pressed against any irregular object, such as a wood moulding, takes an exact impression of the contour. The device consists of hundreds of special brass strips, packed together on edge in an aluminium frame. Each strip has a thickness of .007 inch and a width of .1 inch. These strips can slide on each other endwise, but are held from movement in other directions by the frame. A rubber-faced clamping plate is pressed against the edges of the strips by two screws. When these are slacked off by half a turn, the strips will slide upon each other with a light pressure. To take a profile, therefore, all one has to do is to press the edge formed by the ends of the strips against the object, when an accurate replica of the contour will be produced. A feature that is often useful is the production of a reversed profile at the opposite ends of the strips. Once the profile is taken the screws can be tightened up and the gauge becomes fixed. These profile gauges are being used for many purposes. One is to take the profiles of the treads of railway wheels, so as to show the wear. There is no limit within reason to the size of profile that can be reproduced. Instruments have been made that will take profiles eighteen inches in length.

A THERMOS ICE-MAKER.

When it is desired to produce ice in the home, the only way of doing so, apart from mechanical refrigerators that require power for their operation, is to use a chemical mixture. A machine has been brought out recently that will not only make ice in a few minutes, but will also store it; moreover, the container can be used as a thermos flask for keeping foods and drinks hot. The body consists of a short, wide thermos flask, uniform in diameter from top to bottom, and open at the top. This has an aluminium outer container with the usual silvered-glass inner container, a vacuum being produced in the space between the two. On

the top is an aluminium lid with a thick cork under it which fits tightly into the mouth of the flask. A spindle, with a cranked handle outside the lid, passes through a hole in the middle, and carries on its lower part four detachable ice-boxes, the arrangement being not unlike a revolving cruet. The ice-boxes bear some resemblance to spectacle cases with sliding lids, but they are shorter and thicker, and have flat ends. They are 'drawn' from an aluminium alloy. Clips at the ends hold them vertically and equally distant from each other round the spindle. When ice is to be made, equal parts of washing soda and commercial ammonium nitrate, with a measured quantity of water, are placed in the flask, the ice-boxes are filled with water (or cream if ice-cream is wanted), and the lid is put on. If the handle is then turned for two minutes, and the flask allowed to stand for a few minutes longer, the contents of the ice-boxes will be found frozen solid. To prepare the machine for use as a thermos flask, the spindle is removed from the lid, and the hole left is filled with a cork.

TWO NEW CHEMICAL ELEMENTS.

In our issue for April 1923 we referred to the discovery of a new chemical element, hafnium, and explained how X-ray spectroscopy had been utilised in making the discovery. From Berlin there comes the news that the same means have been employed to effect the recognition of two other new elements, to which the names *masurium* and *rhenium* have been given, in honour of Germany's eastern and western borderlands. These new substances, it is stated, have also been detected by chemical analysis, and have been obtained in minute quantities from a number of mineral substances, the principal of which is platinum ore. Their atomic numbers are 43 and 75 respectively, leaving only the elements corresponding to the numbers 61, 85, and 87 to be discovered to complete the ninety-two which scientists believe to be the full complement of the chemical elements forming the crust of the earth.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE WHITE HEALER.

A TALE OF THE PACIFIC.

By DEMAIN GRANGE, Author of *The Impostor*, *The Cruise of the 'Corisande'*,
The Wind in the Whispering Canes, &c.

PART I.

I.

'WELL, what is it, Faring?'

James Logan, Deputy-Commissioner for Borua—and that meant for about ten square miles of diluted civilisation and something like one hundred and fifty square miles (including the dependent islets) of undiluted savagery—turned his head quickly, and regarded the young man standing before him with a slight frown of annoyance. It is a little annoying, of course, to be interrupted when one is deliberating weighty matters of State, extended in a comfortable lounge-chair, with one's legs stretched out on the rest, and one's eyes closed.

This appeared to be quite understood by Richard Faring, his official secretary, assistant chucker-out, and anything else that the exigencies of the moment might require.

'Sorry,' the latter said, smiling faintly. 'But this lady—Miss Temple—has called again.'

'Again? Bless the woman! What in Heaven's name does she want now?'

'She insists on seeing you personally.'

'Oh——' The Commissioner sat up, a very decided look of annoyance upon his face this time. 'Insists, does she? Well, you can just tell her——'

'I've told her twice already that you are—er—busy, and cannot be disturbed. She said, Oh, very well then, she would wait until you were at liberty; and when I suggested that I might be able to deal with the matter, she snubbed me pretty badly.'

'She did?'

'Yes.' A tinge of colour spread over Faring's cheeks. 'Said she hadn't come to be interviewed by underlings—or words to that effect. Then she got talking about her rights as a British subject, and all that tosh, you know. What was I to do?'

James Logan pursed his lips thoughtfully. 'Um—exactly,' he said. 'That's where they all have me in a cleft stick, confound it! What sort of a person is she? The high-browed, aggressive type of female, I suppose, with a

self-imposed mission to improve the social condition and habits of the gentle savage.'

'No—oh no,' the young man declared, with some haste; 'she isn't a bit like that! In fact, she's——' The colour in his cheeks deepened. 'She's quite different,' he concluded, rather lamely.

The Commissioner glanced at him sharply. 'That so!' he said. 'Well, I'd better see her anyhow, or she'll be writing a furious letter to the papers when she gets back, and making unpleasantness generally. I know the sort.'

And again the young man smiled faintly as he withdrew.

But the Deputy-Commissioner for Borua was very much surprised, not to say utterly taken aback, when a few moments later a tall, slender, exceedingly graceful girl, with big lustrous brown eyes, and a distractingly pretty face, stepped out onto the veranda and advanced towards him with a shy, yet wholly charming smile.

'I am so sorry to disturb you——' she began.

James Logan was hoisted up to his feet by some inward force of which at the moment he was barely conscious. 'Not at all; not at all!' he protested gallantly. 'I am delighted to see you.' He jerked forward a chair, and spun it round with almost boyish eagerness. 'Pray be seated, my—er—Miss Temple, is it not?'

She inclined her head gravely, and sat down with a slightly preoccupied air, as if she was debating in her mind how best to introduce the matter which had brought her there.

'I asked to see you personally, Mr Logan,' she said, 'because what I have to tell you is of a private and confidential nature. It must remain strictly between ourselves, you understand?'

'You can rely upon me absolutely, Miss Temple,' he assured her.

'Thank you.' She turned a dazzlingly radiant smile upon him. 'I felt sure that I could trust you.' Throwing a glance round the veranda,

Miss Temple continued, in a voice charged with suppressed emotion: 'Twelve years ago, Mr Logan, my brother, believing that he had killed a man, disappeared suddenly and completely. What it was they had quarrelled about I don't exactly know—something to do with a woman, I think. Anyhow, the man didn't die after all; though my brother apparently never learned that. At any rate he never came back, and neither my father nor I, his only living relatives, could find any clue to his whereabouts. Then, after dad's death six years ago, I heard something which made me think that possibly he might be hiding under an assumed name in one or other of the South Pacific islands. That is no uncommon thing for men who—men like him—is it?'

'As you suggest,' said Logan, 'there are many such in the islands. Or, rather,' he added, 'many who have a truer cause to seek a refuge from the past.'

The brown eyes flashed a grateful look at him. 'Of course,' she went on, 'I had no actual proof that it was so, and couldn't very well do anything then. You see, for one thing, I was too young——' He nodded, judging that she would have been about sixteen. 'But when I came of age and inherited the small fortune which my father had left me, I resolved to visit this part of the world on the chance of picking up a thread of evidence which perhaps might lead me to my brother's hiding-place. It was rather a forlorn hope, you know; but something—a sort of unreasoning conviction that Arnold was still alive, and that we should meet again—urged me to the task. For two years I have wandered up and down these seas, visiting island after island, from Manilla to Samoa, making inquiries everywhere, sometimes with what seemed to be a prospect of success, but never more than that.'

'And you have done this alone, Miss Temple?' he asked wonderingly, knowing the difficulties and discomforts such an undertaking would involve.

'Oh no!' she replied, flushing a little. 'I have a companion with me, a middle-aged lady, who—who——'

'Quite so; quite so,' he assented hastily. 'But you must have found it a somewhat trying experience at times, Miss Temple?'

'And a very disappointing one, so far as any tangible result is concerned. True, I have talked with people, old traders and others, who seemed to have encountered a man answering to Arnold's description years ago; but none of them could ever tell me where he lived, or what became of him. Indeed, I had almost persuaded myself that he must be dead, when a chance alteration in the running of the inter-island steamers landed us here in Borua. And now——' She paused, the light of re-kindled hope shining in her eyes.

'You have heard news of him?' said Logan, with an eagerness that contrasted strongly with his annoyance of but a few minutes before.

She shook her head in a doubtful way. 'I don't know,' she answered. 'It hardly amounts to that, perhaps. Yet—I have heard some talk down there in the town of a mysterious witch-doctor, who lives far away in the north, and is said to perform wonderful cures amongst the natives. They call him "The White Healer," I believe.'

'Oh!' Logan gazed at her with a startled expression upon his face. 'And you think——'

'Well, my brother was on the eve of completing his medical course in Edinburgh when he—when the accident occurred. It sounds rather improbable, even a little foolish, I know. But—The White Healer—don't you see——'

'By Jove, yes!' Logan started to his feet, and stood for a moment frowning thoughtfully. 'There's something in that—if this White Healer really exists, and isn't merely a fanciful creation of the native mind, as I've hitherto always thought was the case.'

'But why should they imagine him to be *white*, Mr Logan?'

'Um—precisely. That is a point I had not considered. One rarely takes any notice of these tales that come through from the wild country. They are, as a rule, pure inventions, or gross exaggerations at the best. But *this* one—well—it certainly is rather curious when you come to think of it.'

The girl leaned forward suddenly, her hands clasped, and her slender young figure tense with excitement. 'It is more, Mr Logan,' she said. 'I believe it to be absolutely true. That there is a white man up there, I feel sure. Whether he is my brother Arnold or not, I don't know. But I must find out. Oh! you see that, Mr Logan, don't you?'

'Of course, of course!'

'That is why I came to you. I want you to help me. Will you?'

'Assuredly—so far as I can. But——'

'You would rather not?'

'No, no! You misunderstand me. I was about to suggest that you should allow me to speak of the matter to my secretary, Faring; he has quite a remarkable knowledge of the country and its native inhabitants—far more so, indeed, than I have—and his assistance would be invaluable.'

'Is that the young man whom I saw just now?'

'The same, Miss Temple. A very excellent fellow, I assure you, and one whom you need not hesitate for a moment to trust.'

With a pensive air she looked out between the trailing masses of purple bougainvillea to the sea glittering beyond the palm-tops. Then a gentle smile played furtively about the corners

of her lips. 'Yes,' she said, 'I think that I could trust him.'

II.

Ka-Ka, Paramount Chief of one of the larger of the string of coral islands extending from the northern end of Borua, sat in the doorway of his sago-palm hut with his huge splay-fingered hands spread out over the girdle of tappa-cloth about his middle, and an expression of acute anguish upon his dusky, wrinkled face. He was an exceedingly fat, heavy-jowled, villainous-looking old savage, whose aspect on most occasions was one of truculent ferocity. At the moment, however, he was feeling uncommonly sick. 'Belly he walk about too much inside me,' he wailed, in *bêche-de-mer* English, addressing the tall, hooded, monk-like figure standing a few paces away from him in the centre of a wide semi-circle of awed natives. 'I plenty sick. No can eat. No can—'

Suddenly the tall figure strode forward, the hood falling back and revealing a lean bearded face, with pinched cheeks, and steel-blue eyes deeply set in cavernous hollows beneath the lofty brow. It was the face of a white man; but of a strange chalky whiteness that in its even colourlessness resembled the hue of death.

Ka-Ka shrank back, his eyes dilating with fear. The other stopped short, regarding him with a thoughtful, half-whimsical smile. 'How is this, O Chief?' he said, speaking easily in the native dialect. 'You have sent for me across the narrow water that I might cure you of your sickness. Yet, when I come, you draw away from me with terror in your eyes. Is it, then, that you fear me more than the devil-devil which I am here to drive out? Know you not that he who would be made well must have faith in the magic which heals him?'

'It is true, O White Healer, and your magic is beyond doubt very great,' said the trembling Ka-Ka.

'Then have no fear, O Chief! For that which takes away evil must in itself be good.'

Thus encouraged, Ka-Ka retired into the hut, and there submitted his ungainly person to the strange rites which seemed to be a necessary part of the white medicine-man's magic. He thrust out his thick flabby tongue when ordered to do so, suffered with protesting grunts much prodding in the more sensitive portions of his anatomy, and obediently swallowed a draught containing a curious gray powder, which had the miraculous effect of making cold water boil, and was manifestly intended to prevent the return of the devil-devil, which he had distinctly felt departing in the thin tapering fingers holding his wrists. Ka-Ka was amazed. Nay, he was dumbfounded, stirred to the depths of his unsophisticated nature, and, if the truth be told, very thoroughly frightened. Beyond question, the magic that could perform such wonders was of no ordinary kind.

Then, while the bewildered savage was yet gasping from the effects of the mysterious potion he had swallowed, and experiencing no small degree of astonishment on finding that the apparently boiling liquid was actually cold to the taste, an interruption occurred.

A wild-eyed, obviously much-excited native thrust his head in at the door of the hut, with the breathless announcement that a strange ship—a white man's ship—had just entered the lagoon; and incontinently bolted.

Ka-Ka forgot the wonderful things that had been done to him, forgot even that he was sick, in the exuberant delight with which this unexpected news filled him. It was several years since a ship of any kind had visited the island; and then it had remained only for an hour or two, in order to take a supply of fresh water on board. But the captain had paid for the privilege—and possibly for some others not specifically mentioned in the contract—with a couple of bottles of trade-gin. The memory of the glorious time which had followed was like a torch to Ka-Ka's desires now.

The other occupant of the hut, too, seemed to be powerfully affected by the news, if in quite a different way. His face became sternly set, gravely anxious-looking, and there was an ominous glint in his pale blue eyes, as he seized the departing Ka-Ka's arm, and held it in a vice-like grip. 'Remember, O Chief,' he said, 'that you speak no word of me to those white people yonder. For assuredly if you do, I shall know of it, and though you were fled to the furthestmost ends of the world my magic should find you out and utterly destroy you. Do you understand?' The grip tightened threateningly. 'One word—and nothing can save you.'

'I will remember, O Great One,' mumbled Ka-Ka.

'It is well. Have my canoe brought round to the smaller lagoon on the eastern side of the island. And—remember!' The White Healer slipped out of the hut, and with a swift glance towards the distant beach, vanished into the thick grove of coco-nut palms which cast its shadow over the clearing.

Ka-Ka hung back for a moment irresolutely, as if checked in his purpose by the terrible warning he had just received. Then the ghosts of those two bottles of gin rose before his mind's eye alluringly, and reflecting that it would be quite possible to obtain others without breaking the condition imposed upon him, he left the hut and hastened down to the lagoon.

The rest of the natives were already assembled on the beach, gazing intently at a small fore-and-aft schooner, which had dropped anchor in the sheltered water under the barrier-reef. Ka-Ka, somewhat resentful of the neglect shown to himself, ordered his state-canoe to be manned without delay, hoping thus to impress the white

men with a due sense of his importance. He felt that much might depend upon it—much trade-gin, that is to say—and in ordinary circumstances no doubt he would have been right.

But as the canoe, propelled by eight stalwart savages, drew near to the schooner he perceived that the circumstances were not ordinary. This became evident to him in many ways; notably, in the absence of rough-looking, bearded men leaning over the side, pipe in mouth, with strange, blood-curdling, if unintelligible, words upon their lips; and in the remarkable (from Ka-Ka's point of view) cleanliness and shininess of the vessel herself.

It was, however, only when he stepped on to the smoothly-polished deck at the invitation of a tall sunburnt man dressed in curious white garments of what (to his untutored mind) appeared to be a sort of super tappa-cloth, that he realised fully the vast difference between this and the chance-brought trading schooners which at long intervals had visited the island. He also realised something else—something that, while it did not occupy his attention much at the time, was to be remembered by him afterwards, and to prove no small factor in determining the subsequent course of events.

Evidently the schooner was not prepared for trouble of any kind. By the side of the first white man stood a second, shorter and more broadly built, with the unmistakable stamp of the sea upon him; and behind them there was yet another, with two 'white Marys,' as Ka-Ka mentally designated the slim graceful girl and her stout middle-aged companion. The crew, except for a wizened-looking creature who popped his head out of a hut-like structure on the deck, and who in reality was the Chinese cook, seemed to be composed entirely of Kanakas—perhaps a dozen in all. The island could muster at least five hundred brawny warriors. . . .

Obviously, those on the schooner were not anticipating any trouble. Ka-Ka opened the ball, so to speak, in his quaint pidgin English, a smattering of which he had picked up in the far-off days of his youth, when for a year or so he had worked on a cane plantation in New Georgia. 'Plenty water you no have,' he said, with an ear-to-ear grin. 'I savvee. Him you wantum plenty bad?'

To his astonishment the tall sunburnt man answered him fluently in the Boruan language: 'No. We do not seek for water, O Chief, but for information which we think that you may be able to give us.'

The grin lost something of its engaging expansiveness. 'You give two, perhaps three gins,' murmured Ka-Ka.

'Perhaps. It depends upon how much you can tell us.'

'I can tell you anything.'

'Ahi! But they must be true words for which a price is paid. Is that not so, my friend?' Ka-Ka wagged his head in cheerful assent. 'Very well, then. What we want to know is where we may find this wonderful medicine-man who is called The White Healer, and who, we have reason to believe, dwells on one of the islands hereabout. Can you tell us that?'

For a few moments Ka-Ka was speechless, stricken dumb by the abject terror which possessed him. His eyes bulged and his features worked convulsively, while beads of perspiration shone on his black receding forehead. Then, seeing that the white men's gaze was fixed upon him curiously, he made a strong and very palpable effort to recover himself. 'I do not know—how should I know?' he stammered.

'Have you never seen him?'

In his fright, Ka-Ka resorted to no half-measures. He lied magnificently. 'I have never even heard of him,' he said.

The two white men exchanged glances. 'That is very strange,' the tall one remarked. 'All the evidence points to his having his headquarters somewhere in these islands. One would have thought—'

The other shrugged his shoulders. 'A prophet in his own country!' he laughed.

'I suppose so,' said his companion. He turned to the lowering Ka-Ka.—'Then we must seek elsewhere, my friend. Perhaps on the next island we may be more fortunate. Are any of these smaller atolls round here inhabited?'

'No, no!' Ka-Ka declared quickly, with an ill-concealed note of alarm in his voice. 'Only the sea-birds live there—and the currents are very dangerous.'

The shorter of the two white men turned his gaze seaward and then glanced aloft. 'The wind is freshening a bit from the nor'-west,' he observed. 'It may come on to blow before nightfall.'

'In that case,' said the other, 'it might be as well to remain here until the morning. What do you think, captain?'

'I certainly think it would be safer, Mr Faring,' was the quiet response.

A sudden gleam of intelligence, and it might have been of grim satisfaction, flashed in Ka-Ka's eyes. The two men had spoken together in English, but his knowledge of the *bêche-de-mer* variety of that language had enabled him to catch the drift of what was being said.

'You are staying here until to-morrow?' he asked eagerly.

'Yes. If you have any fruit or fresh vegetables you can send on board, we shall be glad to have them. You will be paid—'

But, strangely enough, Ka-Ka was not listening. Even the prospect of obtaining the much

desired gin no longer held the foremost place in his mind. It had become a secondary consideration, a mere side-issue in an affair of vastly greater moment. The sudden resolve, born of terror and savage lust, which had flamed up in his brain was more intoxicating than many bottles of trade-gin.

His thoughts, as the canoe glided shorewards over the glass-like surface of the lagoon, would have considerably startled those on the schooner could they have known them. These strangers,

he reflected, were bent on discovering the jealously guarded secret of The White Healer's abiding-place. Should they do so, as was more than likely, he would inevitably be held responsible, and the terrible curse would fall upon him. That must be prevented at any cost. The question of how this was to be accomplished troubled him not at all. To his primitive and savagely direct mind there was only one way.

(Continued on page 573.)

THE BUSH NEGROES OF DUTCH GUIANA.

By D. B. KIRKE.

I.

THE little-known colony of Surinam (Dutch Guiana) lies between British and French Guiana, on the north coast of South America. It is a wild, half-civilised country with great tracts of swamp along its coast-line; vast stretches of virgin forest in its hinterland; and, where the forest ends, range upon range of hills, growing higher and higher, until they become the huge mountains on the Brazilian frontier.

There is a very small area of cultivated land on the coast, and two towns, one small and one with about twenty thousand inhabitants, mostly of mixed descent. Beyond this the country may be said to be uncivilised.

There is no communication with the hinterland save by rivers on which are dangerous falls and rapids; with the exception of a few negroes working on timber grants or balata concessions this vast interior is left to the aboriginal Indian, and, in a few places, the 'bush negroes,' who are to be the subject of this article.

The origin of these 'bush negroes' is of great interest. From the days when negro slaves were first imported to the Guianas there were always some who, unable to stand the cruelty they suffered at the hands of the planters, took their lives in their hands, and disappeared into the unknown, where, whatever befell them, they knew they would at least be free from their persecutors. As time went on, these runaways increased in numbers, and began to form villages on the banks of the rivers above the falls, where they had little fear of pursuit, owing to the difficulties of navigation for large boats.

Freedom declared, they came out of their strongholds and went in numbers to the Governor of Dutch Guiana, begging that they should be allowed to remain where they were. The Governor, knowing that after their life in the forests they would never revert to the life on the plantations, granted their request, and to this day the 'bush negroes' remain in their villages, far up in the higher reaches of nearly every river in the country.

In appearance, strange though it may seem, the 'bush negroes' differ considerably from their brothers in the towns and civilised parts of the country. They are a much more powerful, cleaner built people, with smooth jet black skins, and abnormally large chests and shoulders. As the greater part of their lives is spent in their dug-out canoes, which they propel with a single paddle, this is not so extraordinary; but there is a difference in features and facial expression which is almost unaccountable. Maybe it is because they have, for all these years, remained free from degeneration—the curse of the negro wherever there is civilisation.

II.

The villages, which are always built on a high piece of ground on the river's bank, are usually small, not having more than eighty or a hundred inhabitants. The houses are large, strongly built structures, made from mora wood, and the tough leaves of the ita palm, which are woven into large thick screens, and make excellent roofs and walls. All are usually clustered round one larger than the rest—the house of the chief.

Every village has its own chief, chosen by vote, and he remains chief, unless he has committed some great fault, until he dies. His duty is to settle all disputes, make rules, and to give consent to marriages.

Before a young man can 'marry' a dusky maiden to whom he inclines, both his family and the girl's are brought before the chief. A long consultation is held, and should both families be agreeable to the union all is well; but should one disagree, then the chief will not give his consent until that point which is disagreed upon is adjusted, which may be never. And woe betide the young man who is found paying attentions to a young lady before the chief's consent has been given! He is caught, bound, and mercilessly flogged, but, after he has undergone his punishment—if, indeed, he survives it—he is allowed, without comment, to return to and live with his choice.

Sometimes the chiefs get so old that they

become incompetent to rule their people properly, and then there is little law or order in the village.

The writer visited a village on the river Coppename, the chief of which, an old man, Witta by name, was so infirm that he could hardly drag himself down to the river's edge. He must have been nearly a hundred, and looked it. His village was in an awful state of dirt and untidiness; women were brawling and abusing each other as only women of their race can; and some of the men told us that their boats and provisions were being stolen. Witta had allowed some of the wandering balata-bleeders from the lower forests to settle in his village—a thing which is always fatal, as these men are usually coast niggers who have either escaped from prison or taken to the bush for fear of the law.

The old man crawled down to the river to greet the writer's boat—a huge skeleton, completely bald and toothless, half-blind, and leaning on a long twisted staff. Some bad thing, he said, had pursued him ever since he became chief of the village, so much so that he could not leave it. As soon as he was out of sight of it something drew him back, and the spell on him was so bad that not even the 'Jiggers'¹ would enter his feet! Like all his race he was in the toils of superstition, and it must have been a very bad spell indeed, as the 'Jiggers' torment every human dweller in the bush!

Once a year, the chiefs of all the villages, at least of those near to it, go down the rivers to Paramaribo, the chief town of Dutch Guiana, to pay tribute to the governor. For this purpose they dress in the most extraordinary collection of garments, and, accompanied by some retainers, make the ten days' journey down the river to Government House. They usually carry gifts with them in the shape of canoes, carved stools, &c., for which they get in exchange knives, salt, axe heads, or fish hooks.

III.

All 'bush negroes' are splendid axemen, and the writer has seen a man fell a tree, three feet in diameter, and square it inside half-an-hour. Some owners of timber grants in the interior have tried to get them to work on their grants, but the 'bush negro' will work for no man. Other negroes, who come to the bush as boatmen in expeditions such as the writer's, are treated scornfully by the 'bush negroes.' They are offered nothing in the way of food by their 'brothers,' and are looked down on as 'the white man's slaves.'

The 'bush negroes' lead an easy, careless life. As dawn breaks each grown man takes his dugout and goes up or down the river to where his 'ground' is situated. There he grows his

provisions—yams, plantains, and beans; and, after doing any work there that is required, the rest of the day is spent in hunting or fishing.

Very few of the 'bush negroes' have guns, but they are wonderful trappers and extraordinarily good shots with bow and arrow. Nearly all their fish are shot in the water, a long piece of 'bush rope' (i.e. string made from silk-grass, and as strong as hemp twine) being attached to the arrows. The writer has seen sting rays shot in the water by a 'bush negro' twenty yards distant.

Like all native races the 'bush negro' is in the thrall of superstition. Most extraordinary rites are performed at certain seasons of the year, and it is certain that ceremonies take place in the South American 'bush' that are performed in the wilds of Africa. These ceremonies have never to the writer's knowledge been witnessed by a white man in Dutch Guiana, but he has been told by a coloured man, long a surveyor to the Dutch Government, the following extraordinary anecdote.

Whilst staying in a 'bush negro' village on the Marowijne, the river dividing Dutch from French Guiana, this surveyor was the guest of the chief, a man named Atta, who had governed his village for many years. He was a fine strong man in spite of his age, for he was nearly seventy; but one day, while out hunting alone, he dropped dead, evidently from heart failure. Sudden death, amongst an uncivilised race, is a fearsome thing. When the chief was found a few hours after by some of the younger men, the village was thrown into a state of extreme terror; the surveyor, returning to the village from his work, found it completely empty. Man, woman, and child had taken to the woods. After some trouble he discovered a terrified old woman, who, too old to drag herself from her hut, had hidden herself beneath a heap of palm leaves. She told him what had happened, and he at once set off for the spot where she said the chief was to be found. When he arrived there he discovered that the old man was indeed dead, and as there was no wound or snake bite on his body, surmised that he had succumbed to heart failure. He began the task of carrying the huge body to the village, but was soon relieved of his burden, as some of the people, seeing that he was not suddenly struck down by the same strange hand, plucked up their courage and came forward. There was great lamentation in the village that night, indescribably sad wailing, and the muffled beat of drums.

Next day the body was carried by the chief's family round the village, halting in front of every single house. Should any slight, unimportant incident, such as the slipping of one of the bearers, an animal's howl from the bush, the flight of a vulture overhead, take place during these halts, then the death of the chief would be put down

¹ *Jigger*.—A minute insect which bores its way into the foot, and there lays its eggs, causing intolerable itching.

to the family outside whose door the procession had halted at the moment. Their punishment would be too horrible to mention.

Nothing untoward, however, took place on this occasion, and, having completed their round of the houses, the bearers halted in the centre of the village, where a large framework of bamboos had been erected. On this they laid the body of their chief, and, having built over it a shelter of palm leaves, left it. The body remained there for ten days. One can imagine what this meant in a country where the thermometer registers 108° in the shade. Every morning and evening during that time the family of the chief visited his body, covering it with herbs, and actually rubbing themselves with the exudations from the corpse! Can such a proceeding be imagined! Eventually the body was buried miles away from the village, and a huge cairn of stones built over it, which the writer has himself seen.

IV.

The 'bush negroes' are great believers in the supernatural. Should a man be drowned in the rapids, then the 'water mamma' has taken him below the water to live in her home in peace and contentment. Some of them have seen the 'water mamma,' so they affirm, and she is a huge black woman with four arms! Before passing a rapid, or, indeed, any dangerous part of the river, the 'bush negro' will always throw into the river a few yams or plantains 'for the water mamma,' so that she will grant him a safe passage.

Once, while on a hunting trip with four 'bush negroes' in one of their small dugouts, the writer noticed that every few hundred yards or so the negro in the stern threw a yam into the water. The creek in which the boat was was a very narrow one, with countless dead trees on either side. Of a sudden, one of them crashed down, falling right across the creek, and missing the boat by inches. Great excitement prevailed, and the man who had been so thoughtful as to feed the 'water mamma' was looked upon with great reverence for having delivered the company from certain death!

The 'bush negro' is a great doctor. Every herb in the bush has some healing use for him, and numerous decoctions are made, which, when taken, are marvellous in their results; but he will never divulge these remedies to anyone outside his own people. He is supposed to be the only person who has an antidote to the poison of the 'bushmaster,' probably the most poisonous snake in South America, and his 'make cut,' as it is called, is much sought after by those who run the risk of being bitten by these reptiles. There are instances on record where this 'medicine' has proved its worth, but none has come directly under the writer's notice. 'Tiger'

cut' is a concoction made from the ashes of the roasted feet of pumas or jaguars, which is given to their dogs in their food, or else rubbed into cuts in their heads and noses. The idea is that the dog will smell out a 'tiger' anywhere, and never lose its track until it has it at bay, when the unfortunate tiger suddenly loses all power of resistance, and waits quietly until the hunter arrives to kill it! This notion, of course, is entirely erroneous, but it is extraordinary what faith the 'bush negro' has in his 'tiger cut'!

There is very little disease of any kind amongst these people, and for what there is they usually have a remedy handy. Any illness, however, they do not understand is treated as an evil spirit having entered the body, and the unfortunate is banished from the village.

Whilst visiting a 'bush negro' settlement, the writer came on a large savannah,¹ some distance inland from the river, on the bank of which the village was built. Away on the other edge of this savannah, fully three miles away, was a small grass hut, standing all alone, and without any sign of life about it. On asking what this was, the writer was told that it was a 'bad place,' that no one must go near it, and that two people lived there who had been sent away from the village a long time ago. In spite of protestation on the part of the 'bush negroes' accompanying him, the writer set off alone to discover the mystery, and, arriving at the hut, found an old man and a middle-aged woman, who cowered away in fear as he approached. They were very much frightened, and would have run away into the bush, but they could not. Both were in an advanced stage of leprosy.

The language of the 'bush negroes,' if it may be called a language at all, is a mixture of African, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, and here and there a word of English, borrowed from the 'talkee-talkee' of the negroes on the coast. It is a most difficult language to understand, as many of the words are made up on the spot! The writer had with him on one occasion a tin-opener, which he showed to a 'bush negro' who had never seen one before; he at once gave it the name of 'ita,' because on the handle was the engraving of a pear (the advertisement of some canning firm), and this homely fruit bears a slight resemblance, in shape only, to the nut of the ita palm! To this day in that particular village any tin-opener will at once be recognised as an 'ita.'

'Bush negroes' live to a great age. The chief of a village the writer visited must have been at least eighty. He was, as all his race are, of enormous proportions, and practically covered with short white wool! His great pride was his mother, to whose hut he conducted the writer with much ceremony. Inside was a tiny

¹ The puma and the jaguar are commonly called tigers in the Guianas.

¹ A large open space in the bush, usually covered with short grass.

shrivelled-up negro woman, completely bald, deaf, and blind; she managed to raise herself and hold the writer's hand in hers for an instant, mutter a blessing or something of the sort, and, after a great deal of fumbling, presented him with a jaguar's tooth. She wore a huge necklace of these round her neck. She was the

oldest woman the writer had ever seen. No doubt Africa had been her birthplace, and, carried off to a strange country under the thrall of cruel masters, she had chosen the wild life of the bush, where, free from the hardships of plantation work, she had lived to this tremendous age in peace and quiet.

THE REMORSELESS RULING.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN, F.Z.S., Author of *Habits and Characters of British Wild Animals, Tracks and Tracking, &c.*

I.

THE young sparrow-hawks had left the nest and were now able to fend for themselves, but though no longer held together by any family bond, they still regarded the fir planting in which they had been reared as their home quarters. It was a hidden-away little forest lying at the foot of the range, and only an occasional shepherd went that way. So any morning or evening one might have seen a whole flock of wheeling, screaming sparrow-hawks about the fir spires—the two parents and their five young—and as the young grew stronger on the wing, the destruction they began to wreak among the wild bird life of their locality was truly appalling. There were, it must be admitted, too many hawks in that locality, and if allowed to flourish unchecked they would, ere long, spoil their own hunting by the annihilation of the wild life on which they depended.

But one curious thing was noticeable—that about the home wood of the raiders other birds were safe. Numbers of ring-doves had built their scanty platforms and laid their pearl-white eggs within sight of the sparrow-hawks' eyrie, and all had safely reared their broods. Even now, with the young hawks a-wing, several of the wild pigeons were busy with their second broods, and they went boldly back and forth under the very eyes of the pirates.

Yet, had one come to examine the eyrie of the birds of prey, one would have found it littered with the legs of pigeons and chickens, and pigeon feathers strewed the ground below—pigeons which had been killed evidently beyond the one mile radius of that sacred area. The why and the wherefore of this I cannot explain, but we know it is a rule among the killers to keep their thresholds clear of murder, and—listen to this.

When a hawk sets out in pursuit of its quarry it will not readily abandon the quest, sometimes becoming so fiercely intent that it will follow into the open arms of death. One evening the hen hawk was seen in hot pursuit of a stock-dove, which was flying straight

and fast across country, as though with some fixed goal in view. Twice the hawk struck, and on the second impact the feathers flew. The pigeon was weakening, its fate seemed sealed, and as the bird of prey rose to strike the final blow, the fugitive swerved and headed in a desperate dive down the slope. At the foot of the slope, not fifty yards distant, was the fir wood, and now, true to the rules of the game, the hawk spread her tapered wings and rose vertically, abandoning the chase when success seemed certain. The pigeon had reached home. She had touched wood!

II.

Let us follow for a while the lives of these fierce birds which haunt our forests, and we shall see how those who fear none, and whom others fear, live the most precarious lives of all.

In these early flights the young hawks regularly followed their parents, straggling by easy stages from tree to tree, and in this way, no doubt, they were shown the best hunting-grounds and were advised of the risks which accompanied each. Among these hunting-grounds was the Adams Hewlitt Poultry Farm, eight miles distant from the home wood. It was a huge farm, its rearing pens and wire screens covering an area of at least a hundred acres, and here an old man was employed to keep down the vermin. He had been a noted poacher in his day, and what he did not know by experience in the extermination of rats, crows, weasels, hawks, and the like, he seemed to know by instinct.

But the parent hawks were cunning, and many and many a chicken had they snatched when the old man's back was turned. Well they knew that he was their arch-enemy, and on their visits to the farm they would alight first on the branches of a giant ash which overlooked the wire pens. Close at hand a woman was filling the drinking troughs from a large watering-can—she was not to be feared. A little farther away two men in brown suits were strolling with their hands in their pockets—they were the owners of the place, and to the hawks they were of no consequence. Nor was

the joiner hammering down some felt roofing about a mile away, but—ah! there he goes, the old fellow with the gray coat and the cloth gaiters and the gun under his arm!

So the hawk, watching from the giant ash, would look before she leapt, and when she had made sure that the old man was safely out of range, there was a swish of wings, a stampede among the poultry, and much wild cackling. And the girl with the big watering-can would turn about, to see a large blue hawk skimming over the wire-netting, carrying a shapeless bundle in its claws. This kind of thing became of daily occurrence, and the poultry men agreed that the hawks were becoming bolder.

'You'll have to get them somehow, Tim,' they told the old vermin-killer. 'How about fixing up a shelter and waiting for them?'

'No good, sir,' announced the erstwhile poacher. 'I'd wait all week and get nothing else done. Them hawks don't come till they see me; then they go right in at the other end of the farm.'

At this Tim's employers were thoughtful. Would it be possible to disguise Tim as a female worker, and to rig out some one else to represent him? On second thoughts the idea hardly seemed practical, for surely even a hawk would spot the disguise—Tim with his short bow legs, his immense width, and his square bulldog chin covered with ginger stubble—no, not even a hawk would be deceived into mistaking Tim for a lady.

'I'll tell you what,' said one of the proprietors eventually. 'Come along to-morrow morning, Tim, in your blue Sunday suit. Set to work repairing the roof of the Ancona pen, and keep your gun handy. While you are at it I will stroll about at the other end in your old gray overcoat, and carrying a gun.'

So Tim went away chuckling his approval, and next morning the cunning ruse was carried into practice.

Man's brain is bound to triumph over the wild folk when he sets himself that task, and old Tim in his Sunday suit was busy hammering nails into the roof of the Ancona house, when out of the corner of his eye he saw some bird alight swiftly in the branches of the giant ash, only eighty yards away. He glanced at his gun lying handy under a plank, and he went on whistling and hammering. At that moment a figure appeared from a hen-house half a mile away—a figure wearing a famous gray overcoat, which hardly seemed to fit, and carrying a gun.

Down came the hawk, and old Tim turned. His hands were steady and his eyes were clear. The gun spoke once, and an unshapely bundle of feathers bounced and somersaulted all amongst the startled fowls.

'It's only a young bird,' Tim told his employers. 'Just about clear of the nest, and

that's all. But I'll tell you what, sir. If that big old ash were felled we should be less troubled with the hawks. It's an old tree anyway, and it's time it came down.'

So the big ash was cut, and from that day on the hawks were never again known to visit the poultry farm.

III.

Within a mile of the fir planting a tiny village nestled at the river-side. At one end of the village, deserted and alone, stood a square stone building, which once had been the schoolhouse. But for some reason it had been abandoned for that purpose, and now the local seat of learning was a wretched tin shanty at the opposite end of the 'town.'

Sadly neglected, the old schoolhouse had fallen into disrepair. For years its windows had been glassless, staring with blank unseeing eyes across the laughter of the river, and the starlings had come to regard the deserted building as sacred to their possession.

But recently the big estate had changed hands, and the new laird was an enterprising man who realised that if he was to keep the best of his young people about him, he must improve the conditions of living. Why were the Colonies claiming so many? Was it because the life at home was not worth while? Well, perhaps under the old régime—a niggardly and indifferent landlord, a disreputable, tumble-down old village, farms worked by obsolete methods, pasture-lands sinking into swamp—life at home *did* hold few prospects; but the new laird would alter all that.

For a time the joiners and builders had been busy, and now at last they attacked the old schoolhouse, which was to be converted into a concert-hall. Re-floored and re-roofed, it would serve well in the direction of making life at home more attractive.

One of the young hawks was accustomed to visit the village in the dusk of evening, and skimming low from garden to garden, darting now round the corner of a building or diving from the shadows of one of the giant elms, it was seldom he returned to the planting without a song-thrush or a blackbird, or perhaps even a wary starling, dangling limply in his claws. The stone-breaker announced that he had seen the bird fly in at one of the glassless windows of the schoolhouse to snatch a starling from the rafters, and depart hastily from the opposite window with a screaming mob at his heels.

Be that as it may, within forty-eight hours of the old hall being renovated one of the new window-panes was found shattered to fragments. At first it was thought to be the work of some mischievous urchin, but on further examination a dead sparrow-hawk was found inside the building, its slender body traversed by a bayonet of glass.

'Only a young bird,' said the finder, 'possibly just clear of the nest, and I guess it won't happen again.'

He guessed rightly, for in this way was a tradition of the Wild broken—a tradition which said that those windows were glassless.

IV.

It is during the first few weeks of their existence, while they are yet wanting in experience, that Nature exacts the most remorseless toll upon her children. Each day finds them a little wiser, each day teaches some new lesson, and those who live to see the dawning of winter are well on the highroad to survival.

So far only eight days had elapsed since the young hawks became able to feed themselves, and two of the five were already gone. The third met his fate on the tenth evening, and once more there was an eye-witness.

Just below the village the river narrowed between the hardwood forests, taking a downward plunge through the blue-bell slopes, and across the white cataract was a cable bridge, slung from four stone pillars and affording a bridge way to the gray stone mansion on the slope above. In the centre of the bridge was an iron gate, which could be locked, and about the gate, to prevent people climbing round it, was a wicked *cheval-de-frise* of long iron spikes.

One evening an angler sat at the water's edge watching the swifts wheeling and screaming up and down above the rapids, when a sparrow-hawk flashed into view and proceeded forthwith to pursue the 'devil birds.' That hawk could fly to some tune—but so could the swifts, and for five minutes or more a dozen of them kept him busy, crossing and criss-crossing, while the hawk, screaming angrily, strove in vain to separate one from the rest. Time after time he dived like a ray of light into the thick of the little pack, but with screams of defiance the swifts would scatter, and every time he missed—just missed!

At these repeated failures the young hawk became more and more furious. Several times he almost dashed himself into the river, several times only a mighty wrench from the line of travel saved him from collision with the branches. Finally he shot skywards from a dizzy stoop, his pinion feathers singing in the still evening air. And then, in the twinkling of an eye, the angler heard a metallic thud, and the hawk, with drooping wings, hung poised against the cloudless sky.

At first the angler did not realise what had happened. The whole performance had been so meteoric that his mind had been unable to keep pace with it. But at length he rose to his feet, muttering, 'Well, I'm blessed!' Then he set out to cross the cable bridge.

Reaching the iron gate, he took the dead hawk in his hands and tried to dislodge it,

but it was so firmly wedged that he could not do so. Two of the iron spikes had passed through its body. Such was the force of the impact that one of the spikes had bent, and, jammed against the next, it held the hawk in a vice-like grip.

'A young bird!' was the angler's summing up. 'Had he lived another month or so he would have realised the folly of chasing swifts!'

V.

Two little nigger boys—and yet another week and there was only one. A shepherd returning from the hill by the long white road which follows the burn till that merry personality is swallowed up in the fir woods, when the road mounts steeply over the brae—a shepherd, returning rather wearily from his long day's tramp, witnessed the fall of the fourth, though he played no part in it.

He noticed a number of jackdaws feeding down the centre of the road constantly ahead of him. As he trudged on the nearest would rise and alight behind him, and so he learnt that a migration of caterpillars, moving from the forests on one side to the rough pasture lands on the other, was the attraction which drew them. Becoming interested, he watched the flotilla rise and fall, till he was surprised to see a hawk swoop down at one of the birds.

Now, of all birds of the woods and the hills the jackdaw is well able to guard its own interests, and as the hawk descended the jackdaw turned, belly upwards, to parry the thrust. The feathers flew, but there were as many gray feathers as black ones, and promptly both birds fell into the centre of the road, their claws interlocked. There they proceeded to fight it out, the jackdaw parrying savagely with his sable bill, the hawk striving to pin down its quarry and to hold it helpless.

Now it happened that the shepherd's dog was running a hundred yards ahead of him, as sheep dogs do when home and supper-time are near, and, seeing the general scuffle in the centre of the road, the dog charged. The hawk saw him coming, and strove to disengage itself, but the jackdaw was too frenziedly busy to notice anything at all, and clung desperately to its opponent. So the dog caught them up—but his fangs closed only on the body of the hawk, and next moment the jackdaw was mounting with eager shuffling flight.

'You've settled him, anyway!' said the shepherd, as the dog brought the dead bird to his feet. 'Serves him right for being such a dern fool as to interfere with jackdaws.'

VI.

Thus within five weeks of their leaving the nest, the brood of five sparrow-hawks was reduced to one. Three had perished by Dame

Nature's chosen ways, and only one at the hands of man; for the keeper, like everything else about that estate when the new laird came, was old and beyond his work. Had he been young and active the hawks would probably have died by shot and powder, but even so the keeper would merely have achieved a task which, had it been neglected by him, would have fallen to wiser hands. For Nature is ever striving to retain her balance—to keep an even keel. She does not allow the strong to triumph nor the weak to multiply beyond the limits of economy. Her rules are the simplest of all rules; their working is infallible. They were made without man's aid, and without man's aid they attain their ends. No species is

allowed to prosper at the death-sum of another, and left to herself Nature does her own killing. So it is only when man demands an unnatural order, the superfluity of one and the exclusion of another, that he must take the matter into his own hands, and run counter to a ruling wiser than his own.

All that winter three sparrow-hawks haunted the fir planting, and next spring the sole surviving chick, a wise hawk now, brought his bride to nest within a few score feet of the tree in which he himself was reared. Thus there were two hawks' nests in the planting; but by then the old keeper had gone his way and a new man had come, so another story begins where this one ends.

THE LARGE BLACK PIG.

By SIDNEY ROGERSON.

I.

ALTHOUGH it has been extolled through the ages as pork, the pig, so far, has not received its due share of appreciation as an animal. Abuse, as well as brief life, has been its portion, and against one 'Dissertation on Roast Pig' can be set a score of tirades reviling the 'belly that walks on four legs.'

This is not fair. There are pigs and pigs, and it is as idle to judge all members of the piggy tribe by the back-yard porker, as all dogs by the street-corner mongrel. What of the Large White, the pampered pet of the north-country miner; of the Gloucester Old Spot, which looks as if it had strayed from a child's Noah's ark; of the rufous Tamworth, lineal descendant of the ancient British hog; of the Wessex Saddleback; of the Berkshire with its genial mien and retroussé snout? True, they all come at the last to table, but, this mournful eventuality apart, they are as different as dachshund from collie. They are the aristocrats of the pig world, rejoicing each in an ancient name and jealously-guarded pedigree; but, blue-blooded though they are, they have fallen on evil days, and have been displaced in popular favour by that vulgar parvenu, the Large Black.

Oh, he is a mighty fellow, the Large Black, but swollen with a crass consciousness of his exalted position. Little has he to recommend him in appearance or character. His popularity rests solely on his large families and his eminent convertibility into foodstuffs. Grossness is in him a virtue. Yet with all his vulgarity he has done much to improve the lot of his gentler relations, for he has given the Englishman a new idea of the pig.

It was not long ago that the pig's only proper surroundings were considered to be the four

walls of a small and smelly sty, where it was cribbed, cabined, and confined for the period of its natural existence. If he was sometimes spoken of as the 'gentleman who paid the rent,' he was allowed to wallow in a state of filth which he was supposed to like, but which was certainly not the proper setting for a gentleman. Dirt and a pig were inseparable in the public mind. If tackled on the subject, a pig-owner would explain that pigs were delicate animals, and made more fat when deprived of exercise. Which was, in a limited sense, true enough.

But then the Large Black was developed, and people began to see that there was money in him. Unlovely as he was, he was a commercial proposition—not kept as a despised but necessary member of the household, alone in his back-yard sty, but roaming in the open in as large numbers as possible. Pig farms were started on a large scale, and the word 'herd' crept back into use. There is a fine ring about that word, placing as it does the domestic porker at once on a level with the lordly bison or the graceful antelope. It heralded the dawn of a new era. Nowadays, as one travels through the country-side, either by road or by rail, one sees large boards bearing such legends as '—herd of pedigree Middle Whites,' '—herd of Berkshires.' But most herds are Large Blacks, and if the Large Black has lifted others with him it has only been incidental to his own popularity.

II.

If there is one corner of England that the Large Black has made peculiarly his own, it is Sussex. The county crawls with pigs. Here is a farm in which a retired general of artillery has sunk his pension, and which he works with the assistance of a solitary boy. There is

another on a larger scale, started by a business man from the East—'I must either go back to China, get married, or keep pigs.' He has now over six hundred. There are two or three herds of over a thousand, though such large numbers are admittedly exceptional.

One farm is much the same as another. The only sties are those for farrowing sows, and these bear scant resemblance to the old-fashioned sty. Imagine a long line of fifty or sixty of them, built back to back, of oak or cedar, floored with wood inside, and red-tiled outside; down the front runs an open drain with water laid on at intervals for flushing, while in one case even electric light is provided. Each pen contains the sow and her litter of from eight to fifteen young, the sty scrupulously clean, and the little pigs shining like well-blackened boots.

When the litter is old enough to leave the shelter of the sty it is passed out into the fields. The young are weaned, and, as they grow, pass from one wired enclosure into another until they are large enough for market, when they start upon their last mournful journey to the bacon factory. Except for the breeding-pens, the pigs live in the open all the year round, though shelter for them at night is provided by semicircular iron huts, usually of the familiar Nissen type. The 'fug' that could be got up inside these huts was sheer bliss to many a trench-weary soldier during the war; but the pig more often than not prefers to follow the latest hygienic fashion and to sleep out of doors. It is as if he were anxious to dispel the impression that he is a dirt-lover, to emphasize the distinction between dirt and mud. For mud, honest mud, is, after all, but the soap and water of brute creation, and is essential to the pig for cleanliness and also, in summer, for coolness. If there is no stream or pool available he will bathe in his drinking-trough, upset it, and pound the soil into paste. Then, thoroughly plastered and happy, he wanders away to some neighbouring shade, there to bask in stertorous slumber and dream of the next meal. In winter the fields get so ploughed with rooting that they resemble a water-logged battlefield, and no bombardment could churn up grassland better than a troop of healthy swine. The Nissen huts stand in a characteristic setting. But even in pouring rain it is no uncommon sight to find all the huts empty and a mass of pigs lying piled one atop of the other in the mud, in which they have wriggled a circular depression. Frighten them away and, however sodden the ground around, it is a curious fact that the place where they have been is bone-dry, even hot.

Nor, for all the apparent damage he does, is the pig a blind agent of destruction. A field furrowed by the plough does not suggest ruin. It presages a future crop, just as the sight of a hop-field caused the tramp to observe to his

mate, 'Lawks, Bill, ain't that a grand crop of beer?' Before the fields were turned over to pigs they produced, perhaps, a poor yield of oats, or mere uninteresting hay; but how the constant grubbing of many snouts transforms them, and the coming of summer clothes the barren mud with a wild mantle of flowers, weeds, and shrubs! Surely the pig is nature's finest landscape gardener! He is a true worker, enriching the soil on which he lives.

III.

To watch him at work or at play is to discover all kinds of unsuspected qualities in the pig. He is a friendly, almost lovable beast, and his intelligence is rivalled only by his inherent inquisitiveness. His memory and his sense of direction are uncanny. For example, a large bunch of young pigs had been undergoing quarantine after purchase, and, the period of segregation over, were driven one morning a distance of over a mile across rough country they had never seen before to the farm proper. Late the same night the foreman heard sounds of feet scurrying past his cottage, little grunts and squeals in the darkness, and next morning every pig was found back in the quarantine enclosure waiting for its breakfast.

The kindness of its character seems to be recognised by other animals, especially birds, and where there are pigs there will the birds be also. Of course, it will be said that it is the food which attracts the latter, but this is only partly true. It probably does attract sparrows, starlings, partridges, and even pheasants. But on one farm the pigs have brought back the plovers, and, whereas a year ago there was not a peewit to be seen, the fields are now full of them, nesting in the holes where the hogs have rooted. On the same farm a pair of semidomesticated Manchurian cranes—the sacred bird of Japan—even chose to build in the middle of a pig-field, where the hen managed to hatch her eggs, not, it must be admitted, without constant attention from inquisitive porkers, many of whom felt the sharpness of her long beak when they ventured too close.

Still more eloquent was the attempt made by a common fowl to mother a litter of newly-born black pigs. Had this not been amply attested by photographs, it would have been almost unbelievable, but such was the fact. The hen wandered into the sty and promptly tried to take charge of the youngsters. She clucked and strutted fussily about with them, and when they went to sleep she perched herself on them, trying idiotically but heroically to cover them with her wings. Again and again she was driven off, only to return, and not until the pigs were really active on their feet did she give up her hopeless task.

Yes, treated like an animal, and not fatted for 'foie gras' like a goose, your pig, be he

Large Black, Middle White, or any other breed, shows up astonishing well. Perhaps to assert that there is poetry in pigs would be an exaggeration, but certainly to see him under

modern conditions is to realise the truth of the saying that 'A dog looks up to you, a cat looks down on you, but a pig looks upon you as another human being.'

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

(1) THE STEEL HAND.

By ASHLEY L. BARNES-LAWRENCE, Author of *Jacob Bateman's Ladder*.

CHAPTER V.—*continued*.

III.

A MOMENTARY silence ensued; an unendurable silence like the silence of the grave.

I felt I must say something. 'My poor, dear boy!' I said.

Hubert nervously stroked with his left hand the empty sleeve. 'It is soon told,' he continued. 'This man Spicer was quite a stranger to me, and also to Vera; but he seemed very much taken with Vera, and made quite a nuisance of himself by following her about.'

'I suppose he had been introduced to her?' I inquired.

'Oh yes! just at the beginning; but later in the evening his attentions became so marked as to be very objectionable to her, and she complained to me about him. So I kept my eye on him, and soon saw that he had had too much to drink.'

'That was just my opinion,' I observed.

'Oh! you noticed it also?' he said. 'Well, then, that just confirms what I say. Of course I was determined to put a stopper on him, for I felt that Vera had virtually appealed to me to protect her. So I made a point of speaking to him out in the garden about it; and that was just my mistake, for it's no use speaking to a man when he's the worse for drink. I spoke quietly to him, and had expected he would say something apologetic; but he was quite hoity-toity and insolent.'

'So I called him a cad, and then he struck me a blow which I warded off with my left arm. And then, in a sort of rage I suppose, and without thinking what I was doing, I found that I had seized him with my right hand by the throat.'

'What! with the steel hand?' I ejaculated.

'Yes. It was a sort of instinctive thing; what I suppose I might have done before I lost my poor hand. Anyhow, with an artificial hand, as you may imagine, it is impossible to feel anything; and I really had no conception what had happened until I found the poor man staggering backwards and pulling me along with him. And then I realised that I couldn't let go, for the more he pulled, and the more I pulled, the tighter my grip became.'

'I see exactly what occurred,' I remarked; 'it is on the same principle that a bird sticks all the tighter to the bough of a tree when a wind is blowing; there is an involuntary contraction of the sinews. But, tell me, what happened next?'

'The end of it was, he suddenly sank down on the grass, with me on the top of him, and that relaxed the tension; and I then managed to release myself. I left him lying there, as I imagined, in an exhausted condition; and wasn't sure he hadn't fainted.'

'Feeling very shaky myself, I went off and took a mouthful of brandy, and then to avoid any further scene or unpleasantness, I ordered our taxi to come round. I managed to pull myself together sufficiently to say good-bye to Vera, and then, as you know, we got away.'

'How dreadful!' I exclaimed. 'To think of your going through all that, and none of us knowing anything about it! Of course I recollect very well that you said you were indisposed; but, good God, what you must have suffered!'

'The next day,' he continued, 'I didn't go to Paddington to see Vera off. For one thing my arm was very bad; and I knew also her friends would see to her all right. Then, again, I confess I funk'd meeting her, for I dreaded to hear something about the previous night.'

'Did you know at that time about Major Spicer's death?' I asked.

'No! I had no idea of it until I saw it in the evening papers. I ought, of course, to have gone off there and then to Admiral Chapman, and told him all about it, and given myself up. But it seemed such a dreadful thing to have Vera's name mixed up with such a scandal, and the whole thing seemed so low and horrid, and very difficult to explain—and then, you see, the newspaper account suggested that the death might be due to apoplexy, or something of that sort. In my heart of hearts I hoped before God that it really was so.'

'It may have been,' I murmured; 'it may have been. It is just possible it was brought on by the sudden excitement.'

IV.

'Anyhow,' said Hubert, 'I thought that in the circumstances I would wait in town, in case

I might be wanted; and in fact I wrote a line to Admiral Chapman, giving him my hotel address. Of course, if I had been wanted, I should have told the truth. But I was not sent for, and, as you know, the verdict was an open one.'

He paused, and lit another cigarette.

'You went abroad immediately afterwards,' I observed; 'and have been in Canada ever since.'

'Yes! I had a letter from my agent, and at once decided to be off. I felt I must have instant occupation and a complete change. I didn't even go home to say "good-bye." The fact was, I couldn't face it; I wanted time to recover self-control and to think out the whole position.'

'If you don't mind,' I said, 'I should like to get at your mental attitude in regard to this point. If you wished, quite naturally, not to draw attention to yourself as being implicated in this unfortunate affair, how is it that you did not consider that your conduct in leaving England so hurriedly, and staying away so long, was just the sort of thing to draw attention to yourself, and to make people begin to put one and one together? Have you never contemplated such a possibility?'

He looked searchingly at me. 'Do you mean that people have been suspicious about me?'

'No! I don't mean that! Of course, I can only speak for myself. I had not the least suspicion; and indeed I feel equally sure that Vera hasn't any idea of such a thing. But my point is that, knowing what you did, I wonder at your doing the very things that were likely to lead to questions and surmises. And, as I told you in my letter about Vera, she, poor girl, has been connecting your absence from England with the happenings at Sussex Lodge. Your conduct had led her to fear that perhaps you thought that on the night of the ball she had not been so discreet as she might have been, and that you had cooled in your affection for her.'

'Never!' cried Hubert; 'never doubt my love for her. Why have I done as I have done, do you suppose? Why have I kept away from her? Why have I all these months been breaking my own heart? Hasn't it been with the view of getting her to break off her engagement with me? And what has been my reason? Is it because I don't love her? It is because I love her with all my heart.'

He uttered all this with intense passion, and then, rising quickly from his chair, he took a half-dozen hasty strides up and down the room.

'My dear Hubert,' I said, as I laid my hand upon his shoulder, 'Vera is far too precious a treasure for any man to throw aside like this. A girl of truest perception, and finest feeling, intensely loyal—my dear man, she is just the girl to be trusted.'

'Thank you! thank you!' he murmured in broken tones.

'Now, Hubert,' I continued, 'I believe you are worthy of her; and you must show you are worthy of her by trusting her. Come, sit down again,' I added, 'and let us see what we ought to do.'

v.

'No!' said Hubert, presently. 'No! I can hardly expect you to realise my intense conviction that for Vera to marry me would be fatal to her happiness. And Heaven forbid that I should be the wretched cause of unhappiness to the very being I love most in the world.'

'I want to be quite sure,' I replied, 'that I apprehend your standpoint; so tell me quite plainly in what way you think that your marrying Vera would lead to unhappiness. Have you never thought that if you don't marry her, or if you lead her to think you have ceased to care for her, she is certain to be very unhappy?'

'Oh yes! I've thought of all that; but then she might get over that. The other thing she could never get over.'

'What other thing do you refer to?' I asked. And the question was prompted not by ignorance, but by the necessity of drawing from him something definite, so that I could deal with it. It was a case of being cruel in order to be kind.

'Don't you see,' he said, 'I must either tell her all about this dreadful affair of Major Spicer before I marry her, or else hereafter for ever hold my tongue?'

'Well!' I rejoined, 'supposing you did keep silence and told her nothing?'

'In that case,' he replied, 'I should always have the dreadful feeling that I had deceived her, and that if she had known, perhaps she would never have married me. On the other hand, what good could come of telling her after marriage? Her first and last thought would always be that I ought to have told her before, and not have waited till she was tied to me for life.'

'Then what about the alternative?' I inquired. 'Suppose you did tell her before you married her?'

'In that case,' he replied, 'I should have to bind her to secrecy; and then, just think of the dreadful burden of such a secret! No!' he proceeded, as he bent his head and covered his face with his hands, 'I have learned what it is to carry about with one a load of this kind—to know that there is a man wanted by the police, and that you yourself are that man—and yet never a whisper of such a thing to one's fellow men. How could I impose such a burden on my beloved Vera? Just think of her life under such a cloud! A life of dread, and a life of deception! Do you think that I could bear to see her live like that? Her dear eyes troubled with a nameless dread? Her cheek blanching and her heart breaking? Never! Never! Never! Do you know,' he

went on brokenly, 'I have sometimes thought I would put an end to myself.'

'No! my dear boy; that is truly the devil's own temptation. "Cast thyself down," is his cry; whereas what you have to do is to cast your burden on Him who is the great bearer of all human burdens; "surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." And now I want to lead you on a little further, until, please God, you shall be able to say with me, "and with His stripes we are healed."'

'Oh, sir!' he exclaimed, 'how can healing in such circumstances as mine be possible?'

'With God,' I answered, 'nothing is impossible. I need scarcely say, Hubert, as the friend of Vera and yourself, how greatly I wish to see both of you happy, and trusting in each other. I cannot believe that these dark clouds may not be dispersed by Him who is the light of the world.'

He looked questioningly at me.

'The only way,' I whispered, 'is the way of the Cross.'

VI.

Hubert's hand gripped my arm, and a spasm of pain contracted his brow. 'I'm afraid I don't quite understand,' he said.

'Let me explain,' I answered. 'You have put two or three propositions before me, and you have put them on one side. There was first the idea of marrying her without first telling her; you have put that aside, and I honour you for that—you are quite right. Also you have put away all idea of telling her and binding her to secrecy, because it would impose upon her your secret burden and sense of guilt; and this would simply mean a doubling of the burden, bringing no relief to you, besides being unfair to her. Is not that your view?'

He nodded acquiescence.

'What, then, is left?' I continued. 'I have referred to it as the way of the Cross. It is the trying to act in such a way as our Saviour would have us act. There is no other right way but just that. We may confess our sins a thousand times over, and think we have repented of them, but there is never any real pardon and peace from Him unless the confession includes amendment of life. And this mending up of what is wrong in our lives entails considerable humility and self-sacrifice. Do you not agree with me?'

'Yes!' he said; 'I follow what you say, but how does it apply in my case?'

'Well, my dear fellow,' I said, 'all this present misery of yours, with its prospect of more misery in the future, arises from the mistake you made in trying to conceal what you ought to have confessed on that fatal night at Sussex Lodge. Isn't that so? Well, then, you must retrace your steps to that point, and do now what you ought to have done then.'

I could see plainly that my words had sent a chill to his very heart.

'You will never know anything of pardon and peace until you do,' I said; 'and meantime you stand to lose another of God's greatest blessings—the love of a true-hearted and unselfish girl.'

'I must lose her in any case,' he replied; 'and I do want you to believe that my chief motive in keeping silence was to save her from any distress or shame on my account.'

'Yes! I quite believe that,' I exclaimed; 'but the whole course of events afterwards must surely prove to you that your motive, however good, was mistaken. And now the whole question is, what are you and Vera prepared to bear for each other? You and she had come into each other's life before this tragedy happened, and now it only remains to be seen whether each of you is possessed of the true spirit of self-sacrifice. If the love be genuine, the spirit of self-sacrifice will not be lacking; "love never faileth."'

'Do you really mean,' he asked, 'that I am to make public confession of my share in that dreadful event, now at this eleventh hour?'

'That is just what I do mean,' was my reply. 'Of course, you must insist upon releasing Vera from her engagement to you. That is a *sine qua non*. You must give her entire freedom, and if I judge her aright I think I know how she will use her freedom. She will help you, I believe, to bear this cross, hers and yours, and she will win her crown.'

'God bless her!' he cried with deep emotion.

CHAPTER VI.

I.

THE next morning we breakfasted betimes, and then I went off to consult a well-known solicitor in the city of Liverpool as to Carrington's best mode of procedure, while he himself wrote an all-important letter to Vera. Any interview with her was clearly out of the question.

I also sent her a brief note by an earlier post.

'MY DEAR VERA,—I am here for a couple of nights in Liverpool, and Hubert, dear old fellow, is with me. He is now writing to you, so I will say no more except that, as I told you in London, I am sure all will come right at last. —Yours ever, A. B.'

My visit to the Liverpool solicitor confirmed me in my admiration of Lord Bacon's aphorism, 'I would that every man knew enough of the law to keep clear of it.' He made me feel how easy it is to get into the clutches of the law, but how far from easy to get out of them.

'You must be prepared,' he said, 'for a Treasury prosecution on the part of the govern-

ment. Major Spicer's executors, if any, are little likely to move in the matter. And then, you see, your friend Mr Carrington apparently took great pains to conceal his connection with the event, and went abroad for nine months, and practically treated the law with contempt.'

'Of course he must have had a motive for attacking Major Spicer, and a motive for fleeing from justice; and I need hardly tell you that the prosecution is not likely to attribute good motives. It is quite on the cards, you will understand, that in the public interest they may deem it to be their duty to formulate a charge of murder.'

'Oh, surely they could never convict him of murder!' I exclaimed. 'The whole thing admits of explanation.'

'Well,' he dryly observed, 'there may be valid explanations, but it will need a great deal of explaining. Mind you,' he added, 'I don't for one moment say that a jury will convict him of murder, but the law is bound to take a very serious view of this nine months' concealment; and in the circumstances I should say that the case is pretty certain to appear in the list as a murder charge.'

He further advised that as Carrington had no warrant out against him, the better plan would be not to surrender to the police in Liverpool, but to go quietly down to Richmond and surrender himself there; otherwise the authorities in Liverpool would have to communicate with the police at Richmond, and an officer would be sent to convey him there. And this was an unpleasantness to be avoided.

II.

I hurried back to the hotel. Hubert had just finished his letter to Vera, and had sealed it.

'You are quite sure,' I said, 'that you are prepared to go through with this business, whatever the consequences may be.' And I told him what the lawyer had said.

At the first mention of the word 'murder,' he gave a sudden start, and turned an ashen gray. But he faced the question bravely. 'I can do no more than put my trust in God,' he said, 'and believe that truth will prevail.'

'There is one other thing I wanted to say to you,' I proceeded, 'and it is of the utmost importance. Have you got that steel glove of yours? I earnestly hope you haven't destroyed it.'

'No!' he said. 'I did at one time think of getting rid of it, but later on I realised the importance of keeping it.'

'Thank God for that!' I exclaimed. 'Where is it?'

He coloured up. 'I carry the hateful thing about with me. It is stowed away among my baggage in my bedroom.'

'That's excellent,' I answered; 'and, in addi-

tion to that, we must secure the evidence of Dr Mackenzie who invented it, and of the people at Birmingham who actually made it. They will be able to show exactly what happened.'

'Yes,' Hubert assented, 'that's the tragic part of the whole business; the thing was made in that way on purpose, so that when one laid hold of any object to bring it towards one's self the clutch was automatic, and could only be released by ceasing to pull.'

'I have been thinking, Hubert,' I next said, 'that you had better stay here quietly to-day, and very carefully rehearse with me what you propose to tell the police of Richmond, and in fact put it down in writing; for you don't want to be recollecting or forgetting this or that, on the spur of the moment, when you are under examination. And then we will go up to town to-morrow, and I will introduce you to a Mr William Thurlow, as good a lawyer as you could possibly have to prepare your defence, and a well-known man into the bargain.'

Hubert gladly agreed.

'This will be far better,' I continued, 'than going to Richmond straight off. It is one of our present advantages that we can choose our own time and mode of procedure. Then, after we have made sure of Thurlow, I will go with you to Richmond, if I may, and have a word with the police people myself. And there is something else we ought to settle—what about your mother and sisters?'

Poor Hubert! how dolefully he shook his head. 'Of course they ought to be told,' he said, 'before it becomes public news; but I really do shrink from telling them.'

'Would you like me to go to them?' I asked. 'I could go straight back from Richmond, and your mother is just the person to understand your motives, when they are explained to her; and perhaps I am in a position to explain them even better than yourself.'

He grasped by hand with much emotion. 'Thank you,' he said; 'there is nothing I should like better.'

(Continued on page 568.)

PIXIE-TIME.

SUMMER-TIME is Pixie-Time!

You may glimpse them, as you pass,
Chasing shadows in the grass,
On green stalk and twig a-climb;
Hammocked in some cup-shaped leaf,
Dancing with the circling bee—
All these wonders you shall see,
If you have a child's belief.

After birds have nestward sped,
In the woods at sunset glow
Elfin-bugles softly blow,
Calling tiny folk to bed;
Linger 'neath the starry sky,
Soon upon your spell-bound ear
Steals the music, faint but clear,
Of a Fairy-lullaby!

FRANK LIND.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

COLLARS.

By JAMES T. JOHNSTON.

I.

ESSAYISTS have from time to time discoursed on various articles of dress. *The Spectator*, in the days of Addison and Steele, abounded in descriptions of Fashion's whims. Leigh Hunt has left us a dissertation on hats and sticks, and Pope sang of the 'nice conduct of a clouded cane.' But no one appears as yet to have given us a treatise on collars, of which there are so many types, one denoting knight-hood, another masonry, another widowhood, and so on; others, again, some particular profession, such as that of a cleric or a nurse. It is, however, with the everyday linen collar that we are here more immediately concerned.

We owe it to ourselves as well as to our neighbours to appear agreeable objects. Bacon says that 'a pleasing figure is a perpetual letter of recommendation,' and Hazlitt parodied Pope's couplet to read:

*Dress makes the man, and want of it the fellow;
The rest is all but leather or prunella.*

A little work lately compiled by a medical man, *How to be Useful and Happy from Sixty to Ninety*, closes with a chapter of axioms, one of which runs, 'When you reach sixty, turn over a new leaf, and if you were careless of your appearance before begin to dress well. It makes you look better and feel better, and you will be no older than what you feel.' On the same principle, as has been said with perhaps more than a grain of truth, a new hat is of more use to a woman than any tonic.

The wearing of a collar makes all the difference in the appearance of a man; its presence renders him comely, its absence unsightly. True, the wearing of one involves the addition of a cravat; and it is a moot point whether a shirt without a collar or a collar without a cravat is the more unseemly. Collar-law used to be rigidly enforced at Eton. The wide collar worn outside the jacket by the junior boys is familiar throughout the land, but a member of the Sixth Form would never in the old days have been seen without the full 'stick-up.' Even there, in this utilitarian age, things appear to be changing, judging from a wrathful letter in a recent number of the *Eton College Chronicle*,

from an old boy who was disgusted, on paying a visit to his *Alma Mater*, to observe a swell, as the term was in his day, 'actually wearing an effeminate turn-down (or "Portland") collar.'

A collar occasionally stamps the personality of its wearer. Just as Wellington and Blücher gave name to a type of boot, so Gladstone and Byron may be said to have sponsored a certain pattern of collar that furnished a fair index to their respective nature and character; for it would be as difficult to imagine the fiery and energetic Grand Old Man in anything but a stiffly starched 'stick-up' as to picture the free and easy Byron in any other than a loose and comfortable 'turn-down.' There is no question that a hard upright neck-band, like the old military stock, makes a man hold up his head and keeps him alert, while a soft one tends toward slackness, developing often into untidiness, if not into slovenliness. Among the bits of sound advice that Lord Chesterfield gave his son was this: 'I should be sorry you were an egregious fop; but I protest that of the two, I would rather have you a fop than a sloven.' As in all else, the happy medium between a fop and a sloven is what a man of sense will endeavour to keep.

II.

Such a trifling omission as the non-wearing of a collar may have serious consequences. In a recent case heard by Mr Justice Darling, before his retirement from the bench, one of the reasons given by a wife for leaving her husband was that he sometimes sat down to meals without one, to which the husband very justly retorted that, while his wife and mother-in-law wore blouses half-way down their front and back, they expected him to appear in a starched collar. Sergeant Sullivan, the husband's counsel, pleaded that he had seen some of the greatest financiers of New York sit down to lunch without a collar on a hot day; from which it would appear that our cousins across the herring-pond are not so punctilious in the matter of this appendage, an omission endorsed by Lowell in *The Biglow Papers*,

So wen one's chose to Congress, ez soon ez he's
in it,

A collar grows right round his neck in a minnit.

It is interesting to note, in passing, that Sergeant Sullivan, mentioned in the above lawsuit, is the last surviving sergeant-at-law, an order so ancient that its origin is wrapped in mystery. It was certainly extant in the reign of Edward I., and figured in Chaucer's list of pilgrims, in whose day each sergeant had his appointed pillar in the porch of St Paul's Cathedral, by which he stood and waited for clients, and, as they came, took their instructions, writing upon his knee. When the pillars became inadequate they established themselves in Scrope's Inn, Holborn. Sergeants Buzfuz and Snubbin in the leading case of *Bardell v. Pickwick* will occur to our readers. The year 1873 saw the end of the order, thus severing another link with the past.

How often to an unfortunate child a collar with a frayed and iron-like edge has proved the crowning sorrow. Lovers of Dickens will remember how poor little Tozer, a pupil in Dr Blimber's school, was so constantly galled and tormented by a starched white cambric neckerchief that his mother insisted on his wearing during the holidays in preparation for the Church, to which he was destined, that, choosing between two evils, the lad thought he would rather stay at school than go home.

III.

But it is not only man that is fettered with a collar. Draught animals are likewise victimised, and every tax-paid dog nowadays must also endure—though, when Burns wrote his tale of 'The Twa Dogs,' it would seem that the wearing of one was a mark of blue blood, since Cæsar's

locked, lettered, braw brass collar
Showed him the gentleman and scholar;
. . . he was o' high degree;

which naturally calls to mind the haughty epigram engraved on the collar of the dog which Pope gave to the then Prince of Wales:

I am His Highness' dog at Kew;
Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?

Ancient slaves, like the modern dog, used to wear collars bearing their owner's name and address, the material varying with the value of the slave and the importance of his owner.

It is not so many years since men played cricket in top-hats and stiff shirts and collars. How much more rationally clad is the 'flannelled fool' of to-day.

A tight neckband, which, like tight lacing, is injurious as impeding circulation, may seriously affect both eyesight and hearing. The danger of celluloid, owing to its inflammability, is now generally recognised.

The movement recently afoot in Cairo to substitute mufflers for collars and ties was anticipated in America soon after the United States declared war against Germany. A New York lawyer, named Frooks, organised an Anti-collar

League 'to relieve mankind and help to win the war.' 'Wearing collars,' he announced, 'prevents the free movement of the neck muscles and the flow of blood. There are few men who do not wish at some time or other that collars were never invented. Approximately in America alone 125,000 men and 200,000 women are engaged in making this suffocating harness for our throats. Thousands more are engaged in washing and ironing them. Valuable time, too, is used in making the button-holes in shirts to which the collar is attached, and thousands are making collar studs, which labour would be more usefully utilised in a collarless country. . . . No author ever wrote anything worth reading with a collar on. Edison takes off his collar before he can invent anything; so did President Wilson when he sat down to pen his great messages.'

A modest centenary which, however, deserves mention is that of the detachable collar. In 1825 Hannah Lord Montague, the wife of a blacksmith in Troy, New York State, conceived the idea when washing her husband's shirt. Her neighbours bought collars from her, and then one, Ebenezer Brown, scented money in the invention, and exhibited 'string collars,' as he called them, in his shop-window.

Maybe too much store is set nowadays by this fetish of respectability, this 'insidious cincture of torture,' as it has been exaggeratedly termed, to which comfort is often sacrificed, as in the case of little Peter Cratchit, who, having borrowed his father's monstrous 'stick-up' for the family Christmas dinner, found its corners constantly getting into his mouth. One thing Hannah Montague's device has certainly done, and that is to make men—owing to the collar's consequent development of multiple shapes and sizes, soft or starched, plain or coloured, single or double, high or low—less distressingly similar in appearance than they were before.

AT EVENTIDE.

LIKE a sea of wine, the heather
Glowed red in the setting sun,
As I took my way o'er the moorland
When the long day's work was done.
The harebells were all a-chiming
(For those who had ears to hear),
And the 'Angel of His Presence'
Seemed very very near.

The fetters that bound my spirit
Were loosen'd, and fell away,
As I rose, on the wings of vision,
From my chrysalis of clay.
Alone on the wide, wide moorland
My soul was filled with peace,
And from the tyranny of life
I found me sweet surcease.

And as I laid down my burden
I cried, 'It is good to be here!'
And the 'Angel of His Presence'
Was very very near.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

THE WOLF.

By ALBERT G. MACKINNON, Author of *Hospital Jock*, &c.

I.

‘YOU brute!’

There was horror and also venom in the words. The speaker was a big man, who somehow looked ungainly in his tailor-cut clothes. His unwieldy figure uttered a protest at every angle against the dictates of convention.

In front of him stood ‘The Wolf,’ as it had stood for three thousand years. The same cruel leer was on its face, the leer that had fired the ancient Romans to deeds of blood. It had not lost its power to move the souls of men, for the big man who gazed fiercely at it was strangely agitated.

The company of tourists, startled by the exclamation, turned to the member of their group who had so unceremoniously interrupted their guide and cut the thread of his discourse, thus compelling him to begin all over again. The party half-filled the little room in the Capitol Museum in Rome, and had been gaping open-eyed at the bronze figure of ‘The Wolf.’ It returned their stare with a crafty savagery, which plainly said, ‘If I could only jump out of my bronze body I would soon make short work of your vulgar curiosity.’

One of them interpreted the meaning of that look, but then he knew wolves. They had been his enemies all his life.

‘You have found me again, you villain!’ continued Bret Hixon, taking no note of his fellow sight-seers. He hitched his trousers (though they did not require it), spat on his hands and doubled them up into two formidable fists, and looked as if he were going to break his knuckles against the wolfish face. ‘If there be a howl in yer I will bring it out,’ he snarled.

‘Be careful, zur,’ said the guide, stepping between the speaker and the object of his sudden fury. ‘This is ze great “La Lupa.” It is *multo* precious. It costs millions of lire now. Once it stood in ze forum, on ze pedestal in ze Comitium. It tells ze ancient Romans to be like itself—wolves, savages; to tear zeir enemies zo.’ The guide made a gesture to signify ferocity.

‘Very pretty, young man; but the way the wolf tears is—so,’ and Hixon suddenly gripped the guide by the neck until he gasped for breath. ‘What did you mean by saying “No” when I asked you if you were going to a Zoo to-day? I told you that you could take me anywhere except to see animals. I am fed up with them. At Brussels the guide nearly lost his head for bringing me within scent of the wild beasts.’

‘But, zur, this wolf is not living. Ze bite is not in it. You need not be afraid.’

‘Bret Hixon afraid of wolves! I like that!’ sneered the stranger, relaxing his grip of the guide. ‘The only wolf I fear is the ghost of a wolf. That is different. It has tracked me for years, night and day. I came to Europe to throw it off the scent. I thought the Atlantic was broad enough to spoil the trail, and here I am faced with *that*.’ He pointed with an action of terror to the figure on the pedestal. It would have taken little imagination to fancy that the leer on the wolf’s face changed into a grin; Hixon thought it did, and his fists clenched once more.

The tourists turned their gaze from the bronze to the big Canadian. Tragedy was shadowed on his face, and they feared what would happen next. Fortune turned the wheel to comedy instead.

Another party came trooping into the room at that moment. It was headed by an American girl, who, on seeing the wolf, darted forward with the exclamation, ‘Oh Golly!’ and flung her arms round the neck of the bronze.

‘What are you doing that for, you silly?’ called her companion after her.

‘It is such a dear old thing. I want to hug it. I love wolves. Think of it being three thousand years old, Cora! There!’ and she gave the nose a smack with her lips. ‘I wonder if it was ever kissed before. What if I, Letitia Tucker, were the first ever to have kissed “The Wolf of the Capitol”? That’s what I call fame. The first woman to—never mind what she did, so long as she was the *first*.’

‘Guess you have a right to that honour. I don’t suppose any woman ever thought of kissing that ugly snout. Seems to me people are daft to rave over a thing like that. What a head! It is enough to give one a nightmare,’ answered her friend.

‘But think of what it stands for—the Roman people which conquered the world! Remember what Byron says:

And thy limbs black with lightning—dost thou yet
Guard thy immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge
forget?

Letitia Tucker had stepped back from her embrace and was gazing admiringly at its object.

‘Guess it would take a mighty good coating of poetry to gild that thing. It’s hideous,’ laughed Cora Bowman. ‘If you want to waste sentiment on a wolf, go to the New York Zoo and see that big chap they trapped somewhere away up on the Mackenzie River. He would knock all the points out of this one. I always

want to let him out; only some people and creatures have a strange way of showing their gratitude, and he might be one of them.'

'Perhaps I am too. That is why I kissed this wolf. It was gratitude to all wolves in general, and one in particular. We should not have been here to-day, Cora, if it had not been for a wolf. I should have been teaching a lot of noisy ruffians in some little school out West; but the wolf changed all that. As I cannot take off my hat to its representative, that not being the fashion amongst ladies, I did the other thing. Don't you think it has got a little more kindly expression in its eyes since I kissed it?'

'You can imagine anything of a face like that. I should not like to be at its mercy, anyhow. Come along, Letitia; we are blocking the way.'

Certainly a crowd had collected. The Wolf had had an exceptional audience that morning. What between threats and caresses, its brazen heart ought to have been flustered, but it went on leering as it had done for centuries.

II.

Bret Hixon, so occupied with his own feelings, had scarcely noticed the action of the girl. He hurried out of the museum and back to his hotel. 'When is there a train leaving Rome?' he demanded of the proprietor, something of the fierceness of the Wolf still clinging about him.

'Where do you wish to go?' was the response.

'To a place where there are no wolves.'

The proprietor's face reddened. He did not know whether a personal reference was intended, and he began to recall his sins, especially those committed against his guests in the matter of accounts. 'Wolves? We have none in Rome,' he said, with some pretence at dignity.

'In the Capitol you have one whose face is going to haunt me all my life. Let me see. I shall go to Genoa. They are sailors there—and sailors are not likely to be such fools as to put a wolf on a pedestal.'

'You can get a train this afternoon.'

'Well, have my luggage sent to the station. I sha'n't want ever to be back in this wolfish den again.'

Bret Hixon stumbled upstairs, and, entering his room, threw himself on a sofa and stared out of the window. Beneath, the Imperial City spread out its proud domes and roofs. In the distance St Peter's added that touch which will always give distinction to this ancient capital. But for once that fascinating vista was slighted. The visitor's eyes saw nothing of it. Before his vision rose up a lonely stretch of snow, shadowed by the sad pines. In a cluster of the trees stood a little shack with two outhouses adjoining, one on each side. From inside one came a ceaseless patter, with occasionally a thump against the door.

'What have you got in there?' asked a trapper, whose face the dreamer was afraid to look on even in vision.

'That's "Jack o' the Mountains." He's the biggest wolf that has been seen in these parts for many a year. He's as fierce as they make 'em, a perfect demon, and has done no end of mischief. I sent word down to Winnipeg that I had caught him. I mean to sell him to a Zoo; that will fetch more money than his skin.'

Bret Hixon started as he heard again in fancy his own voice.

The two men entered the shack and seated themselves at the table. Bret produced whisky and eatables, and as the men ate and drank the trapper's tongue became unloosed.

'Look here, Bret, I must push on to-night to the Fort,' he said. 'I will return in a few days. Will you keep my kit for me? I have some nuggets there I want to take down to Edmonton. I expect they're worth a pile of dollars. I will leave my gun too, as it's heavy. A good stick is all I need. No wolves about here just now, are there?'

'None. All the packs have gone North. You're safe enough.'

'So-long, old fellow, then,' said the trapper, rising. 'Look for me in two days;' and he passed out into the gathering dusk.

Bret saw himself drinking long at the bottle on the table, and the fierce look on the face told of a desperate struggle with the wolf of temptation within. Then he rose and went over to where the trapper had left his bag. Opening it, he searched until he found the parcel of nuggets. Emptying these on the table, he handled each carefully, and with the scrutiny of an expert summed up their value. 'Five thousand dollars' worth, not a cent less. Ned was a fool to leave them with me.' He stared at the little heap as he fought and lost the big battle in his soul. When it was over, and his better self was vanquished, there was an ugly look on his face. He wrapped the nuggets up into their bundle again and placed them in his own pocket; then he paced the floor as the good within him fought vainly a rear-guard action. 'Dead men tell no tales,' he muttered. 'Ned's got to be put out of the way. Sarves him right for being such an ass! It's a good fifteen miles to the Fort, but he can be caught and wiped out before he gets there, and I have got the one that can do it. No incriminating traces left, either. Those Zoo people wouldn't give me anything like a thousand dollars for the wolf, and now I can make five times that amount by simply letting him loose.'

Bret swallowed another glass to keep the idea down. Then, taking a rope, he stepped out of his door. Night was falling now, and a death-like stillness was shadowing everything.

There was no eye to see. Besides, what seemed more innocent than merely opening the door of an outhouse? He fastened the rope to the bolt so that a sudden jerk would draw it and the door would open. Then he sought the cover of the shack, for the wolf was famished and, therefore, in a dangerous mood.

'Jack o' the Mountains' was dozing when he sniffed liberty. The door of his cage had opened miraculously. He had had too many narrow escapes in his short life not to value chances. He rose, and trotted out. A fresh trail was on the snow, that of a man. With a low howl he started on it, and Bret watched him from a window disappearing amongst the pines.

Some hours later, when the fumes of the whisky had subsided, conscience awoke, and Bret experienced the worst time of his life as it cudgelled him unmercifully. There was no peace now in that shack or in that countryside, and with the light of dawn he started to flee from the spot. He knew that 'Jack' would finish his job thoroughly; he had already several scalps to his belt. And so Bret started on his long trek with conscience on his heels.

III.

'Well, of all the fixes to be in I guess this is about the worst!' Letitia Tucker as she spoke sat down on the bed, consternation on her face and tears not far from her eyes.

'What's the matter now?' asked her friend.

'My purse is stolen!'

'That's the Wolf's fault, then,' answered Cora. 'When your arms were round its neck somebody's hand has slipped into the pocket of your jacket. It is the everyday thing in Rome. I suspect that Wolf. You could see the craft in its eyes. It had an accomplice, you bet.'

'It means my going back to Genoa, to the banker there who knows me, and getting a new supply of notes. Thanks to the wolf there are plenty left. I shall go right now, for there are heaps of things I want to buy, and one can't stay in Rome without money. You just wait here until I come back to-morrow.'

'You had better take your fur, as it may be cold in the train. Besides, I do not want to be left alone with that wolf-skin in the room; it is too life-like,' answered Cora Bowman as she helped her friend to pack for her journey.

'The dear old thing—of course I will not leave it with you. It is my mascot;' and Letitia carefully folded the fur with its wolf's head, and placed it amongst her wraps.

The compartment her porter chose for her in the Genoa train had only one other passenger. He had settled himself in the far-off corner and was evidently fast asleep. At a glance Letitia recognised him as the Canadian who had be-

haved so strangely in the Museum that morning. Still, as he looked quite peaceable, and as there was no other compartment so empty, she settled herself at the opposite window.

The train started, and she unloosened her wraps to take out a book. Lifting her fur, she flung it over her knee. As she read she stroked the wolf's head, a frequent action of hers.

A jolt of the train disturbed Bret Hixon's slumbers. He awoke from a nightmare in which the Wolf of the Capitol was the principal tragedian. The first thing he saw was the head on Letitia's lap. His eyes opened into a horrified stare, and he pinched himself to make sure that he was awake. 'Run to earth at last!' he gasped. 'The brute has got me this time.'

Letitia looked up with a smile. 'Doesn't he look fierce?' she said, patting the head.

Bret pulled himself together, and realised that the cause of fear was in himself and not in the object at which he was staring. 'I hate wolves,' he said.

'I love them,' she answered.

'I have reasons for my hatred.'

'So have I for my love.'

'Guess they must be strange ones.'

'No, just the commonest sort—mere gold. This wolf brought me a fortune—that's why I love it.'

'Mine has robbed me of peace—that's why I cannot bear to think of it. Seems to me we are both interested in wolves from opposite sides. Just let's hear what good you have got to say about the brutes. How did this one bring you luck?'

'Oh, that's easily told. My Uncle Ned was a trapper.'

'Guessed there was some connection atween them. Sure as I live, this is "Jack o' the Mountains"! Was your uncle old Ned Blake?'

'Yes. Did you know him? How very strange!'

'He was eaten by a wolf up Edmonton way,' murmured Bret, passing a hand over his forehead, which was wet with cold perspiration.

'Not he! Uncle Ned was far too tough to be eaten. He skinned the wolf.'

'Skinned "Jack o' the Mountains"! exclaimed the Canadian, jumping to his feet in his amazement.

'Uncle Ned would skin anything alive. But that's not how he made his pile. Sit down and I will tell you the whole story.'

'Guess I know a bit of it you don't know,' said Bret, as he seated himself directly opposite the girl.

'Uncle Ned was making a lonely trek through the pine forest one winter's night. He had been assured that there were no wolves about, and so had left his gun with a friend.'

'A friend!' interrupted Bret with a groan.

'Suddenly he saw a big wolf dodging along

his trail, and he knew he was in for the fight of his life. He made for a little cliff, and stood with his back against it. He had just time to pull out one or two small boulders from the loose earth when the wolf came on. I wish I could tell you the story as Uncle Ned did. It was a cunning brute, and it did not rush in at once. I expect it wanted to see what weapons Uncle Ned had. But he was as cunning. He made a feint that lured the creature within range. Then he let him have one of the boulders right on the head. You can see the marks here yet, though Uncle Ned knew how to stitch up skins so well that there ain't much after all to show; and the girl pushed the head of the wolf towards her companion. But he shrank back, the old look of terror coming into his eyes for a second.

'It must have been a mighty sure aim. Ned Blake had nerves of iron,' said the Canadian.

'Yes, he stunned the brute,' continued the girl. 'Then he drew his jack-knife and finished him off, so as not to spoil the skin. He said it was the best wolf-fur he had ever seen, and when he came down home he gave it to me.'

'I am mighty glad to hear this story!' exclaimed Bret Hixon as he reached out his arm and, taking the girl's hand, gave it a hearty shake. 'It has driven the black wolf off my back; but you will not understand that until I tell you my bit of the story.'

'Wait, I have not finished,' said Letitia. 'I have not come to the fortune yet. That's the most important point to me.'

'The killing of "Jack o' the Mountains" is the greatest piece of news I could hear; but even his skin wouldn't bring your uncle a pile, especially if he gave it away.'

'The fight with the wolf did, though. When it was finished, and uncle looked at his hands, he found them all black. They were covered with something which had come off the stones he had been handling. It was coal dust. He examined the holes from which he had dug them out, and discovered a coal bed right on the surface. You bet he did not waste much time. He put the stones carefully back, so that no other chap might see the marks of the coal, then started with the skin straight for Edmonton. He had money in a bank there, and he bought up the whole bit of land all round the spot of the fight. Next he approached a mining company, and took out some of their experts to examine the find. The coal was there right enough, and within a week he had sold the rights of mining for over a hundred thousand dollars, with a fourth share in the company as well. The thing has boomed ever since. Then he came back down East. He said he had made his pile, and had had enough of snow and ice and wolves, and meant to sit by the fireside for the rest of his days, burning his own coal. Poor uncle, he caught a cold just after we had settled

into a comfortable house, and that carried him off. As I was his only relative he left all his fortune to me, and that's how I am doing the world now; and that's why I love this dear old head;' and she gave the wolf's skin a hug.

'Did your uncle happen to mention about another little tidy sum he had in gold nuggets, which he had left with—ahem—a friend?'

'Oh yes, I remember; but the friend had moved off, and he never found him. However, he did not worry about it.'

'Well, here he is right in front of you, and here are the nuggets back safe and sound, not one of them missing. They are worth over five thousand dollars.' Bret took from his suitcase the parcel, and handed them across to the girl, who received them with astonishment. 'I set the wolf on to your uncle. I did it in drink, and I have never had a peaceful hour since. I thought he was dead—couldn't see how it would be otherwise—and I have been a Cain ever since, running away from my sin and it catching up on me, until right here it has run me to earth.'

There was a choke in the thick voice, and the glister of a tear in the eye, which the speaker brushed away with his sleeve. 'I don't know how I can ever repay you for bringing me relief. The best I have is yours for the taking,' he added.

'Then, in a kind of way, I owe my fortune to you. If you hadn't done what you did, then I should have been a poor girl earning my living with a pointer. Guess I owe you some gratitude;' and Letitia cast a look of sympathy at the big Canadian. He was a handsome man, every inch of him.

'Gratitude is akin to love, they say. Let's start with gratitude together. I am a lonely man, and I would like to make it up to you for what I did to your uncle,' Bret said, taking the hand of the girl once more.

Now Letitia was not pretty; her chances of attracting a husband were few. She read character quickly, and saw that the big lump before her was a good sort. His repentance had been genuine. 'Guess Uncle Ned would have forgiven you if he had been alive. He was that kind. He would have laughed over it, and thought you had made the biggest mistake of your life in imagining that he couldn't tackle a wolf single-handed. I don't mind doing what he would have done, and going a little further.'

The Canadian was on her side of the carriage in a jiffy, and their hands together patted the head of the wolf. 'Guess we had better go right back to Rome, and tell that big wolf in the Capitol all that he has been the means of doing,' he said.

They did, and the leer of 'The Wolf' changed to a grin—at least in their eyes.

A NIGHT WITH THE FISHING FLEET IN
KILBRENNAN SOUND.

By N. MORRISON, F.Z.S. (Scot.).

WHEN one is served with a fresh, well-cooked, and, perhaps, well-flavoured Lochfyne herring for the breakfast-table, one takes this dainty delicacy with good relish, and as a matter of course, without even giving a thought to the adventures and discomforts endured by the toilers of the deep in following their dangerous calling.

I have always had a keen desire to spend a night with the fishermen on the bosom of the mighty deep, in order to see them engaged in their interesting and, I may add, fascinating vocation. Recently, through the kindness and courtesy of the owner of a herring screw who invited me to spend a night on board his steamer, this deferred wish was at last gratified. I should like to mention here that a herring screw means a small steamer which patrols the firth all night amongst the fishing fleet and buys up their catches on the spot—in other words, a floating market—and then steams at top speed for Fairlie, in order to despatch the cargo of herring by the early train to the Glasgow market.

About 10 p.m. on 19th July, immediately after sunset, we sailed from Campbeltown and cruised up to Skipness Point, taking a mid-channel course. The sky was overcast and a gentle northerly breeze was blowing, and the air was rather chilly for a night in July. The Kintyre hills and the Arran mountains were shrouded in a dark pall of mist down to their base. Through an opening in the northern horizon the afterglow of the sunset could be faintly seen, tinting the upper ragged edges of this window in light crimson and orange hues. The sea between the steamer and Kintyre shore had taken on a sheen of gray, cold leaden shade, while away on the starboard side towards the Mull, the surface of the deep was of a sombre dark colour. To the right, Pladda Lighthouse was blinking brilliantly, like a flaming eye of a monster of the deep peering out from beneath the waters of the Sound. Sternwards, Davaar Light was nodding leisurely against a dark shadowy background.

The steamer was enveloped in an atmosphere of solitude and eerie isolation which was of an impressive and fascinating character. Save for the throb of the engines, and the swirl of the waters passing by, an awesome stillness was brooding over the scene. There was no other craft in our purview. The fishing fleet, which was operating near the shore, was swallowed up by a strip of inky darkness fringing the coast-line.

At twilight and dawn, the boats, which work in pairs, cruise slowly in and out of bays and creeks, keeping a sharp watch on the surface of the water for any signs of herring. These are usually the two periods when the herrings rise to the surface. They make their presence known by patches of the sea becoming brilliantly coated with a phosphorescent sheen; and next moment these areas are transformed into a boiling surging mass, from which issues a fizzing buzzing sound caused by the herring disporting themselves on the face of the waters.

Immediately this sign appears the shoal is encircled with a seine net by two or more pairs of boats, and in a short time the net is dragged on board one of the boats. If they have a good catch the next move is to set up a flambeau—that is, a double flare for large herring and a single flare for small herring—and the fishing steamers in the neighbourhood will steam straight for the light. Then a pithy, hot discussion will ensue between buyer and fishermen regarding the quality and market-value of the herring till at last a bargain is struck, very often by splitting the difference between the price asked for and the price offered.

As we were sailing slowly up the Sound a flare appeared in Cour Bay near Carradale. A straight course was at once set for this light, and, on arriving on the scene, a boat with fifty baskets of herring came alongside and was made fast to the steamer. The buyer then went on board the skiff, and after a wordy duel about the price, &c., the buyer and the seller came to terms. Of course, it should be noted here that the fishermen, when not satisfied with the first offer they get, exhibit again the flare signal in order to attract other steamers, and thus will sell their catch to the highest bidder. However, on this occasion, as I have already indicated, the first offer was accepted, and immediately afterwards the operation of shipping the herring on board the steamer began. The recognised standard of measure for selling herring is a basket, four of which go to a cran. Therefore, during transhipment, two men kept tally of the number of baskets sent on board the steamer, where the herring were being boxed ready for the market.

The fish in the hold of the boat under the glare of the torches were truly a beautiful sight—a glittering, sparkling heap, constantly changing colours into gorgeous hues and shades, resembling exquisite bars of silver set with precious stones. A quivering, fluttering move-

ment here and there amongst the scintillating mass showed that some of the herring were still alive. This was the first time I had seen a live herring. This species is a delicate creature, and it will succumb shortly after being taken from its natural element.

I noticed, also, that the fishermen in their oilskins and sea-boots looked dignified, sturdy, and manly, harmonising beautifully with their environment, and totally different from their shore appearance. Indeed, if one wishes to see the fishermen at their best, one should see them at sea following their calling.

We repeated the above operations several times during the early morning, while several other steamers were sailing about and carrying on the same work. Sometimes there was an exciting race between two or more steamers making for the same signal, which gives a touch of adventure and spirit to the enterprise.

A flock of sea-gulls followed the steamer all night, and, during the process of transshipping, small herring were thrown overboard and others would drop accidentally into the sea. No sooner had a herring dropped over the side than a cluster of gulls, setting up a chorus of screeches and shrill cries, would dive or rather plunge for it. I often noted that a gull would miss its mark, which goes to show that these birds cannot see very well at night—the gull, of course, is not a night bird. At times a bunch of them would plane down majestically right over the hold—coming into the zone of the torches—and the light reflecting on their white bodies against the dark background of

the night gave them the appearance of a shower of gigantic snowflakes.

The gull referred to here is known as the herring-gull. It differs from the common gull in certain colour characteristics. The former has its lower mandible decorated at the angled part by a splash of red, and has flesh-coloured legs; the legs of the latter are of a yellowish green shade, and the red splash is absent from the mandible.

At dawn the gannet or solan-geese came on the scene, and the gulls then had no chance of getting any of the spoil. Every fish that went over the side was immediately caught up by a gannet. These creatures are graceful divers—taking the water at a slanting angle when fishing at a low altitude, and never missing their quarry. The dive is vertical in working from a high altitude.

About 5 A.M., as the glorious sun was rising over the rugged mountains of Arran, painting sea and land in golden hues, we left the fishing-ground, homeward bound for Campbelltown.

The other steamers left earlier in order to catch the early train at Fairlie, and send their fish off to the city for the morning market so that the citizens of Glasgow might have a fresh herring for breakfast.

My night's cruise in Kilbrennan Sound amongst the fishing fleet made a lasting impression on my memory, and gave me a fuller insight into the factors which weave so splendid a romance round the arduous calling of the fisherman.

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

CHAPTER VI.—*continued*

III.

ALL was now arranged between us, and nothing remained but to carry out the arrangements we had made. We went from Liverpool to London next day, and had the interview, which we had secured by telegram, with Thurlow.

I had known him previously; but never before had it been my lot to elicit from him a legal opinion, or to fix his attention upon a matter so important as that which now confronted Hubert and myself. He seemed to me to be just the man we wanted; the very embodiment of sound legal knowledge wedded to good common-sense.

By his advice we stayed another day in London on purpose to secure the attendance at his office of Dr Mackenzie, and also of an expert from Messrs Swallowfield, the Birmingham manufacturers.

These interviews were eminently satisfactory.

And then Hubert went with me to Richmond. It was as silent a journey as the one we had taken on our way back from Sussex Lodge to my club nine months ago. Both of us were deeply engaged with our own thoughts. It is not every thought that may be uttered, and there are 'thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.'

The surrender to the police was not so painful an experience as I had anticipated. The official attitude, the business-like tone, the routine questioning, even the good humour of the spider on seeing the fly walk into his parlour—all this tended to put us at our ease.

In due course the charge sheet was filled; and then with a promise to Hubert to return to Richmond in good time for the trial before the justices, away I went, like a homing pigeon, as straight and as quickly as I could to my own home.

I had written a line the day before to Mrs Carrington to tell her that I proposed to call

and see her on the evening of my return, as I wanted (so I wrote) to talk to her about Hubert.

Over my interview with this brave-hearted and true mother it were well to draw a veil; but let this at any rate be said, would that every son had such a mother!

IV.

I was back again at Richmond for the trial. Needless to say, it created a great sensation; and the newspapers made the most of it.

The Treasury, represented by one of the Treasury Counsel, prosecuted; and alas! the charge brought against poor Hubert was that of murder. A good deal was made of the fact that he had fled from justice, and for nine months had concealed from the police his knowledge of the event.

Another point which was pressed was the cause of quarrel between the deceased officer and the defendant, and it was argued that there must have been strong animus to provoke so much physical violence and such a deadly struggle.

I was called as a witness on behalf of the prisoner not merely to testify to the excellence of his character, which I did *con amore*, but to substantiate what he had said as to the inebriety of the deceased on that particular night.

Hubert had determined, previous to the trial, that nothing should induce him to bring Vera's name into public notice, but, in the course of the proceedings, it became obvious to me that his reticence might very seriously prejudice his case.

I took the opportunity, therefore, when I was in the witness-box, to ask that the name of the lady should be written on a slip of paper and made known only to the magistrates and to the counsel on either side; and this was done.

The evidence of Mr Mackenzie was then taken; and he described lucidly enough, and by means of diagrams, the powers and limitations of the artificial hand which he himself had designed for the most beneficent of purposes, but which, by sheer inadvertence, had been the cause of such grievous disaster.

His evidence was confirmed by the junior partner of Messrs Swallowfield & Co. of Birmingham, and also by the very mechanic who made the steel hand, and who remembered every detail of its manufacture.

The steel hand itself was brought into court, and was an object of supreme interest to everyone who could manage to obtain even a glimpse of it.

It was inspected by the magistrates, but the attention they bestowed upon it was but scanty, and I was led to suppose that after the evidence they had just heard as to its manufacture and design, they did not consider that a more

minute examination could serve any good purpose.

But as a matter of fact (so Mr Thurlow subsequently told me), the decision of magistrates in such a case as this would not be influenced by a detail of this kind, for it is upon broader issues that they have to decide whether they shall send the case for trial to the Higher Court, or not.

Nevertheless the appearance of that hand in that court, witnessing, silently but eloquently, to the part it had played in the tragedy that had taken place, was to me a very pathetic and remarkable circumstance.

Hubert had been accustomed to wear over this hand an easy but well-fitting glove, which helped to conceal both from himself and from others the loss he had sustained. Thus very few persons had ever had opportunity of seeing the hand itself, and still fewer had had opportunity of making acquaintance with its mechanism.

The tiny plates of steel of which the surface of the hand was formed were beautifully constructed, and so delicately adjusted to each other as to present the appearance of a fish's scales; and they served to give to the hand that elasticity without which it would have been but a useless appendage. Within this outer covering of steel plates a most ingenious system of pulleys had been contrived, whereby the working of the more important sinews of the natural hand had been artificially reproduced. These pulleys were riveted inside the gauntlet to the extremities of the finger-stalls, and from there they passed along the arm to a strong but elastic bracelet which encircled the arm just above the elbow.

Thus the flexing and reflexing of the fingers of the hand depended upon the contraction and expansion of the muscles of the upper arm. These muscles were brought into action by the bending and unbending of the elbow, and in process of time Hubert had acquired considerable adroitness and power in laying hold of objects and in releasing them from his grasp.

V.

There was a full bench of magistrates, and it was evident that their duty weighed somewhat heavily upon them. At the close of the trial they consulted together in private for about twenty minutes; and then upon returning into court the chairman announced that, in view of the arguments adduced by counsel for the prosecution, it became their duty to send the prisoner for trial; and that he would be tried at the Central Criminal Court at the next assize.

All this fulfilled our worst anticipation, and I left the court with very gloomy feelings.

Notwithstanding all the warning conveyed by Mr Thurlow, and by the Liverpool solicitor,

that a commitment of this kind was not unlikely, I yet had buoyed myself up with the hope that the magistrates, taking into consideration the fact that Hubert came forward voluntarily, and was the victim of his own crippled condition, would deal summarily with the case, and allow common-sense to prevail against mere legal practice. But this was not to be.

The practice of the English law is a curious thing, and the one certainty about it is that it exhibits all the glorious uncertainty of a game of cricket.

The only person, curiously enough, who seemed quite satisfied with the result, and rubbed his hands together after a joyous fashion, was Mr Thurlow, the eminent solicitor, who was responsible for the defence.

'Everything has gone much as I expected,' he said to me, 'and now we are in a position to estimate the relative strength of the prosecution and of the defence. They've had their say, and we've had ours; and indubitably we've got the best of it.'

I could but hope so: and felt very anxious.

VI.

Moreover, there were other matters of which the lawyer knew nothing, but which caused me infinite concern. Two days after the account of the trial had appeared in the newspapers a letter reached me, from Sir Thomas Weston, as follows:

'DEAR SIR,—I am given to understand that you are not only the clergyman, but also in a special sense the personal friend, of Mr Hubert Carrington, who is now in prison awaiting his trial for murder. I feel myself precluded from writing to him personally in the unhappy circumstances in which he has placed himself, and, therefore, pardon me for addressing myself to you. I do not wish to say one unnecessary word to cause pain, but it is imperative that he shall be informed without delay that no further communication now, or at any future time, whatever may be the result of the trial, can be permitted between him and my daughter Vera. I am tempted to say a great deal in justification of this decision, but with your knowledge of the world I feel that I need not enter upon further explanation. I shall be greatly obliged to you, reverend sir, if you will convey to Mr Carrington, in suitable terms, this my irrevocable decision. And I beg to remain,

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS WESTON.'

In some circumstances I should not have felt called upon to answer such a letter as this, beyond writing a bare acknowledgment. But for Hubert's sake, and, indeed, for the truth's sake, I curbed a rising feeling of irritation, and tried to view the position from the general's

point of view. In this I was partly successful, and I sent him a conciliatory rather than an indignant reply.

None the less it was with feelings of satisfaction that I wrote that as Hubert himself, out of a chivalrous regard for the feelings of Vera and her family, had already renounced his engagement and given back to the young lady her freedom, it did not seem to me at all necessary to add any further sting to his troubles by communicating to him the painful message conveyed by the general's letter.

I also took occasion to add that my fuller knowledge of all the events which led up to this trial enabled me to say that, in my estimation, Hubert's character stood higher than ever; and that, so far from his being condemned by his fellow-countrymen, I could not bring myself to believe that any judge or jury was likely to censure him, except for the one thing, that he had not communicated immediately with the police.

I added that probably General Weston was unaware that Hubert's real reason for this silence had been his extreme reluctance to have Vera's name publicly associated with the quarrel which had led to such disaster.

CHAPTER VII.

I.

THE Assize at the Old Bailey now began to draw on apace. Hubert had already been four weeks in prison, but as the charge against him had been formulated as one of murder, the question of bail could not be entertained.

Often during that period did I think of St Peter's imprisonment as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles; 'Peter was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him.'

Hubert within the walls of the prison was prayed for by some of us outside those walls; but to say that he and we, during those anxious days, were sustained by prayer might be misleading. We felt ourselves to be sustained by Him to Whom we prayed; and we tried to cast our anxiety upon Him, knowing that He careth for us.

It was now within three days of the opening of Assize, and I had come up to town so as to be at hand until the trial was over.

The authorities had been kind in the matter of allowing me to see Hubert from time to time, and as for Mr Thurlow he had been the very incarnation of patience in listening over and over again to my oft-repeated tale.

I had determined, therefore, that I would not go down to his office again, nor weary him with any last words, or final instructions. And yet, behold! here was I, to my amazement, going once more to his office as fast as motor power

was allowed to take me, perhaps a little faster. Mr Thurlow had telephoned hurriedly for me.

Within half-an-hour I was at his office, and was shown at once into his private room. He rose from his chair alertly, and held my hand. 'She's come!' he exclaimed; and his eyes twinkled.

'Who's come?' I gasped.

'Why, who do you think? The young lady herself, Miss Vera Weston.'

'You don't mean it?' I said.

'Yes! I do; and if you had been a few minutes sooner, you would have found her here. You are surprised?' he added.

I confessed I was surprised; and then I told him of the letter I had received from Sir Thomas Weston absolutely forbidding any further communication with his daughter, and putting an end to the engagement.

'Ah! well!' said Mr Thurlow, 'he reckoned apparently without his daughter. Sir Thomas, you know, was a daring cavalry officer in his time; he was known throughout India as "Dare-Devil Tom." And now his own daughter dares her own father. Depend upon it she's a chip of the old block. But, whatever she is, she's a girl after my heart, though I myself am the most cautious man now living.'

All this seemed pleasant enough talk for Mr Thurlow, but I continued to stare blankly at him. 'Do you mean,' I interrupted, 'that she is determined to stick to Hubert, and has run away from home?'

'It looks very much like it,' he observed.

'And where is Miss Weston?' I anxiously asked.

'Oh, she's all right. She is now staying with old friends of her family; some people called Chichester, living in Lennox Gardens.'

'I know them,' I said; 'very nice people.'

'Yes!' he rejoined; 'Mrs Chichester accompanied her here.'

'That was kind of her,' I remarked; 'but tell me, what was her purpose in coming to you?'

'I see,' observed the lawyer, 'that you are more surprised by this visit than I was. The fact is, I had been somewhat prepared for it.'

II.

Mr Thurlow unlocked a safe in one corner of the room, and taking out a letter, unfolded it and laid it carefully on the table before me, but kept his outspread hand upon it.

'This is a very private letter,' he remarked; 'indeed, I may say that it is a very sacred letter.'

'It is addressed, as you see, to our client. It is the outpouring of a girl's true love for the man to whom she has given her whole heart. It is not many men who have the privilege of receiving such a letter. You and I may esteem it a privilege that we are allowed by Mr Carrington to read it.'

'Are you sure,' I asked, 'that he intended me to see it?'

'Quite sure,' Mr Thurlow replied. 'He sent for me yesterday, and placed the letter in my hands. Not, he assured me, because he wanted advice upon it; but because, being shut up in a cell, and feeling so utterly helpless to do anything himself, he wanted me and you also to do all we could to prevent Miss Weston from coming to town, or taking any step which might make a breach in her own family circle. However, she has given us no chance. She has followed up the letter promptly by arriving. But there's the letter; perhaps you will kindly peruse it.'

I required no second invitation. And this was the letter:

'MY OWN DARLING HUBERT,—When I read your letter from Liverpool I felt as mortally wounded as if I had received two death blows. One great wound was the discovery that you had not trusted my love for you sufficiently to enable you to make a confidante of me when you first got into that dreadful trouble. If only you had told me, I should have advised you to make a clean breast of everything without a moment's delay, and I should never have failed in my love and loyalty to you.

'The other great wound you gave me was your telling me that now you had got into such trouble, and were sinking so deep in the mire, you could not think of dragging me down with you, and that our engagement must cease.

'All this so paralysed my senses that I did not know how to answer you; and you also purposely gave me no clue as to where I could write to you.

'And then my father must needs come down upon me with all the weight of parental authority, saying that there must be no further communication between us. Well! I have had plenty of time for consideration, and I want now to make some amends for my long silence, and to thank you with all my heart, dear one, for all the tender and loving consideration which caused you to think more about my position than about your own.

'But oh! how mistaken you have been about me. I can't tell you how my heart has ached for you all the time you were in Canada.

'Oh! if only I had known that you were in exile on my account. I am fully resolved now what I ought to do, for I have thought and thought of you unceasingly, and of the shipwreck of my own life if you go out of it.

'Dearest Hubert, you are in a very great trouble and danger, and I could never be happy again if I failed you in such a crisis.

'I am acting on the supposition—though it is not a supposition, but the truth, is it not?—that you still love me as I love you: and so we cannot and must not be parted from each other.

'How I do wish that I could be with you

in your prison life to share it with you, and to cheer your solitude. But it won't be for long, for this horrible trial will soon come, and soon be over; and I want you to know that in it all, and at the end of it all, I am as much your own loving Vera as ever I was before, only more so. For I think when people suffer together and for each other, as you and I have, it endears them to each other. Isn't that your own feeling?

'I am coming to London at once, so as to be as near to you as I can; and also to arrange with the lawyers to let me give my own evidence in open court as to what I know of that night at Sussex Lodge. I shall be staying after to-morrow with Colonel and Mrs Chichester in Lennox Gardens. You are quite mistaken if you think that your Vera could feel any shame in taking her stand beside you. It will be a dear delight to me to testify my belief in you to the whole world. They are bound to see that it was all an accident, and I can show what led

up to it. Quite innocently I was partly to blame, and so how could I ever forgive myself if you suffered through any cowardice or backwardness on my part now?

'But, however this trial may end, whether they let you go free now, or not till a later period, I wish to be the very first to be clasped again in your dear arms when you are free again, and to feel that after all that has happened you still are mine.

'I cannot contemplate any other issue; but as the occasion of my writing this letter to you is such a solemn one, I would like you to know that if you are altogether taken away from me in this life, the one thing I shall pray for and look forward to is the meeting you again in the better country, and in the presence of Him Who judges righteously.

'I am ever, my darling, what you once called me,—Your own true VERA.'

(Continued on page 589.)

MID-ASIA'S DEAD SEA.

By N. TOURNEUR.

MID-ASIA holds many secrets and mysteries, and her 'Dead Sea' is one of them. Few of us but know of Palestine's expanse of brine and desolation, with which many British troops became familiar when driving out the Turks. But only one or two Westerners have set eyes on the barren waters of Lake Issikul, that lies surrounded by vast mountain ranges in 'Old' Moghulistan. This stretch of very briny waters, that is some 120 miles long and 40 miles at its widest, has occupied its valley, 5300 feet above the sea level, since the prehistoric ages when Mid-Asia was the cradle of the Old World. And tradition there gives it an origin much the same as that connected with the Dead Sea in Palestine.

Old Moghulistan is to-day the land of the wandering Kirghizes and their flocks of cattle, sheep, and goats. But under its soil, and along its mountain-sides, are the remains of great and once prosperous cities, many of which were flourishing until put to the sword and destroyed by the dread Tartars in the thirteenth century. Here, too, lies Karakorum, their lost capital with its buried treasures.

In ages farther back, where Issikul laps its shores, there lay a great city and some small towns. Then came deep rumblings beneath the valley, the earth rocked, and the nearby mountains shook. Fires burst from volcanic depths and consumed the city and towns, and were followed by briny waters gushing from underground.

To-day this lake of very salt water is known among the natives of Western Turkestan as Tuzkul, the salt lake, as well as Issikul, the hot

lake, for not only are its waters very brackish, but owing to the hot springs supplying it the surface never freezes in winter—notwithstanding the severe winter in these regions, which is almost like that of Alaska.

The lake is very deep, and no islands are now found on it, although in the fourteenth century one existed, to which Timur Khan, greatest and most terrible of the Mongol sovereigns, who changed the history of the Old World, banished the Tartar chiefs of Asia Minor and their clans. In consequence of numerous springs of boiling chemical water issuing from the bottom of Issikul the temperature of its waters reaches between eighty-five and ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit. The bottom of the lake appears to contain a great quantity of pure iron ore, which is cast up on the shores after one of the frequent tempests, and out of which the tribesmen manufacture iron. The scimitars and daggers of Samarkand, so famous throughout Mid-Asia for the strength of their material and the keenness of their edge, are fashioned out of the flotsam ore of Issikul.

Like those of the Dead Sea of Palestine its salty shores are sterile, but have banks of bituminous deposits. In these, it has been stated, are embedded the remains of beast and bird of far-off centuries. But Issikul is no new discovery, for it is mentioned in the Chinese annals as early as the seventh century. All the geological evidence points out that here, in Old Moghulistan, a cataclysm occurred which was exactly like that which destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

THE WHITE HEALER.

PART II.

III.

'I DON'T know why it is, Mr Faring,' said Iris Temple, 'but I feel oddly depressed to-night—uneasy—just a little frightened.'

'Frightened?'

'Yes. That sounds rather absurd, doesn't it?'

'It doesn't seem quite like you, Miss Temple.'

'I suppose not. Still, there it is, you know. I have a sort of presentiment that something is going to happen. Something terrible——' She broke off, shivering slightly.

Dick Faring nodded, regarding her with a thoughtful air. They were standing in the lee of the deck-house, sheltered from the strong wind which was blowing across the lagoon. His face, in the pale moonlight streaming down between fast-travelling clouds, had a grave, troubled look.

'I think I understand,' he said gently. 'You are feeling the strain of this prolonged search, and are anxious as to the result. It's the uncertainty that is worrying you—getting on your nerves a bit. That is very natural, of course, since it means so much to you. But the suspense will soon be over. I feel sure that we are on the right track now; and if The White Healer turns out to be your brother, well and good. If not—and it's an even chance, after all—at least you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you've done your best. No one can do more.'

She turned to him with a grateful smile. 'Perhaps you are right,' she said. 'It has been an anxious time, and no doubt I am a little overwrought. I will try not to think about it.'

And he took it upon himself to help her, with quite an astonishing degree of success.

Perhaps, after all, it was not so very astonishing either, the circumstances being duly taken into consideration. Here were two young people, of opposite sex and attractive personality, thrown together in the daily intercourse of ship-board life for a matter of some three weeks. Add to that a common interest of no ordinary kind, with a strong feeling of sympathy on the one side, and of gratitude on the other; and it is little to be wondered at if a warm friendship springs up between them—or something even deeper, if it comes to that. And the latter, though possibly neither of them was as yet fully aware of it, is precisely what had happened in this case.

But amongst other things Dick Faring had helped Iris Temple to forget was the passage of time. She realised suddenly that they must have been standing there for the better part of

an hour. She glanced at her wrist-watch hastily, and a little gasp of dismay broke from her.

'Dear me!' she cried. 'I had no idea it was so late! I must go down now, Mr Faring. Jane will be thinking all sorts—I mean wondering where I am.'

'Why should she? A turn on deck——'

'Yes'—smiling. 'But then, you see, at dinner I happened to make some very pointed remarks about the—the chilliness of the wind.'

'And I have kept you out in it all this time! I am sorry.'

'Oh, well——' For a second their glances met, and a faint blush stole into her cheeks. 'It doesn't really matter. I expect she has forgotten.'

'Let us hope so,' he said cheerfully.

Dick walked with her to the head of the companion-way, and there bade her good-night. For some reason or other, which he could not very well have explained, he did not go down with her into the saloon, though there was nothing particular to keep him on deck. Possibly a due regard for Miss Jane Harvey's speculative habit of mind may have had something to do with it.

As he stood with one hand resting upon the frame-work of the hatch, deep in thought, a thick black shadow fell across the deck by his side. He started round, for a moment overcome by a quite absurd feeling of panic. Then, in a rather shamefaced way, he exclaimed: 'Hullo, captain! It's you, is it?'

Captain Jackson laughed heartily—perhaps even a trifle boisterously. 'Why, yes!' he said. 'Who did you think it was, Mr Faring?'

'Dashed if I know,' was the somewhat vague reply. 'I'm a bit jumpy to-night—on edge, as it were. I think something of Miss Temple's uneasiness must have communicated itself to me.'

'Oh——?' The captain stared at him.

Faring nodded. 'This business has got a little on her nerves,' he said.

'But what is there for her to be nervous about?'

'Nothing. That is—nothing definite. She just has a feeling—a presentiment, you know—that something unpleasant is going to happen.'

The two men looked at each other steadily.

'Odd that,' muttered the captain. He moved away from the hatch, drawing Faring with him by a glance. After they had taken a few steps along the deck, he said: 'To tell you the truth, Mr Faring, I've not felt quite comfortable myself since we got in here. These islands have a pretty bad reputation generally, and if there was to be trouble of any kind—well——'

'Trouble?' Faring put in sharply.

'The possibility is never very remote where these head-hunting savages are concerned. They're a treacherous lot, and devilish awkward customers to deal with, as more than one white man I could name has found to his cost. Personally, I don't mind taking the risk, of course. But—we've got two women aboard, you know.'

'I know, captain. That makes what you suggest a very terrible thing to contemplate. I wish I could have persuaded Miss Temple to let me undertake this quest alone. But she simply wouldn't hear of it, and—in the circumstances—what was I to do!'

'Quite so. I can understand how you were placed, Mr Faring, and since they're here with us we must make the best of it.'

'But do you think there is likely to be any trouble with the natives?'

Captain Jackson was silent for a few moments. Then—'Between ourselves,' he said, 'I think it would be wise to clear out of this at day-break. I didn't like the look of that old chief much. There was something shifty about his manner, I thought. The way he kept eyeing us, as if he was measuring up our strength, had a peculiar significance to my mind. Then, his sending off those vegetables and what not—'

'Doesn't that seem to indicate a friendly attitude towards us?'

'On the face of it, perhaps. But I noticed that they didn't arrive until close upon sundown, and that the matter of payment was treated with an indifference, amounting almost to contempt, very unusual on such occasions. Further, the total absence of any lights or movement ashore is in itself somewhat remarkable. As I was saying to Mr Carter, only half-an-hour ago, the thing isn't natural. These islands are visited by white men only once in a blue moon, and—— Eh? What the devil——'

There was a sudden loud clamour of voices forward, and the sound of bare feet pattering along the deck. A moment later, one of the Kanakas rushed up to them in a state of apparently uncontrollable excitement. 'My word, cap'en—you come quick!' he gasped. 'Black fella he here one time catch 'm this fella ship. We plenty fright——'

'Hell and thunder!' roared Captain Jackson, striding over to the rail.

Faring sprang after him, and together they peered shorewards with anxious, straining eyes. The moon was hidden behind a mass of dark clouds, but by its diffused light they could make out dimly the line of the beach, and what at first sight appeared to be a broad curved shadow advancing slowly across the water towards them. In reality it was a vast fleet of canoes, closing in upon them from three sides. The rapid

swish of the paddles came to them like a harsh whisper out of the night, and here and there a spear-blade flashed ominously.

'Hundreds of the beggars,' groaned the captain. 'We're up against it now. There's not a moment to lose——'

He turned quickly, almost colliding with a man in a white duck suit, who had raced aft from the forward part of the ship.

'My God, sir!' cried the latter. 'D'you think the brutes mean to attack us?'

'Not much doubt about that, Mr Carter,' Captain Jackson answered grimly. 'Five minutes or so 'll see hell let loose aboard. Get up the spare rifles, and arm the Kanakas—as far as they 'll go. Look slippy, man!' The mate spun round, and dived down the companionway. Captain Jackson glanced at the group of dusky figures huddled round the main-mast. 'You fella Kanaka fight plenty dam' hard! Savvee?' He turned to Faring. 'We 'll form a ring round the hatch. That 'll give us the width of the deck, and we 'll be able to keep together. We're too few to prevent them from getting aboard. Come along, Mr Faring!'

IV.

What happened immediately afterwards Faring could never very clearly remember. He had a hazy recollection of following Captain Jackson down into the saloon; of seeing Iris Temple's face, white and distressed-looking in the light from the hanging oil-lamp; and of exchanging a few hurried words with her which expressed far less than the unspoken message in their eyes. Then he was up again on the moon-lit deck, rifle in hand, one of the grimly silent figures standing in a ring about the hatch, waiting for the moment that should bring the first of their savage assailants upon them.

It came suddenly, heralded by a discordant yell, as a score or more of frizzy heads bobbed up on either side of them, and dark lithe bodies swung themselves over the bulwarks on to the deck.

'Now!' Captain Jackson shouted.

The rifles cracked, and spat venomously. Unaccustomed as the Kanakas were to fire-arms, some of the bullets went wide. Nevertheless, at that short range most of them found a billet, and for a moment stopped the rush. But it was only for a moment. Other naked figures, brandishing spears and clubs, leaped on board, followed by others, until it seemed that the little band of defenders must be overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers.

It was then that Faring, who had emptied the magazine of his rifle, and was about to use the weapon as a club, felt something tapping against the calf of his leg. Glancing down quickly, he saw Iris Temple crouching under the hatch, with two automatic pistols in her hands, and a small box of cartridges on the step

before her. 'Iris!' he cried. 'What are you doing here? Go back, dear—'

She shook her head, smiling at him confidently. 'Take this,' she said, giving him one of the pistols, 'and when it is empty you can have the other while I reload. There are twenty-four—that is—twenty-two cartridges. You understand?'

And Faring, who understood only too well, bowed his head in assent.

There was, in truth, no time for any further words between them. The savages were closing in, and for the most part the conflict had resolved itself into a hand-to-hand struggle, with the odds rapidly mounting against the already diminished few. Faring, Captain Jackson, and Mr Carter still survived, the two officers fighting desperately with clubbed rifles. But six of the Kanakas had fallen, killed or seriously wounded by thrusts from the short keen-bladed spears, and in all human probability the end could not be very far off.

Then, when it seemed that nothing on earth could save them, when Faring had deliberately fired his twenty-second shot, and there only remained the last hard duty to perform, a voice rang out through the night, loud and clear above the din of battle, uttering a stern command in the Boruan tongue. 'Hold! Hold, I say! Who wars against the white man wars against me!'

The effect was magical, instantaneous. As if drawn by some invisible force, the mass of the invaders fell back slowly, with awed faces and fear-dilated eyes, leaving a wide space between themselves and the remnant of those whom but a moment before they had been seeking to destroy. Into this space stepped a tall gray-robed figure, wearing a hood which partially concealed its face. A movement swept through the ranks of cringing savages like that of wind playing over corn. The newcomer flung out his arm in a superb gesture of authority. 'Go!' he commanded. 'Return to Ka-Ka, the chief, and say that for this I will deal with him presently. You hear my words?'

'*Ai, Ai!*' wailed a hundred voices.

'Then go quickly, lest an evil thing befall you!'

V.

They went with almost incredible swiftness, vanishing over the side like leaves caught up in a gale. Within the space of three minutes, there were left on the deck only the dead and the wounded, the six Kanakas, Captain Jackson, Faring, Mr Carter, and their mysterious rescuer.

'Thank heaven, I was in time,' came a barely audible murmur in English from beneath the cowl-like hood.

Captain Jackson stepped forward, still clutching his rifle by the barrel in one hand, and with

the other outstretched. 'We owe our lives—and the lives of the two women on board—to you, sir,' he said.

The man pushed back the hood with a startled gesture, the moonlight falling clean upon his lean, bearded, strangely white-looking face. 'Good God!' he exclaimed. 'There are women—white women—on board!'

Then, before Captain Jackson could frame an answer, Iris Temple rushed out from the shelter of the hatch, her lips parted in a gasp of breathless astonishment, and her eyes shining with a glad light of recognition. 'Arnold!' she cried, going towards him.

He shrank back, holding out his hands as if to ward her off. 'No—Iris—you mustn't touch me,' he said in a hoarse whisper. 'You do not know—'

The girl halted, staring at him in a dumb-founded way. 'But, Arnold,' she protested, with a ring of dismay in her voice, 'what is this? I have searched for you through two long years, and now—I want to take you back with me. I want you to come home with me, dear.'

'No, no! I cannot come. You don't understand—'

'Yes, I do,' she interposed quickly. 'You are thinking of what happened long ago. But you need have no fear, Arnold. The man did not die after all.'

'I know.'

'Yes?' She looked at him wonderingly, a puzzled frown creasing her brow. 'Then, if you knew, why did you not return!'

'Because the knowledge came to me too late—as you have come, Iris.'

'Too late!' she echoed.

'Even so,' he answered gravely. 'There can be no return for me. My home is here amongst these wild untutored savages, children of the outer darkness, to whom, for the little time that remains to me, such skill as I have may be of some service. And that time is very short now.'

'Arnold! what are you saying? What do you mean?'

Suddenly he bent towards her, the blue gleam of his eyes contrasting sharply with the dead whiteness of his face. 'Iris, look—look!' he cried. 'Don't you see? Oh, my dear, can't you see that I'—his voice sank to a tone of hopeless, absolute finality—'I am that accursed thing, *a leper!*'

For the space of perhaps five seconds there was an intense, heart-gripping silence. Then a pitiful little cry broke from Iris Temple.

Faring caught her in his arms as she fell.

VI.

The schooner lay hove-to off the pinnacled mass of rock rising like a fantastic dream-castle from the sea, her bow dipping gently in the

heavy ground-swell. A couple of miles southward a faint purple blur marked the position of Ka-Ka's island, and to the north a streak of white showed where the breakers foamed against the encircling barrier-reef of a distant atoll. Westward, glittering under the tropical sun, stretched the wide sapphire-blue waters of the Pacific.

Dick Faring and Iris were standing by the accommodation-ladder with Arnold Temple, to whom they were bidding farewell ere he descended to the waiting canoe. It was a sad leave-taking; yet not without some measure of resignation and hopefulness, so far as Iris was concerned. They had talked the matter over long and earnestly the night before, and Temple had convinced his sister and Faring that any change in his present mode of living would be undesirable, if not impossible.

'It is too late to think of that now,' he had said. 'The terrible disease with which I am afflicted is advanced to a stage beyond all hope of cure, or of amelioration. I am reconciled to that, and content to spend the short remainder of my life in this beautiful island on which I have made my home. There is nowhere else I could go where I should be free to live as I do here. No, no! I have my flowers, books, everything that I want; and am even able to be of some small service to those around me. That, for such as I, is a happiness not to be relinquished easily. I could never find it again elsewhere.'

And when Iris had spoken of her desire to be with him, he had answered, with a shake of his head, 'You mustn't think of that, dear. It is quite impossible. Apart from the sacrifice involved—a sacrifice no brother would allow a sister to make—the risk of infection is too great.'

'Yet others take it. Those men of yours——'

'Ah, that is different! The natives on these islands appear to be immune from the disease. I have never known a case during the years I have been here. But for you, my dear, putting all other considerations aside, it is utterly out of the question.'

'Then I—I am never to see you again, Arnold?'

'Well,'—and a smile of rare tenderness had lighted up the shrunken face—'as to that, now, perhaps it might be managed—occasionally. Let us suppose that you found it convenient to reside for a time in Borua——' He broke off, with a quick, involuntary glance at Faring. 'Then you might take a little cruise in this direction now and again, and we should be able to see something of one another. Eh?'

'Oh yes! And I could bring you things——'

'Um—perhaps——'

'Of course I shall, Arnold!'

'Provided you don't—er—give anything away, you know.—What do you think, Mr Faring?'

'I think the plan is an excellent one,' came the prompt and very hearty reply.

And so it had been arranged.

Now, therefore, that the moment of parting was come, Iris found herself able to face it more bravely than she could otherwise have done. It was very quickly over.

Temple turned to Faring. 'Good-bye, Mr Faring,' he said. 'I am glad to have known you. Our meeting was a rather strange one, but——'

'A very lucky one for us, Mr Temple. If you hadn't come just when you did——'

'I know. It was indeed fortunate that the wind had prevented my leaving the island. Otherwise—but we must not think of that! And in a lowered voice: 'You will look after my sister, won't you?'

'Trust me for that,' said Faring, returning steadily the searching gaze bent upon him.

'Ah, yes—I do.' Then, to Iris, 'I leave you in Mr Faring's care, dear. It has been a very great happiness to me to see you again after all these years, and to know that your loving faith in me has never wavered. God bless you for that, Iris, and—good-bye, my dear, good-bye.'

'Good-bye—for the present, Arnold,' she responded, smiling at him bravely through a mist of tears.

They watched the canoe glide shoreward over the heaving water, until it vanished through a narrow opening in the coral-reef. Shortly afterwards, a small gray figure appeared on a rocky ledge running obliquely across the face of the cliff, and stood there waving its hand to them.

It seemed to be giving them to one another.

THE END.

WOODLAND ECHOES.

(Translated from Geibel.)

DEAR Love sat as a nightingale,
Beside the rose—and sang,
And hark! the sweetest melody
Throughout the woodland rang.

And as he sang, a coronal
Of fragrance crowned the air,
And softly whispered rustling leaves,
As zephyrs floated there.

The brooks were silent—from the height,
Low murmuring they fell,
The deer stood still as in a dream,
And listened to the spell.

And clear and ever clearer flowed
The sunbeam's glowing stream,
Whilst flowers, wood, and glen rejoiced
In gold and ruddy gleam.

I also listened to the spell
As soft I passed along . . .
Ah! what within my heart remains
Is but an echo's song.

EDITH C. ADAMS.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

A ROMANCE OF THE REEL.

By N. M. GUNN.

PART I.

I.

THAT there could be anything uncanny about angling had never before touched the mind of Davie Dunbar, though half a century recorded his devotion to the sport—and the art. Never before had excitement, whipped by exasperation, been held in leash by the fearsome. For it is not that the long black pool in the still hush of a late September evening contained many salmon; it was possessed by them, as, of old, bodies were possessed by spirits. From filmy copper to purest silver they launched themselves into the air, to fall again with resounding splash, in front of him, down the long vista of the pool, above him, by his very waders. And yet to his thunder-and-lightning—no slightest offer.

Covering the leaping fish became a game in excitement that wore thin to an exasperation that quivered—because in this game hope cannot die. His nerves renewed their youth as so many live wires stringing his body to an awful expectancy . . . and then *splash!* behind him, and his heart would be in his mouth. Uncanny! . . . maddening!

Yet Davie Dunbar was normally a mild retiring little man, and his gray eyes looked straightly and simply at you, notwithstanding that most of his life had been spent along the tortuous alley-ways of a dealer in curios and antiques. But then his little shop in an Edinburgh side-street had made him no fortune. For alas! he not only knew old beautiful things when he saw them—he also loved them; so that, even blindfolded, the cool, soft, almost velvety touch of old silver to him spelt a caress unmistakable. Indeed, were it not for old Jamie Forsyth, at once his managing director, accountant, salesman and caretaker, it is at least doubtful whether there would ever have been any fishing expeditions at all. Not but that these expeditions were of the most modest, and for ever winding along the dubious ways of 'free fishing'—except for the rare red-letter windfall that landed a day or two on 'private water.' Ah, private water—how it threaded its dark mesmeric way through his dreams! Some day

to sell out, to retire, to live where the autumn of his days would fall softly and coloured and exquisitely as September leaves on a dark deep-flowing pool—of private water!

And then suddenly he had had this windfall—a few days' salmon fishing on a northern river; a spring river, to be sure, yet with the wise, unfathomable autumn fish there too. The greatest windfall he had ever experienced. The real thing. The dream. Yet here the waning of the first day, and in his basket not a scale; and round him, splashing in silver mockery, a dream, nay, a nightmare of—of the brutes!

He reeled in and examined his thunder-and-lightning. 'Far too dark,' he muttered, though he had but just changed from a dunkeld. 'Ah—this silver doctor—two sizes too big—but—it might mesmerise them—it might exacerbate them!' and his lips shut firmly. He changed the fly accordingly, and then, as he was preparing to get his line out again, his eye ran naturally along the pool, to encounter what it had not encountered that day—a fish no more than breaking the surface in a fine business-like swirl.

Excitement was up again, pure and throbbing, but he strove deliberately to keep it in check. He methodically felt for his gaff. He took a steadying glance about him, up to the still sombre pine wood, which persisted so involuntarily in reminding him of that old picture of his, to the opposite bank, down the river. He had the lonely scene to himself.

He fished steadily down, hoping to cover the spot naturally, cunningly. But now the water rose gradually about his waders at each short step. A fear began to grip at him that he might not be able to cover the spot. The floor sloped. The water continued to rise half-inch by half-inch; it was lapping round his waist, a lightness was coming to his feet, the black flood was beginning to suck at his body; once as he half-turned he experienced a very insecure, bobbing sensation, as of a cork. And then Davie Dunbar paused, knowing he had gone as far as he should, as he durst.

He was casting with so much line now that

it caught the water behind him. He tried to 'shoot' a few feet. Yet he was still short, though it could not be by more than a couple of yards. Only, now the off-swirl caught his fly so readily and whisked it away, he got no chance. He began to blame his luck, and the more he blamed the more certain he became that if only he could get his fly over that particular spot in front of the gray stone in the bank-face opposite, he would—he would strike! He would feel that sudden heavy resistance, that momentary incredible pause on the part of man and fish, and then—the music of the reel! He licked his lips. Perhaps he might venture a step or two, very cautiously, yet. He was getting more used to the depth, and for all he knew it might get no deeper. If only he could see bottom! Putting all his weight on his right foot, he began to feel carefully, inch by inch, with his left. But he had to admit he was going deeper. But surely one step more—two steps. . . . Things were becoming insecure. He paled. His eyes rounded a little. He felt his body sway. This was madness—but then he could always return in the attitude he was now in, little by little, side on. He would try him once more.

He reeled in till he got his line under control. Yard by yard he let it out at each cast. Yard by yard the weight of the jerk back and the throw forward was compensated by the swaying body. The line reached the maximum length he could wield. With a final effort, every muscle tense, he sent it shooting for the gray stone. The fly landed, there was a swirl, the fly was stuck, the line taut. . . . Emotion became tumultuous. With left foot he instinctively 'dug in' against the extra weight in this dangerous game of balances. With such small margins the digging in was done the least trifle too impulsively, too heavily. The small round stone under the ball of the left foot slipped, slithered. He pulled himself up, stumbled, thrashed the water, felt himself going. One lucid moment of agonised amazement, and panic rushed the brain.

A mad fight for a moment or so, with an all-engulfing, choking, deadly enemy. He cried out, thin yell on yell, cried and fought—and knew he was done for. He had long known the danger of waders, where the air trapped in the legs assist, in the case of a sudden overturning, to keep the feet up and the head down. His head was now under. The water was choking his throat in great suffocating gulps. He fought to the surface madly, but it was the hectic madness that precedes final exhaustion. Already his brain was giving way, side-slipping into phantasm—for lo! in front of him was not that his picture of the sombre pine wood, and flying from it, hair streaming, the maiden on horseback; that old old picture he had picked up in a sale lot, and that had

interested him because of its somewhat unusual medieval symbolism? Giving way . . . down . . . down . . . and the last flicker dies in a strange comforting quiescence, touched vaguely by a grotesque, fading sensation that he had a salmon on, taking him down . . . down.

II.

If death be a pale shadowy dream of earthly things, then he is dead. This body of his has at last no substance, wavers uncertain as a smoke wisp in a calm. There, apart from him a little, is his own hand knotted on the cork handle of a sixteen-foot rod, and by the rod, silvery and gleaming, the most exquisite of all shapes in the world, of all desires the most beautiful.

A legend this of the land under the waves, where the salmon is all-knowing and all-wise. And even that dark pool which seems to flow below him, this bank, that sombre wood, all this phantasmagoric dry land which wavers so uncertainly—even that dark shadow of something like a centaur coming yonder, two shadows. . . . But all gets blurred, blurred—vanishes as frail smoke.

Out of black nothingness things waver back again. The face of the maid in the picture takes on a glowing, frightful light. The glowing light is sunlight—yet no, it is spirit, it is a burning from within. And she is crouching forward, fleeing the wood. Fear . . . terror. . . . He struggles to dismiss the picture; shuts tight his eyes. But they open in spite of him, and lo! overhead is a great unsearchable whiteness, palely luminous, stretching into remote infinitudes of shadow. Nearer, nearer, it comes; nearer, till his eyes grow dazed, till his eyeballs get oppressed by the intolerable closeness of the focusing. . . . And in a sudden queer amazement, he, Davie Dunbar, realises he is staring at the white-washed ceiling of a real room. Spasmodically his fingers clutch at bed-sheets; his head rolls on a pillow; a dim night-light is burning on a table. . . . Verily, he is alive.

It was enough to go on with. He let himself slip down again into exquisite unconsciousness. He would take things easily. And presently when he returned, he decidedly felt calmer, more real. An utter stillness was about him as his eyes opened and encountered the ceiling. Then suddenly a shadow detached itself from the bed-head and stood over him. It was his landlady, smiling gently.

'You'll be feeling better now?' she asked softly.

'Yes.' He was feeling perfectly all right, though queerly enough his voice was no more than a whisper.

'I have been waiting for you to waken. Now I'll be getting you something to drink,

and then you'll sleep. I won't be a moment!' and she was gone.

She returned with a steaming bowl.

'Tell me,' he whispered, 'how—how——'

'Not a word till you take this and have a long sleep. 'Tis what the doctor ordered. And oh! it's me that's glad to see you as you are. I've been waiting and watching. But now you are well again, and in a day or two you will be fine.' Anxiety and motherliness and relief mingled in word and action. She tenderly lifted his head up, held the bowl to his lips.

'I am so sorry,' he said in a little while, 'to have kept you. Please—I am all right now, and will sleep.'

III.

Daylight was glowing in the yellow blind of the little window in his bedroom when Davie Dunbar awoke to a consciousness of an outside door opening and a half-subdued breezy voice in the passage-way.

'Well, Mrs Fraser, how's our patient this morning?'

'Not awake yet, doctor.'

'Splendid! You'll find he'll be all right—but shaky for a few days, and no more fishing this week.—Ah, that you, Kennie?'

The footsteps receded, but not far enough to render talk inaudible. There was a little laughter.

'Has he been talking, Mrs. Fraser?'

'No, doctor, no; I wouldn't let him. He was going to——'

'I'm sure he was! It must be a bit of a puzzle to him. It was the nearest thing I ever struck—and the pluckiest—ready-witted.'

'From what I've heard, it was surely,' came Kennie's soft Gaelic voice. 'She has enough pluck for many a one. I was saying to the wife just that.'

'The old fellow was game, too. Stuck to that rod and fish of his like grim death. If he hadn't stuck to the rod, of course, it would have been all up.' The doctor gave a chuckle. 'She got hold of the point of the rod, for the current, you see, had sucked him in and across a bit, so that the point walloped the bank. She got hold of it and hauled him in, waders and all, hand over fist. Then she dragged him on to the bank, turned him over on his stomach, and squeezed the water out of him.'

'She had that ambulance during the war,' said Mrs Fraser. 'It came in handy for once.'

The doctor chuckled again. 'But the old chap wouldn't give up the rod—not he. And there at the end of the line, with an odd screech now and then from the reel, was the fish, playing himself beautifully. Eh! I've heard of a man playing a fish when not quite in his sober senses, but never yet of a dead man doing the trick!'

'It wasn't canny nearly,' said Kennie.

'She couldn't get his fingers off the butt, tear at them as she might; so she just pumped the water out of him and left his hands alone. When she could do no more and was coming away for me 't seems she had a sudden queer feeling that—that the fish might pull him in, or something, eh?'

'Just that,' said Kennie.

'Why, now, you don't think it would, really, Kennie?'

'Whoever would be thinking that?' asked Kennie, laughing softly.

'You're a queer lot, all the same, and I do believe that in this sort of thing the Big House and the Black House are but and ben!'

'Nonsense, doctor! And you were saying she landed the fish. . . .'

'Yes, she landed the fish. At least, she stuck the rod up on end and began to reel in. Instead of sulking, the fish, as it happened, had played himself out. No doubt he was mad at the gut being all round his fins; then there was no strain on him after the first rush or two, so that he did not think of leaving his own ground, but thrashed about, trying to break with his tail what there was no longer any strain on.'

'I can see it happening,' said Kennie.

'But the really amazing thing was this. Of course, if we examined the ground we'd probably find an odd little hole in it, or maybe the cleft edge of a bit of rock sticking up, or something like that. Anyway, she says that when she let go the rod to get the gaff, the rod remained standing up, with his hand holding it there!'

'You're not telling me that?'

'I thought that would get you! And it's a fact. Determined, wasn't he, to play his own fish? It must have been a sight for the gods! He deserved to get the fish right enough. In fact, she felt that he had to get the fish. Must get it now. That feeling was stronger even than the commonsense which told her she ought to be rushing for help. And she got him, too. Gaffed him clean. He remained lying close in, exhausted, his white mouth opening and shutting, when she stole on him.'

'It was well done,' said Kennie.

'Wasn't it?' The doctor's tone, for all its half banter, held an undernote of something like enthusiasm. 'That twisted drowned body holding on grimly, lank wisps of gray hair, gaping eyes—it wasn't a bonny sight for a young woman.'

'No, indeed!' said Mrs Fraser. 'No, no!'

'So she laid the fish beside him, leapt on her pony again, and came fast as the beast could carry her.'

'I am wondering,' said Kennie, 'what he would be thinking himself if he had woken

up and found the rod and the fish, and no one beside him at all.'

The doctor chuckled. 'I wonder! I bet, Kennie, you'd have been looking about you for signs of the Last Day.'

'Indeed, now, and there's no saying what one would be looking for at all.'

'Not for Auld Nick, because it wasn't poaching, Kennie; he had permission from the factor in Edinburgh.'

'You will have your joke, doctor!'

'Ah, well! Have a look, Mrs Fraser, to see if he's awake yet. I must be getting on.'

And as Davie Dunbar heard the footsteps coming to his door, he closed his eyes. The door opened quietly, the footsteps came softly to his bedside. He opened his eyes.

'Ah, you are wakening, Mr Dunbar! How are you feeling now?' Her voice was all the tenderest solicitude.

'Very well, thank you,' and he smiled.

'Now, isn't that fine! And here's the doctor himself come to see you.'

The doctor stumped into the room. He eyed his patient shrewdly for a moment. 'What's this I hear you have been attempting at the Dragon Pool, sir, eh?' He stooped and gently caught the pulse in a wrist.

'Oh—I'm afraid—' stammered Davie self-consciously.

'Afraid! I hear that it did not look at all as if you were afraid. I thought such new-fangled ways of catching fish were peculiar to these parts, where they catch them every way—but quite unknown about the Water of Leith!'

Davie smiled.

The doctor nodded. 'Good! You're all

right. Bring in the real medicine, will you, Mrs Fraser, please?'

'Wh-what medicine—'

But her husband was by the door. 'Ach, woman!' cut in his voice, and in the same instant his footsteps were stamping to the kitchen.

The doctor chuckled aloud. 'When it comes to a matter of intuitive intelligence, Mr Dunbar, I am sorry to say that we of the Lowlands haven't a look in. Wait!'

Kennie reappeared, a couple of fingers at the gills supporting the weight of a most beautifully-proportioned eighteen-pounder.

And Davie's smile gradually faded in a strange gleaming increase of light. Another moment, and he was struggling valiantly to get up on one elbow, to stretch out a hand. . . . He collapsed uncertainly.

'Ay, better wait a while! You'll do it before another day is gone. Mr Fraser here says that it is a phenomenally fine specimen for this time of the year.'

'The doctor—' began Kennie, when Davie, gasping mildly, interrupted him in all seriousness: 'Yes, a silver doctor,' he said.

There was an amazed hush for a moment, then the doctor's laugh rang out. 'How's that, Kennie?'

'That's a good one, and no mistake,' replied Kennie.

And Davie, grasping their meaning, blushed.

'Now, you must be wondering how on earth all this happened to you. So I'll leave Mrs Fraser to explain. Between fish and the girls, you have most certainly created history in Glenelg. I'll look in to see you before the night is done.'

(Continued on page 603.)

THE PUZZLE OF THE SWALLOWS.

By MILDRED PERRIN.

THERE is always a certain pleasure in detecting in an occasional error the man who knows everything, and when we find the great Samuel Johnson asserting, with his usual *ex cathedra* manner, that swallows spend the winter under water, we smile our smile of superiority and feel profoundly comfortable. How absurd the words of the great man seem to us now! 'Swallows,' he says, 'certainly sleep all the winter. A number of them conglobulate together, by flying round and round, and then all in a heap throw themselves under water and lie in the bed of a river.' Johnson pronounced this choice bit of natural history in 1768, and he was really only quoting the theory generally accepted at the time by professed naturalists; his error, a serious one, lay in stating it as a proved fact.

The strange notion that swallows hibernated under water prevailed in England for close on a century and a half at least, for it is mentioned in the *Philosophical Transactions and Journal of the Learned* for 1666 and 1667, and crops up at intervals until the close of the eighteenth century.

The annual disappearance of swallows and other migrant birds in the autumn and their reappearance in the spring must have set men speculating from earliest times, wherever the ways of birds were observed, and the ancients seem to have had an inkling of the truth. To the majority of seventeenth and eighteenth-century naturalists, however, the idea that small frail-looking birds like swallows could travel over land and sea to distant countries seemed far more wonderful than that they should hibernate like butterflies and squirrels.

They had observed, too, that in the autumn swallows were wont to collect in numbers near water, and in the evening to disappear among the osier beds, their roosting-ground. The next morning there were none to be seen; hence it was concluded that they had retired to their damp winter-quarters. Some few observers believed in migration, and some thought that both hibernation and migration were practised. For example, in *Nature Displayed*, a work which appeared originally in French, and was translated into English and ran through several editions during the middle years of the eighteenth century, we read the following: 'While some cross the sea, others, in most northern countries, continue in Europe, and conceal themselves in caverns of the Earth, riveted to one another with their Claws and Bills. They flock to places unfrequented by Man and even bury themselves in the Water. The precaution they take to lubricate their Feathers with their own Oil, and to roll themselves up like a Ball, their Head within, and their Back without, preserves them in the Water, and even under the Ice.' This description certainly shows a good deal of imagination, as, of course, no one had ever seen a balled-up swallow.

Gilbert White, writing in the closing years of the eighteenth century, was greatly puzzled by the problem of migration. He could laugh at the Swedish naturalist who, in his *Flora*, 'talks as familiarly of the swallows going under water in the beginning of September, as he would of his poultry going to roost a little before sunset,' but he could not give up the hibernation theory altogether. In one of his letters he says: 'I acquiesce entirely in your opinion—that, although most of the swallow kind may migrate, yet some do stay behind and hide with us during the winter.' He arrived at this conclusion through observing that a few martins were often to be seen on the wing on a mild day in November. It is now generally thought that such loiterers are birds which were either too young or too weakly to join in the autumn migration—but this is one of those matters connected with natural history which are not yet finally proved.

White was honest enough to declare that no case of hibernation had ever been authenticated, though, like other observers, he had sometimes come across birds rendered torpid by a sudden cold spell. Some naturalists, however, gave credence to all kinds of absurd stories about birds remaining torpid for great lengths of time, and some of these stories were current until quite recent times. For example, in a book published in 1890, the writer, a F.R.S., although not committing himself personally to a belief in hibernation, gives several instances of swallows being found torpid 'which have come to our knowledge, on the most respectable authority.'

Some of the instances are likely enough, but among them is this gem: 'Again, about half a dozen swallows were found a few years ago, in a torpid state, in the trunk of a hollow tree, by a countryman, who brought them to a respectable person, by whom they were deposited in a desk, where they remained forgotten till the following spring, when one morning, on hearing a noise, he opened the desk, and found one of them fluttering about; the others also began to show signs of life, and, upon being placed out of doors in the sun, speedily arranged their plumage, took wing, and disappeared.'

We cannot imagine any present-day naturalist having the hardihood to relate stories of this kind as having come to him 'on the most respectable authority,' but it is doubtful whether we have outgrown all our 'strange notions' about migration. One that dies hard is that the larger birds carry smaller ones on their backs. This myth is of respectable antiquity, for a saying of the Tartars that 'each crane carries a corncrake on its back' was referred to as an old legend in 1740. The notion originated from partial observation and from reasoning. It was reasoned that the weaker fliers must be carried somehow, and it was observed that small birds often appeared, as it were from nowhere, immediately after the arrival of the larger species. It is probable that they had travelled in company, and that, being small, they had remained invisible until quite close to the observer. Careful modern observers have sometimes noticed birds dropping from the sky at the time of the spring migration, and it is thought that these were migrants that were flying so high as to be invisible.

Although the fact of bird-migration is indisputably established, there are many problems connected with it which are still unsolved. We have learnt to be humble before the workings of Nature since the days of the great Doctor; even the experts are shy of dogmatising, and are content, for the most part, to record their patient observations, thus adding to the vast mass of data from which the ultimate truth will be unfolded. We of the laity may have our own theories; we may even cherish some 'strange notions,' but if we are wise we do not reveal them, except perchance, tentatively and apologetically, to some trusted friend.

THE GIFT.

HER faith is the sound of the running stream
And the breath of the child who sleeps.
Her heart is the core of the wide-open moor,
And the glorious light of the steepes.

Her love is the break of the early morn,
And the light to life's sinking day,
Her love is the gift of compassionate God—
For worthiness I pray.

J. P. DAVIES,
Pretoria.

A NATURAL PHENOMENON.

By D. E. STEVENSON, Author of *Peter West*.

I.

THE hot tropical sun beat down upon the barrack-square, turning the dry brittle surface to a pool of dust, blindingly white in the glare. Above the low white buildings the blue sky was cloudless and pitiless. George Anderson stared round him in a bewildered manner—stared from the low-roofed cantonments to the few sickly palm-trees, whose leaves were scorched and withered by the heat and long-continued drought. He had been here before—something was going to happen—but here his memory failed him. Across the square was a door—a red door—blistered and cracked. George knew that he must reach that door. . . .

Suddenly he heard a shout, and saw a huge black horse galloping down upon him. It was harnessed to a high cart, which rocked from side to side. George was held rooted to the spot by a nightmare-feeling of sheer horror. He could not move. The dust rose in a cloud. At last a shout startled him out of his apathy, and with a violent effort he wrenched his mind into action and jumped aside—but the action came too late. He tripped and fell. . . .

The pawing hoofs whirled above his head—the wicked eyes, bloodshot and staring—the huge black body, shiny with sweat. An intolerable pain tore at his body, while the dry dust, rising about him like warm smoke, clogged his lungs and muffled his cries of agony. . . . Then all was dark.

George opened his eyes, to find some one shaking him with no gentle hand. 'For Gawd's sake be quiet, can't ye!' a voice said.

He sat up, rubbing his eyes, and found himself in the familiar barrack-room which he, as a private, shared with fourteen other men.

'You bin dreamin',' the voice continued more amiably.

'Shriekin' somethin' awful,' another voice put in plaintively.

George Anderson shuddered. He had had the ghastly dream before, and each time that he had it he wakened like this, wet with fear, every nerve in his body quivering like taut wires. 'I'm — sorry, boys,' he said between his chattering teeth, so making the 'amende honorable' in the vernacular of his kind. Then, hunching up his brown blanket over his shoulder, he turned over and pretended to go to sleep. For a few moments there were murmurings of annoyance, but these soon subsided into snores, and once more comparative quiet reigned in the big dark room.

There was one man, however, to whom sleep did not come. George Anderson slept no more that night. He lay and watched the moonlight on the floor, and saw the dawn come into being over the big building on the other side of the square, which was the officers' quarters. Although he was fatigued almost beyond endurance by his hard day of physical exercise and by the tumult of his nerves, George fought against sleep with every ounce of strength and will-power that he possessed, for sleep might bring a recurrence of that terrible dream. . . .

The dream had haunted him from his boyhood. Sometimes months would pass without his having it, and then, when he was lulled into security, it would come to him with renewed horror and fear, making his nights a misery of wakefulness and his days a long slow torture of jangled nerves that cried out for the sleep which he denied them.

George never spoke of his sufferings to any one. He bore them, as was his nature, in stoical silence, with a bewildered dour courage which he had inherited from his V.C. father. The place that he dreamed of—the low cantonments, the burning sun and white powdery dust, the queer smell of burning rubbish—was like no place that he had ever seen, for the battalion had finished its tour of tropical service before he joined it four years ago.

When the older men spoke of India, George would listen with mouth agape, but his secret prevented him from wishing to go abroad and see for himself the wonders described by his companions. Most of all he liked to hear about the campaign in Tirah when his father, then a private in the battalion, had won the most coveted distinction in the British service. He had won it for his devotion under fire to his company commander, Captain Logan, and now George, his only son, was servant to that officer's son, and held a unique position in the regiment by reason of his father's prowess.

Captain Logan, junior, was a great favourite in the battalion; he was young and cheerful, and keen as mustard. His company adored him, and would have followed him through fire and water. To his seniors he was always known as 'The Boy,' doubtless on account of his round face and fair curly hair.

George liked being servant to this popular officer, not because he escaped certain parades and fatigues by this favour, but because he took a real pleasure in serving him—polishing up his buttons and boots until they outshone those of any other officer in the battalion. His pride and pleasure were therefore not unmixed with regret when he had learned the

previous day that a decree had gone forth detailing him for the next N.C.O.'s course.

'I mustn't be selfish any longer,' Captain Logan had said, with one of his boyish smiles which had endeared him to everyone, from the C.O. downwards. 'I shall be awfully sorry to part with you, Anderson, but it will only be for a time, and then I shall have you back in "A" company as a lance-corporal.'

George never thought of questioning the decision of his idol, but his eyes strayed regretfully from the shining buttons on Captain Logan's tunic to the perfectly polished field boots. 'Very good, sir,' he said; and then added, 'You'd better have Taylor, then, sir.'

'The Boy' nodded. 'Yes, I'll take Taylor; and the momentous interview was at an end.

II.

The afternoon sun was warm and golden. A cool breeze blew across the barrack-square, flapping George Anderson's kilt against his knees, and at the same time blowing the cobwebs of his miserable night out of his handsome head. He threw his shoulders back and saluted the sentry on duty at the gates with a smart gesture of greeting.

The sentry spat reflectively—there was no officer about. 'Eh my, yon's a terrible hole ye've got, Geordie!' he sighed.

'A hole?' cried the wretched George, glancing down at his braw new hose in consternation.

'Niver heed. Aiblins she'll no' see it.'

'Whaur's it?'

'In yer hairt,' was the grave reply.

Geordie's remarks, much to the point, but scarcely printable, were cut short by the timely appearance of an officer, and he sallied forth into the High Street with a little swagger which became his well set-up figure in its becoming rig-out.

Who wouldn't swagger a little with Geordie's consciousness of good looks and good conduct, with a kilt to swing at his knees and a pretty girl in the offing?

Lily was waiting for him opposite Galloway's, the big draper's shop which had usurped a dozen small holdings in the busiest part of the town. She was very conscious of a new pair of silk stockings and high-heeled shoes. A green jumper in Galloway's window had caught her eye; it was very attractive, and she was wondering in her busy little brain how many times she would have to go without dinner so as to save enough money to buy it. Several men passed and nudged each other, and she glanced at them sideways from beneath her pink hat.

Lily knew that George was coming long before he saw her; *how* it would be difficult to say, for she had never glanced in his direction. Her little squeal of astonishment, when she found him at her elbow, would have deceived a more worldly fellow than our poor soldier boy.

'Whit a stairt ye give me!' she said, raising her eyes to his face with a simper which would have completed her capture of his heart had it not been effected long before. 'I wis jis' lookin' at that jumper,' she added. 'Div ye think it would fit me?'

Thus questioned, George tore his eyes from his captor's face and looked at the garment in question, which was hanging in the window. He turned over the few shillings of his week's pay which remained to him, and looked again. The price-ticket was placed conspicuously, and alas for poor Geordie, whose pay had a habit of melting away like snow in April!

'It's real pretty,' he averred; adding in a shamefaced manner, 'weel, is it tae be the movies, Lily?'

Lily turned away with a little sigh. She had not really expected him to buy it for her—she was finding out that soldiers were generally hard-up. If George had not been so good-looking she would have given him the cold shoulder before this, and taken up with a 'clurk' who had shown her, in a delicate manner, that he was quite ready to walk out with her. But Geordie was very good to look upon—she knew that people gazed after them as they passed.

On this particular afternoon Lily voted for the park, and led her companion past the swing-doors of the 'Grand Picture Palace' with a firm little hand on his arm. She did this partly because she liked to be seen with the big handsome soldier boy, and partly because she knew he wanted to sit beside her in the dark solitude of the picture palace and hold her hand. Thus did Lily punish him for his inability to satisfy her desire for the green silk jumper.

As they walked round the park, listening to the band and watching the people, George unburdened his heart to Lily on the subject of the N.C.O.'s course. 'I dinna want tae leave Captain Logan,' he explained. 'But if I get tae be a N.C.O.—weel, I'm nearer being able tae mairry ye. An' oh, Lily, I'm wantin' ye sae bad.'

Lily was only half-listening. It took her all her time to keep pace with her companion's long-limbed saunter, with the mincing little steps dictated by her tight skirt and high-heeled shoes.

III.

The next day there was much grumbling in the barrack-room, for the C.O. had decreed a route-march of fifteen miles. This necessitated an extra polishing up of arms and equipment until they shone again, and it also entailed—in the case of many of the men—a week's purgatory from blisters and corns. George did not join in the general grouching. He enjoyed marching, loved to step out with the battalion as one man, with his kilt swinging free from his hips and the skirl of the pipes in his ears.

There was a rush to doors and windows as the battalion turned the corner of the High Street and marched up Pollock Street towards the big stone bridge. It was fine to see them. Many a woman brushed the tears from her eyes with her apron as she looked after them with misted gaze; many an old man found a lump rise in his throat.

'Eh, they're fine!' was the general opinion. 'Oor laddies; there's nane tae come up tae them!'

The song of the pipes, wailing and sweet, drew a motley crowd of followers, who kept pace with the soldiers along the congested pavements.

'I wonder if Lily sees us,' thought Geordie with a surge of pride.

Old Mr Watson (late quartermaster-sergeant of the regiment, now retired) was taking a swarm of bees, when he heard the wild music and the tramp of many feet. The sound was as strong drink to the old soldier; he dropped the hive and rushed to the gate. 'Eh, they're braw,' he whispered, his feet marking time to the familiar tune; and he was not far wrong. They came up the street marching as one man, their arms and accoutrements winking a dazzling heliograph in the bright sunshine.

Mr Watson leaned on the gate, wishing that he were twenty years younger; he had quite forgotten the bees, which swarmed out angrily from their overturned hive and flew over the fence in a buzzing cloud. The baker's cart happened to be standing outside Mr Watson's gate, and the bees settled upon the black horse, which was awaiting its master with model patience, and stung it severely. It was more than any horse could stand, and with a neigh of terror the poor creature threw up its heels and bolted down Pollock Street towards the advancing battalion.

'A' Company happened to be leading, and Captain Logan shouted to his men to break ranks and stop the animal before any accident happened. He had hardly done so when the enraged horse was upon them, snorting with pain, and quivering with fear of the unknown enemy which had attacked it. . . .

When George Anderson came to himself he found that he was in a narrow dark close; his knees were knocking together, and he felt physically sick. He had no recollection of what had happened after his first glimpse of the black horse—the incarnation of his ghastly dreams—coming towards him at full gallop. How had he escaped from the battalion? What had happened?

The shock had completely shattered his nerves, which were already on edge from insomnia, and it was some time before he regained control of his trembling limbs. When he could do so he crept to the entrance of the close and gazed up

and down the street in a bewildered manner. The street was deserted . . . no signs of the battalion, no sound of its pipe band. . . . A girl lounged on the door-step of a neighbouring shop, watching him with inquisitive eyes. 'Lily!' he gasped.

She laughed shrilly, and disappeared into the dark little doorway.

IV.

'Pull in your chair to the fire, padre,' said Jack Logan hospitably. 'It's funny how cold it gets at night, even in summer, in this—er—hole.'

'It is the damp,' replied Mr Trevor in his low musical voice. 'The place lies very low, you see, and those flats by the river exhale a thick mist at night.'

'Beastly spot,' agreed Jack Logan laconically. He was pouring some amber liquid into two small glasses as he spoke—it seemed uncommonly precious, judging from the care employed in the process.

The padre stretched out his hand and took one with a smile. 'I never can resist Benedictine.'

'Why should you?' his companion wondered. 'It is the best thing to counteract the evil poisons contained in the mess dinner. Macfarlane is the rottenest mess president we've ever had. He ought to sack that cook. Look here, padre, honestly now, don't you think it's positively——'

'It is, it is,' Mr Trevor said soothingly. 'But, Logan, it isn't the mess dinner that is worrying you, is it?'

'What d'you mean?' The young face was turned to that of the older man in surprise.

'You know quite well what I mean—you're worried about something. I suppose it has got to do with all that talk in mess. Not having the clue, I couldn't make head or tail of it, but I saw they were getting at you about some protégé of yours——'

'Oh Lord!' groaned 'The Boy.' 'Look here, padre, I just must tell somebody about it or I'll burst. You know Anderson, who used to be my servant——'

'Of course; Will Anderson's son.'

'Yes. Well, I recommended him for the next N.C.O.'s course. He didn't want to leave me, but it seemed such a waste—he appeared just the man for an N.C.O.—and then his father's record in the regiment——' The voice trailed off into silence.

'Well?' prompted Mr Trevor after a little silence.

'I was going to give the chap a first-class chit and all—he's a fine specimen; at least I thought he was—but after this morning——'

'What happened?' asked the padre. He was very fond of 'The Boy,' and admired the keen interest which he took in every detail of

the regiment, and the endless trouble expended over the men of his company. George Anderson was also a favourite of the padre's, and he wondered of what 'crime' in the army calendar the man had been guilty.

'You may ask what happened,' replied Logan. 'I almost can't believe it myself, though I saw it with my own eyes—it's like Gilbert and Sullivan; if only it were not such a tragedy I could yell with laughter whenever I think of it. Well, we were marching along Pollock Street about twelve o'clock this morning when a horse ran away. It got stung by some of old Watson's damned bees—pardon, sir!'

'All right, Logan, go on,' said Mr Trevor mildly. Nobody deprecated the use of bad language more than he, but he was wise enough to know that it really meant very little to the men who used it, and that there was as little chance of stopping it as there was of stopping the flow of the river which wound its way through the outskirts of the town.

'Well, the brute came careering down the street with the cart rocking behind it, and the loaves and cookies scattering right and left—you never saw anything so comic. I ordered my company to break ranks, and we stopped it easily—it's a tame creature, and even the bad stings didn't madden it up for long. Anderson didn't wait,' continued 'The Boy' bitterly; 'remembered an important engagement, I suppose! Anyhow, you couldn't see him for dust; he went down Pollock Street like a streak of lightning, and disappeared round the corner. Gad, it was funny!'

'But what was the meaning of it?'

'Funk,' replied the young officer grimly.

'Funk?' echoed Mr Trevor incredulously.

'I can't believe it of Will Anderson's son.'

'I know, it's—it's—— But, padre, I saw his face—sheer panic—you can't mistake the signs, if you've seen it before.'

The padre knew that you couldn't—he had 'seen it before' also. He was silent, and his companion continued with a shamefaced laugh, 'It's beastly infectious; for the moment I felt I wanted to run myself. The men were all laughing.'

'They saw too?'

'Oh, everyone saw—they couldn't have helped it, unless they'd been stone blind.'

'What happened after that?'

'I never saw him. He must have gone straight back to the barracks——'

'Perhaps it was an excuse to escape the route-march.'

'The Boy' laughed scornfully. 'Why, the man's a born foot-slogger—positively revels in a route-march; besides, there's his face. Lord, padre, I can't forget it! He must be having a hellish time now,' added his officer, looking out of the uncurtained window across the square to where the barrack-rooms were situated.

Mr Trevor leaned forward, and knocked out his pipe preparatory to re-filling it. 'Have you spoken to him?' he wanted to know.

'Of course; I sent for him as soon as ever I got back. He stood there with his face as cold and proud as Lucifer——' Mr Trevor followed 'The Boy's' eyes across the room, and seemed to see the young soldier standing on the mat at attention, with that hard defiant look marring his handsome face. 'I asked him if he had any excuse for his extraordinary behaviour.'

'What did he say?'

'“No, sir.”'

'And then?'

'Well, I made him come in, and talked to him a bit about my plans for him—and about his father—and—and all that. When he saw that I was really interested, he told me a long yarn about a dream that he had. It was about a horse that savaged him—a great black horse in an Indian compound——'

'Was it true, do you think?'

'Oh yes! Yes, I'm sure he was speaking the truth; but—— Well, you see, it doesn't make much difference so far as his promotion is concerned. What control is he going to have over the men with a ridiculous story like that attached to him?'

'He might live it down.'

'He might; but ridicule is the worst thing for undermining discipline. And then, supposing he were in a tight corner requiring nerve—N.C.O.s can't afford to indulge in dreams like that! It's a question of *moral*, you see, padre.'

The padre saw. Of course 'The Boy' was right; he had a sure touch for everything connected with the regiment. The padre was also seeing something else. 'A great black horse in an Indian compound'—these words called a memory out of some locked cell in his brain. What was it that the words conjured up? An old memory, faded with the passing of twenty-two years, a memory elusive as a will-o'-the-wisp on an Irish bog; yet with 'The Boy's' words it rose clear out of that wonderful storehouse which is in every man's brain.

'That's—odd,' he said slowly. 'A black horse in an Indian compound, savaging him.' He was thinking aloud, forgetful of his companion, who was looking at him in surprise. 'Did he—does he know of any—any reason why he should have that dream?'

'Reason!' The word was echoed wonderingly. 'There isn't any *reason* for dreams, is there, sir?'

'There is—or might be for this one,' Trevor thought. 'Rather a queer thing,' he went on, sitting forward in his chair and tapping his well-worn briar against his teeth ruminatively; 'rather queer.'

The younger man waited impatiently for Mr Trevor to explain himself, and after a few moments the latter began: 'As you know, I

was out with the battalion at Julapore in nineteen-one. I had just joined up then, and I was very keen and interested in everything. I liked the men, and, of course, I was often round the married quarters seeing the women and children. It's odd how, out there, the married quarters are so like *home*—it's a magic word, Boy!—they used to remind me so of home. I've often wondered why those women take Pollock Street east with them—as it were—and I think now that it is because they *resent* the East. They hate it, you know, all of them—hate it as if it were a living thing (women always hate like that, I think). So they take Pollock Street with them, and put it between four walls, and call it home. Their bits of rugs—rag-rugs I think they call them—and their rep curtains, and oleograph pictures, dreadful things, but just *speaking* of home. I suppose I was a bit homesick and I liked it. I was friends with most of the women, but especially with Mrs Anderson.

'Well, to get on with the story, I was crossing the square one grilling hot afternoon, when I saw an accident happen. Brown had a black waler—an awfully vicious beast. He drove it in a *tum-tum*, and had the greatest difficulty in getting a syce to touch it. On this particular afternoon the creature had broken loose, and I saw it come tearing across the compound with the *tum-tum* rocking behind it. I saw suddenly that there was a woman crossing the square towards the married quarters. She evidently did not see the horse coming until it was almost upon her—the noise of its hoofs was deadened by the thick dust which lay there inches deep. When she did look up she seemed to quiver all over; she stood quite still—hypnotised by fear, I suppose. I ran and shouted—and she must have heard, for she tried to struggle out of the way, but—it was too late—another second, and she was down in the dust amongst those cruel hoofs. Boy, it was a ghastly thing to see. When I got to her she was unconscious. We sent for the M.O., and she was carried into the nearest house. Can you guess who that woman was, Boy? She was Will Anderson's wife and George's mother. He was born that night.' There was a little silence, and then the speaker added brokenly, 'She—died.'

'Good God!' Logan ejaculated. 'And you mean—that's what he—dreams?'

The two men sat and gazed at the fire, which was sinking into a bed of red-hot cinders. The elder was occupied with visions of the past, the younger—as befitted his calling—with plans for the future. Did this disclosure change the situation? Was Anderson any more fitted for a responsible position because his panic was the result of pre-natal impression rather than sheer cowardice? Had he the moral strength to live down the ridicule of his fellow soldiers?

It will be observed that the regiment was everything to this not very imaginative young officer.

'Should we tell him?' The words were spoken half-aloud, but the padre heard and answered them.

'I think so. You see, he may be imagining all sorts of horrors—that his brain is affected, or something equally unpleasant. It is easier to fight a nightmare if you know that there is a natural cause—better far than struggling in the dark.'

'Yes, I suppose so,' said his companion doubtfully. 'Still, I don't know that I can recommend him for the N.C.O.'s course.'

The padre smiled inwardly. Oh these boys, these mad keen soldiers! Did they ever think for five minutes without coming back to the regiment? His thoughts went suddenly to George Anderson struggling in the black grip of the nightmare which had secreted itself in his unformed brain. 'I think you'll find,' said Mr Trevor, choosing his words carefully—'I think you'll find he will be able to bear that with equanimity in view of your other communication. It is queer that he should never have heard from anyone how his mother died—his father felt it too hardly to be able to mention it, I suppose, and—well, it is wonderful how soon one is forgotten. By the time little George was old enough to understand, the regiment had come home. You must explain to George,' went on the padre, 'that it is not cowardice on his part, and that it is through no fault of his own that he is haunted by this dream—it is merely a natural phenomenon—'

He broke off as a loud knock sounded on the door, and 'The Boy' said 'Come in.'

A man entered clumsily, a heavy-built man with close-cropped black hair, and a face as white as paper, and staring eyes.

'Will you please come at once, sir,' and then suddenly the years of discipline and training dropped from him like a cloak. 'Oh Gawd!' he cried wildly, and covered his face with his sleeve, as if to shut out some dreadful sight.

Captain Logan's chair clattered to the ground as he jumped to his feet. 'Corporal Burke, stand up—attention! Now, tell me at once what is the matter.'

The man stood before his officer, blanched and trembling, with a pitiful attempt at self-control. 'It's Anderson, sir—fell out of the barrack-room window, sir—dying—'

'The Boy' pushed him aside and strode out of the room. They could hear him going down the stone stairs three steps at a time.

'Come now—er—Burke,' the padre said with intentional cruelty. 'Pull yourself together at once. This isn't a girls' school. You must have seen worse things in your time than a man falling out of a window.'

'Yes, sir.' Burke replied with a force of habit; and then, with an unconscious gesture of despair, he threw out his arms. 'But—but this is peace. He did it a-purpose. I saw him do it. If you saw him all crumpled up on the ground——' And then, in a husky murmur, 'We was chipping him. I never thort——'

Mr Trevor shook him by the sleeve. 'Pull yourself together—you're a corporal, aren't you? What kind of an example is this to show the men?' The curt words acted like magic. Burke straightened his shoulders, and the colour came back to his lips. 'Now, follow me,' said Mr Trevor sternly.

The little group on the cobbles beneath the barrack-room window moved aside to make a passage for the padre and his escort. 'The Boy' was on his knees beside the shattered heap of humanity which had so recently been full of youth and beauty. The atmosphere seemed charged with tense emotions, and when some one called out, 'Here's the M.O.,' a murmur of relief went up from the waiting men.

Only Captain Logan gave no sign of relaxed tension; he rose and faced the newcomer gravely. 'We are both too late,' he said.

The padre sensed the agony which underlay these simple words. 'The Boy' was taking it terribly to heart. If only he could help.

He stood aside while the necessary instructions were being given to the orderlies, and wondered a little at the stern, hard voice. When that was done the two friends walked back together across the square in silence. The night was darkening swiftly now, and lights had sprung up all over the big block of buildings which contained the officers' quarters.

Still 'The Boy' spoke no word, and his friend

began to be afraid. 'You couldn't help it. Don't take it to heart, Boy,' he said as comfortably as he could.

A low even voice replied out of the darkness, 'He was my friend, and I failed him because I did not understand. I—failed him.'

V

Two days later a little cortège passed through the barrack-gates and proceeded down the High Street at the slow march with arms reversed. The sun was shining brightly, and everything looked the same as it had done on that memorable day of the route-march. A little group of officers followed the coffin, which was laid on a gun-carriage and covered by the bright folds of the Union Jack. Captain Logan, with his head erect and a hard expression on his young boyish face, walked alone, for he was chief mourner.

At the corner of Pollock Street a crowd had collected to watch the little procession pass; a motley group, such as might be found at any street corner at any hour of the day with time hanging heavy on its hands. Amongst them was a young girl in a bright green silk jumper; she was hanging on the arm of a young civilian, in a shiny blue suit, with a weak chin and a bowler hat—he was obviously a clerk.

'Come away, do,' he said, pulling her arm in an irritable manner. 'What are ye gazing at noo, Lily?'

'Whose funeral is it?' she wondered idly.

'Well, it's no' mine, anyway,' he replied with the perverted humour of his kind.

The girl in the green jumper laughed shrilly, and followed her witty companion through the swing-doors of the Grand Picture Palace.

SIAMESE SUPERSTITIONS.

By ERNEST YOUNG, B.Sc., M.A., F.R.G.S., Ex-Inspector of Anglo-Vernacular Schools, Siam.

FROM birth to death the native Siamese is enveloped in an atmosphere of superstition. There is no act of his life that is not ruled by some tradition or other that has held authority and power through many ages. The infant is a gift from the gods, and the legendary deities of the parents demand due observance of many customs. As the time of its birth approaches, the mother retires to the seclusion of her own chamber, where she lies on a long flat board in front of a fire. Kindly hands stretch a protective cord all round the exterior of the building, and this is blessed by the priests, and so forms an efficient barrier against all those evil spirits lying in wait to cause trouble. Scarcely has the tiny mite wailed its first feeble note than its nurses make three balls of rice and throw them in three lucky directions. By this means certain bene-

ficent spirits are invoked to be present and to watch over the future of the baby.

Even in these days, when an Education Department is seeking to instil knowledge into the young, there are still thousands of children in Siam who never go to school, and who gain all their ideas about nature from the stories told them by parents and friends. When the big giant in the sky above chases his cantankerous wife and hurls his hammer after her, the sound of his voice and the noise of the falling weapon, as it crashes against the floors of heaven, give rise to the rolling of the thunder; the 'sky cries.' When the long waves of purple lightning flash across the horizon, the angels are amusing themselves by striking fire with bricks. When the mighty crab comes out of its hole in the sea, the tide ebbs, and when this same denizen of the deep

retreats once more to his subaqueous residence, the tide flows again. When too many angels get into the same bath at the same time, the water pours over the side and it rains. And when the earth is wrapped in darkness, and the night winds sigh across the rice-fields and the plains, you can hear in those evening breezes, if you will but listen as you should, the voices of all the little children who have long since gone to their eternal rest.

When the Siamese child wants a fairy-tale with which to while away the hours, nothing so insipid as Cinderella will suit his fancy. His hero is the man who meets single-handed a million foes in a deep ravine. When the assembled hosts laugh at his daring he takes up the mountains in his right hand and his left and, crashing them together, annihilates the opposing forces in the twinkling of an eye.

If a person be travelling far from home he will not mention the word 'alligator' as he passes by the river-bank, or whisper the word 'tiger' as he threads the jungle, for fear the beasts should hear him and answer to their names.

And so the boys grow up to manhood and the girls to womanhood, and, as happens everywhere, they fall in love and seek each other in marriage. Then the parents of the lovers go to the astrologer and state the facts of the case, and the astrologer notes the respective birthdays of the young couple and consults his oracles. For the years run in cycles of twelve, and are ruled over by the rat, the cow, the tiger, and nine other animals. And should the man have been born in the year of the dog and the woman in the year of the cat, there could by no possible means be any happiness in the wedded life of these two. If no inauspicious births have taken place the marriage may be solemnised, and the man will build a house for his bride. But in this house the number of rooms, of doors, of windows, of everything within and without, must be an odd one, for even numbers are unlucky.

No one lies down to sleep with his head pointing to the west, for that is the point where the sun dies his daily death, and so is symbolical of the end of all things. The only safe direction for repose is north and south. On Sunday, if you travel, you must travel to the east, for that will bring you luck. On Monday you may go west; on Tuesday, south; on Wednesday, south-west; on Thursday, north; on Friday, south-east; and on Saturday, north-west.

Again, every day is ruled by some particular planet, and if you wish that planet to bring you success you must dress in the colour of the planet itself. On Sunday, when the Sun is the ruling luminary, dress yourself in red, and wear rubies. The Moon controls Monday and demands

white moonstones; Mars asks for light red and coral on a Tuesday; Mercury requires green and emeralds on a Wednesday; Jupiter looks out for the cat's-eye on a Thursday; Venus is not satisfied unless you wear silver-blue and diamonds on a Friday; while Saturn takes charge of Saturday, and expects dark blue and sapphires.

Get your hair cut on the proper day, or much woe will befall you. Go to the barber on Sunday, and long life and happiness will be your lot; but beware of Monday's tonsorial operations, for they bring disease, sorrow, and unpleasant surprises; Tuesday means peace, prosperity, and success in war; Wednesday brings trouble from your enemies; the angels grant protection to all those who lose their locks on Thursday; Friday is the glutton's day, for all food will be palatable to those who are then shorn; Saturday's haircutting brings success in all deeds and ceremonies performed on the last day of the week.

Wherever credulity flourishes the medicine man reaps a rich reward, and quacks are in great evidence. They combine, in Siam, the double function of healer and destroyer, for they will cure or kill for an adequate financial compensation. If you can afford it, you can, by the help of the doctor, rid yourself of an enemy in the following manner. The wizard will buy a buffalo at your expense, and then say charms over it. As the process of bewitching the animal continues his body decreases in size until the huge beast has dwindled to the size of a pill. Then you arrange for your enemy to swallow this highly condensed extract. No sooner has he partaken of the pill than it begins to swell to its original size. It is scarcely necessary to add details as to the dramatic close of your enemy's career.

At last the time comes to each one to die. There are several methods of disposing of the dead, and one of these is burial. None, however, are buried except those who have died of sudden death, of cholera, or by the executioner's sword. Down in the depths of the subterranean regions there dwells an enormous monster, who sits through all eternity warming his feet in the fire. In order to prevent them from being utterly consumed by the flames it is necessary, from time to time, to pour water over them. This water is brought to him by an army of slaves. The slaves are the spirits of the people who have been buried after death. To get the water they have to travel over perilous bridges, through dark ravines, and across dangerous swamps. Their every step is beset with danger, darkness, and pain. They bring their precious burdens back in sieves, and through endless ages they must perform the same ceaseless, terrible, and hopeless task.

The deceased can be liberated from this cruel existence only if their living relatives are willing to call themselves the relations of the fiend,

and to do homage to him. The method of doing homage does not appear very serious to us, but it is sufficiently efficacious. The earthly relatives bind on neck and wrist a few red and yellow strings, which they can obtain from a priest. Then they make a tiny cart, and put into it a number of clay images, one for each member of the family. With the images they

put offerings of fruit, flowers, and rice, and they deposit the whole gift in an out-of-the-way corner of a field. The wind and the mice soon play havoc with the propitiatory offering, but the demon takes no notice of that, and the minds of the living are satisfied with what they have done in mitigation of the miseries of the departed.

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

CHAPTER VII.—*continued.*

III.

IT was a minute or two before I dared look up and meet Mr Thurlow's eye.

I was aware, when I looked across at him, that he too avoided looking at me. I think we both of us felt that we had been treading on holy ground, and that we ought to have taken our shoes from off our feet.

'Our client,' and Mr Thurlow was speaking in his driest tones, 'would never have allowed us a sight of this letter, had he not been consumed with anxiety about the young lady. His chief idea is to keep her out of the affair altogether; he can't bear that the breath of scandal shall touch her. And so you and I are to devise the means for keeping her name out of it.'

'Mr Thurlow!' I exclaimed with some warmth, 'I will never lift a finger to prevent those two from coming together again. They have been parted; there has been misunderstanding; but the moment the light of truth has shone, she has seen her path of duty quite clearly, and is determined to walk in it; and in my opinion, God bless her, she is doing exactly the right thing.'

'You speak,' said the lawyer, 'as if I were of a contrary opinion; but I have not said so. What I have to consider, however, is the character of the defence which we set up; and the responsibility for this rests upon me.'

'Well,' I queried, 'would not her witness be helpful?'

'That is just the point,' he replied, 'which I have very carefully to weigh. The "pros" and "cons" seem to me to be these. The cause of antagonism leading up to this deadly quarrel was undoubtedly this young lady; but, you see, the more strongly a motive is made to appear—and that I assume is the idea in allowing Miss Weston to give evidence—the more strongly does it appear that our client's act was wilful, and as one might say of 'malice prepense.' And, of course, we don't want to show that: so that is against our putting her in the witness box.'

'On the other hand, when we were before the justices, it became practically impossible,

as you know, to keep her name out of the case altogether. Now, my experience of judges and juries is that they are apt to resent the keeping back of any witness who may seem to them to be material to the case—they become a little bit suspicious. They have, you see, to come to a decision, and they want everything that may contribute to a true verdict to be placed fairly and squarely before them.

'I should say that Miss Weston would probably make a good witness, and would be likely to impress the jury favourably; and even a judge, you know, is not wholly uninfluenced by sentiment and feelings of pity.'

He paused.

'Then, on the whole, you agree with me,' I said, 'that we should let her appear?'

The lawyer's eyes twinkled. 'I doubt if there is much "let" about it,' he remarked; 'we can't hinder it. She has appeared, and she will appear; and what we have to do is to coach her just a little bit as to the dangers of overstatement, in case she gets carried away by her feelings.'

'And what,' I asked, 'are we to say to Carrington about disregarding his wishes?'

'You can leave that to me,' was Mr Thurlow's reply. 'When a doctor of medicine has a patient very sick, and perhaps about to die, he doesn't look to his patient for orders, but gives his own orders. And a prisoner is something like a sick man—he doesn't always know what is best for him.'

IV.

I said 'good-bye' to Mr Thurlow, and as I had missed Vera at his office, I now drove to Lennox Gardens on the chance of seeing her, for I greatly wished to see her, and to speak a word of appreciation and encouragement.

By good luck she was in, and we had a great deal to tell each other.

And then Mrs Chichester came into the room, and I found she had espoused Vera's cause with great enthusiasm. 'I am going to look after Vera,' she said, 'and am only too delighted to do it. There was some talk of Hubert's mother or one of the girls coming up; but that's been vetoed. They would only have made Vera

nervous, and perhaps made themselves ill. No! I am going with her to the law-court myself; so she'll know she has one friend at court anyhow.'

'Many more friends than one,' I declared. 'She has quite won Mr Thurlow's heart already, to say nothing of yours, and mine; and if I were a betting man, Mrs Chichester, I'd wager you she will win the case.'

'That's just what my husband says,' she exclaimed; 'in fact, he says so much that I tell Vera I shall be getting quite jealous.'

'He has written such a funny letter to General Weston—you know they are old Indian friends—and he has told him that his old regiment would disown him if they knew he was opposing his daughter in what she was doing; and he strongly advises Sir Thomas to yield with a good grace now, and not to wait till the trial is over, when everybody, however it may end, will cry "Shame on him."'

'Poor, dear old Dad,' said Vera, 'I'm sure he meant what was right; but he so often calls me "my child" that I suppose he still thinks I am one.'

I did not attempt to see Hubert again before the trial. After what Mr Thurlow had said, I thought I would leave him in the lawyer's hands.

But I went down to Wingate for the Sunday, to take the church services, and to see Hubert's mother and Cecilia and Alice, and to tell them how matters stood.

V.

I was back again on Monday, and made my way at once to the Central Criminal Court.

There I found Mr Thurlow, and Vera and Mrs Chichester, and, to my great surprise and satisfaction, no less a person than Sir Thomas Weston himself.

'I wasn't going to leave my daughter,' he told me, 'to wander about in these unsavoury purlieus all by herself, so I've come up to look after her; and I only hope we sha'n't be detained here very long.'

'A good deal depends,' Mr Thurlow observed, 'upon when our case will be called. I have ascertained that there are seventy-nine cases down for trial, and over 400 witnesses are in attendance.'

'Good gracious me!' cried the general. 'Why, we may be here a fortnight! But whereabouts do we come in the list?'

'I fear,' said the lawyer, 'that the place in the list won't tell us much. There are three judges trying these cases in different courts, and the proceedings in some of them may be very protracted, while in others the prisoner may plead guilty at once. In that way some of the cases get remitted from one court to another, and the order in the list is quite upset. I shall be able probably to find out pretty early each day whether our case is likely to be taken on that

day, and if it isn't, then you will be free for that day at any rate. But it isn't safe to absent yourself altogether, so I'm afraid it means coming here every day.'

The general looked so disgusted, and so furious, that Mr Thurlow nimbly beat a retreat; while I, with a sense of the ludicrous, could hardly restrain a smile.

But, in all seriousness, if prisoners at the bar have their trials, it may be averred with truth that witnesses have theirs also, and that their trials begin long before they set foot in the witness box and face the jury.

The swarms of witnesses, many of them belonging to the great unwashed; the foetid smell of overcrowded courts; the lack of proper accommodation; the pervading sense of crime, and evil, and unhappiness, and anxiety—all these things in combination make the kicking of one's heels at the Old Bailey anything but a pleasing pastime.

However, it is a long lane that has no turning, and in the afternoon of the second day we were informed that without fail we must all be in attendance in good time on the following morning, as we were almost certain to be called before the Grand Jury.

This sifting of cases by the Grand Jury before they are actually tried in open court is sometimes a mere formality, but not always. For the Judge of Assize, previous to charging the jury, is accustomed to give special attention to such cases as demand consideration. Then, in his opening address to the Grand Jury, he is in a position to advise them as to the actual law obtaining in such cases; and if he has seen that the evidence against the accused is inadequate or contrary to the law, he directs the attention of the Grand Jury to the points in question, and sometimes will advise that an indictment must be ignored. By this means much time is saved, and also a good deal of expense to the country.

VI.

It was not without some thrills of emotion, and a deep sense of anxiety that at last we found ourselves conveyed as witnesses to the very door of the room in which the Grand Jury was sitting; and there we had to wait until such time as we might be called, individually, to give our evidence.

Our little party included Admiral Chapman and three of his servants, and one of the three doctors who had made the post-mortem examination, and Vera and myself.

Mr Mackenzie and Mr Swallowfield, junior, were also in attendance as representatives of the Birmingham firm, although they had been informed that they would not have to appear before the Grand Jury, as the Grand Jury only called witnesses for the prosecution.

In this aspect of the case, as it presented

itself to my mind, there seemed to be such a topsy-turvydom of justice, and such a jumble of proceedings in all that we were required to say and do, that I seriously debated whether, by our own fault, we had been turned into a pack of fools, or whether the law itself was 'a hass.'

For here we were, myself and my fellow-witnesses, who were all wishing to be regarded as for the defence of the prisoner, and yet some of us had been subpoenaed for the prosecution.

Moreover, the prisoner himself, as it turned out, who was presently to appear at the bar, although he was the very man who had given himself up on the plea that he had been guilty of assault, if not of manslaughter, was now about to plead 'Not guilty,' in view of the more serious arraignment by the Crown. How would it all end?

VII.

The end was not far off. First Admiral Chapman was called into the room to give his evidence before the Grand Jury. In about ten minutes he came out again, looking extremely disturbed and ill at ease.

Then came the doctor's turn. And he, too, came out again. And then in I went, and at once was sworn to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

The examination was very brief, and proceeded upon the lines of evidence given before the

bench of magistrates at Richmond. I said what I wanted to say; and then out I came.

Vera looked at me with anxious and troubled eyes; but the nervous tension added a set look of firmness and almost fierceness to the whole face, as though she had prepared herself to go through fire and water, if need be, for the man she loved.

She was expecting every moment to be the next witness to be called. But we had to wait, and waiting in such circumstances is more than a trial—it becomes a martyrdom.

And then the door once more opened, and a court official came out. 'Are you the witnesses in the Carrington case?' he hurriedly asked in the gruffest and roughest of whispers.

'We are,' I said.

'Well then,' he continued, 'you needn't stay any longer; the Jury has thrown the bill out. They found there was no true bill against the prisoner, and so the case is at an end.'

And as I turned to Vera she just threw herself into my arms and cried like a little child.

Six months afterwards there was a very grand wedding at Bath. Sir Thomas Weston certainly did the thing well. And I did my little best; for I had the privilege of placing Vera's hand in Hubert's, and saying, as I joined their hands together, 'Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.'

THE END.

LONDON GOVERNMENT.

By WILLIAM ABDOUN.

I.

THROUGH the courtesy of the Deputy Clerk of the London County Council the writer, in company with a body of Overseas engineers and architects, was recently conducted over the new headquarters of London government. The present building on the Surrey side of Westminster Bridge has been erected at a cost of three million pounds. It possesses about nine hundred rooms, and when the northern extension has been completed at the cost of another million, the housing accommodation for the L.C.C.'s tremendous staff will stretch almost half-way from Westminster Bridge to that eye-sore of the Thames, which has a crossing by the name of 'Hungerford.' Much useful information was disclosed, not only in regard to the building, but in connection with many important phases of London government.

The London County Council are the largest landlords in London, their capital expenditure exceeding twelve million pounds. They house nearly a hundred and twenty thousand persons, at an approximate rent-roll of eight hundred thousand pounds. But some of the largest

individual owners are scarcely known. The 116,000 square miles of the administrative area of the county of London are divided amongst 38,200 owners. Lord Northbrook (Eltham) and Dulwich College hold over two square miles each, and the following four persons own more than one and a half square miles: Lord Forster (Lewisham), Mr H. T. B. Barron (Plumstead), Lord St Germans (Blackheath), and Sir Spencer Maryon Wilson (Hampstead and Carlton). The Duke of Westminster is the owner of three-quarters of a square mile of London territory. The Earl of Dartmouth receives rents for over half a square mile of property in St Pancras and Lewisham; Magdalen College, Oxford, owns half a square mile in Wandsworth; and the Prudential Assurance and Mercers' Companies own about the same quantity throughout London.

II.

In connection with the furniture contained in the building there is one fact which is not generally known, and that is, the seating accommodation for members is of oak, some of which is believed to be several thousands

of years old. It was found some thirty-five feet below the level of Villiers Street, Strand, during the process of erection of the Hampstead Tube at Charing Cross Station. The columns and pilasters are monoliths of Veine Dorée, an extremely beautiful marble quarried over five thousand feet above the sea-level in the Italian Alps. 'The heating and ventilation of the chamber,' said the guide, 'are obtained by air which is drawn from alternative positions on the fifth floor, is completely saturated at a predetermined temperature, automatically controlled, and all dust is removed. In the chamber an individual supply is provided for each occupant, and the direction of the current can be regulated by the lever in front of each seat.' The clocks in all the rooms are worked by electricity; there are six boilers in the sub-basement for supplying hot water through thirty miles of pipes to 2150 radiators, 690 basins, &c., and the staff refreshment-rooms and kitchens, which are designed to supply two thousand luncheons a day. When completed there will be four miles of corridors; four million floor blocks will have been used in the work; the total area paved will be about eighteen acres; and hundreds of miles of electrical wire will be required.

One of the most interesting disclosures made concerned public health and the disposal of sewage. It appeared that formerly the drainage was carried off in open watercourses, which was unsatisfactory. Afterwards, main sewers, running approximately at right angles to the Thames, discharged their contents at different points within the London area. The great innovation, however, was the construction at different levels of sewers running from west to east, which intercepted the sewage and conveyed it mainly by gravitation to outfalls well below London—at Barking on the north and Crossness on the south side of the river, five pumping stations being erected to assist the flow of the sewage. When the sewage reaches the outfalls it is run into reservoirs. The solid matter, or sludge, is then precipitated, and the effluent, or clarified liquid, after chemical treatment, flows into the Thames. The sludge is deposited by special vessels in the black deep, twelve miles off the coast of Essex. One hundred million gallons of sewage and two million tons of sludge are dealt with every year, the length of the sewers running to three hundred and seventy miles. In addition there are two thousand miles of local sewers controlled by the authorities. The total cost of maintenance in 1922-1923 was £617,000.

III.

The L.C.C. have a million children in their schools and some 160,000 students in their evening institutes. Their new education officer, Brigadier-General G. H. Gater (who is only

thirty-nine years of age), joined the army at the outbreak of war as a private soldier.

The ages of the students in the evening classes range from fourteen to seventy-eight. The curriculum includes all subjects which are calculated to equip one for a professional, a literary, or a commercial career. Laboratories and workshops are distinct from class-room education, in which technical and scientific instruction is given right from the elementary to the most advanced stages, thereby releasing at the polytechnics and technical institute rooms for development along technological lines. Law is taught by lawyers, hygiene by medical experts, journalism by journalists, banking and the like by specialists who are well versed in their subjects, and, what is equally important, know how to teach them. At the same time 'it links up all the different grades of institutions by numerous scholarships, which enable boys and girls to pass through every grade of education from the lowest to the highest without payment of fees, and with the assistance of maintenance grants. Every London home has the chance offered to it for the clever boy or girl to pass right through from the elementary school to the university, and there win the highest academic honours that the country can bestow.'

When excavations were commenced on the site of the building, for the purpose of laying the foundation of it, an old Roman boat was discovered, which has been presented to the British Museum. The coins and rounded stones found in it have enabled students of antiquity to form the conclusion that before the upper and lower marshes (which are situate not far from the structure) were converted into arable land, the occupants were fisher-folk, who inhabited rough hovels on adjacent territory. It may incidentally be remarked that in the days of Roman London the site of Westminster Abbey was known as the 'Isle of Thorney,' and historians state that it was the centre of a busy trade. Merchants would ferry across the river and essay to negotiate the crossings of the marsh, which were precarious, expansive and swampy, and often resulted in the loss of valuable merchandise. The site of the present building was known in bygone years as 'Pedler's Corner,' a notorious resort of river thieves of the period.

SEPTEMBER.

NIGHTS full of beauty; calm and gracious days
That lay cool hands on Summer's fervid hours;
Fruit ripening fast in quiet country-ways;
The garden-beds ablaze with gorgeous flowers.

So comes September in a regal dress,
With vine-leaves crowned and golden harvest moon.

O who amid this Autumn loveliness
Could sigh for Spring, or miss a vanished June?

E. MATHESON.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

CLAY IN THE HANDS.

By EUSTACE AINSWORTH.

I.

TO say that man is the creature of circumstance may be true enough, provided that Circumstance is admitted to be of the female sex. Circumstance must be, of course, for she will not be gainsaid. John Storrs discovered that fact at the mature age of forty-two, but he will be dead and in another life before he realises how inevitable was his defeat.

For close on twenty-five years John Storrs had concentrated his whole energy upon the upbuilding and extension of Wilberforce, Storrs, and Wakefield, at the head of which he now stood. Wakefield had died very early in the venture, and Wilberforce had become so alarmed at John's ambitious notions that he had suffered himself to be bought out at a large profit, and spent the rest of his years accusing John of having swindled him out of the business. John did not mind that because it was not true, but as time passed and nothing came to him but wealth, and work that brought more wealth, John began to speculate upon the saying that it is not good for man to live alone. There was something so isolating about great success. It cooled a man's old friendships, as one by one comrades of early days found the pace too warm and dropped behind, and hung one up, so to speak, between the everyday working crowd, from which John had sprung, and Society with a capital initial, which—so far as John could detect—consisted largely of the grandchildren of such men as himself. And it was in this vein that Storrs, after much careful thought, decided to marry.

Unfortunately he knew that his choice of a wife would be limited. He had gone far enough to let go the hands of one set without reaching the feet of the layer above, and the only young woman he could think of as a possibility was Wilberforce's daughter Vic. Wilberforce was a fool, or he would not have lost his nerve and sold out when he did, but he was sound, and from what John remembered of Mrs Wilberforce, Victoria should be well-bred in the only way that John Storrs understood that much-abused phrase. Then again Victoria was distinctly pretty, and would make a splendid hostess at Holly Bank. Of course Vic might

have other ideas, and her father's constant grievance against Storrs might have prejudiced John in her eyes. But you never could tell.

So, to pass over a period rather sordidly uninteresting, John Storrs, aged forty, was married, with as much pomp as money could buy, to Victoria, aged twenty-six, only child of Robert Wilberforce, widower, of Myrtle Grove; and the happy couple left for a fortnight in Cornwall, subsequently taking up their abode at Holly Bank.

Victoria had a free hand to take up, or be taken up by, whom she wished, and on those occasions when entertainments came out of working hours, John was a complete success either as guest or as host. His simple directness and modesty made friends on all sides, and the fact that he was completely at ease himself in any company assisted Victoria's social success.

'Must I know the people at the office?' she asked one day.

'Not unless you choose. I'm the only link between this house and the business.'

'Dad thinks I should. He says it's snobbery not to be friendly with the other directors' wives.'

'Rubbish. The snobbery is on their side. I don't know them myself.'

'Dad says it's their only chance of getting onto the Assembly list—'

'That's not my department,' John replied.

'Do as you wish. Personally, if I were you, I would not. But it's all the same to me.'

'Then I won't,' she said, with a feeling of relief.

II.

The months passed, and John found that, as usual, he had made no mistake. Vic was charming, slight in figure, quick, and clever enough to conceal more intelligence than she displayed. Her manner, while apparently deferential, was fearless and unhesitating, till from small venturesome beginnings she succeeded eventually in ruling John and his household as that gentleman had never been ruled before.

Strictly speaking, it had not been a love match, of course; that is to say, it had not begun with any passionate or sentimental feelings on either side; but perhaps for that very reason it

passed the more quickly into that lasting stage of liking, confidence, and respect which, after all, is the shape into which successful marriages merge. In fact, if anything, the liking between husband and wife increased rather than dulled, until John could hardly imagine any request that Vic was likely to make with which he would not at once agree.

And Vic was wise. On the return from their honeymoon she had cast one shuddering look upon the furniture and decorations of Holly Bank, had said nothing at all, but had spent the next six months entrenching herself safely in John's heart. Once there, and a suitable opportunity arising, she had proposed a move into another neighbourhood, the purchase of a modernised old house, and refurnishing throughout. John had asked what it would cost, and eventually had left the whole thing in her hands.

He liked the new house better than the old, noticed the very few articles of furniture and decoration that Vic had preserved from Holly Bank, and noticed also that in every case they were things which had belonged to his grandfather when that gentleman was a tenant-farmer some seventy years ago. He was fully aware that Vic knew nothing of their history, and so began his first lesson in taste.

III.

John never talked 'shop' to Vic, but once or twice a month old Wilberforce would drive over for dinner and critically discuss the doings of Wilberforce, Storrs, & Wakefield before the servants, in a way that John did not like; nor did it mend matters when he more than hinted that he had been legally—oh quite legally, of course—jockeyed out of his share. Like many another, Wilberforce, living on an assured income of some fifteen hundred pounds a year, felt it deeply unjust that John, once his junior partner, should be making at least ten times that amount. John was very patient over this treatment, because, whenever Wilberforce said anything particularly galling, John knew that Vic was looking at him, and either said nothing or smoothed the point over with a soft reply. Vic's eyes, he sometimes thought, would be worth a million pounds if they could be put to their full use.

Unfortunately, too, John had discovered that his father-in-law, not content with annoying him, was actually borrowing money from Vic. So one day he told her that he had doubled her very ample allowance, and suggested that she should drop her father a hint that he had better draw in his horns.

'I can't think what he wants to spend so much money for,' he said kindly. 'Now I hear he's buying another car.'

Vic looked across the cosy study where a reading-lamp fell on John's copy of *The Times*, and said, 'I've often wondered why God was

so good as to give me you for a husband, John.'

'What's that!' John gasped. 'I say, you shouldn't say things like that!'

'Why, I hadn't a chance,' Vic went on, unheeding, 'and now, just look!'

'Well, look!' he agreed, 'and what d'you see? A man that can make money and can do nowt else'—John's rare emotion had swung him back twenty years—'and a woman that he shouldn't have dared to touch!'

Vic shook her head. 'A man's opinion of a woman, John—'

'Don't you make any mistake,' he interrupted, 'I haven't got no "opinion" about you, my lass. Opinions are things that haven't been proved!'

Vic laughed. 'You are certainly the best flatterer I ever met.'

'Flatterer!' he exclaimed indignantly.

'Of course. There are two kinds of flattery, John—that which a woman likes to hear, but which she knows is not true and is not meant to be true either; and the more rare kind which she still knows is not true, but which she also knows is honestly believed by the flatterer. That is the sweetest of all. But seriously, what are we going to do about Dad?'

'I've doubled your allowance, and if there's anything else you can suggest—'

'There is, though I hardly like to suggest it.'

'Go on.'

'Well, you know what's wrong with him—he has no work, no place in the world. He sees Wilberforce, Storrs, & Wakefield on every signboard through the land, and yet he knows that he's out of the concern. That's what makes him extravagant.'

'An odd reason,' John ventured.

'Not as odd as it seems. Dad is vain. He wants acknowledgment by other men, he wants to be looked on as Somebody. Did you see what a newspaper called him the other day?'

'No; but what matter? What do they call me?'

'They call you John Storrs, and every time the printer puts your name in type he raises his hat.'

'You certainly know something about flattery,' he remarked with a smile; 'but what did they call the old man?'

'They called Dad "Mr Robert Wilberforce, father-in-law of Mr John Storrs."'

John laughed quietly and looked into the fire.

'And you see that just makes Dad mad, and he goes out and buys a car, or does some other foolish thing, simply to attract attention to himself. Of course his view is all wrong; but it is his view all the same.'

'Well, we're not responsible for his views,' John said; 'if it's just a matter of money, up to a certain point—' But as he looked across at his wife an extra brightness in Vic's eyes nearly stopped his heart.

'Couldn't he go on the Board?' she suggested, after suffering a long scrutiny from John's troubled gaze.

IV.

This was something entirely new. Never since their marriage had Vic asked for anything for old Wilberforce, and never had she attempted to interfere with the Firm's affairs. And not only was Vic attempting this astounding thing, but, unless he was much mistaken, she was on the point of tears.

Of course he could shelve the matter, as Wilberforce himself always did when a disagreeable question arose, but it was not in the character of John Storrs to take that line. On the other hand, suppose Vic were to lose her tense control for a moment and positively cry! It was a terrible predicament, and took John's mind back to the first week of the war when his accountant had told him, with a white face, that strictly speaking the Firm was insolvent; and John had sacked him there and then.

Wilberforce on the Board would be impossible. John's directors were heads of departments only, who spoke, each in turn, on their own specialised subjects and then held their peace. The policy of the Firm was in one pair of hands, and there it must stay. Yet supposing Vic should cry!

'Couldn't you arrange that he had no real authority, signed cheques or something like that, as lots of other directors do who don't really direct?'

'The cheques are signed by the cashier,' John replied.

'Then they could be countersigned by Dad; that makes it easier still. You once said that the only things Dad could do were to keep books and buy broadcloth, whatever that may be.'

'You don't understand, Vic,' he replied, the unusual use of her name showing that he was distressed. 'My directors are merely heads of departments. Sykes, for instance, is cashier, and runs the financial side; Ellison is buyer; Murgatroyd has charge of sales, and so on; and at Board Meetings these fellows just speak on their own particular subjects. The "directing," as you call it, is done by me.'

There was such a tone of finality in John's voice, so complete a refusal, as though the thing asked for were entirely out of his power to give, that Vic turned away to the fire. He watched her adjust one piece of coal after the other with the tongs, her face still averted, and then sat in torture as she went quietly out of the room.

V.

It was the biggest thing John Storrs had ever done. He cast his mind back to every seeming disaster that had loomed up before his path or chased him wildly through weeks of tight money and bad debts in early days, back to the time when even his bank had for the

moment lost confidence in John Storrs's ability and had shut down on the Firm in the middle of a big deal; but none of these things had shaken his nerve in the same way.

Yet what could he do? Not that the presence of Wilberforce on the Board, with limited power, could do much harm, but the cardinal principle of deciding every such thing from an absolutely hard and fast test of increased efficiency ruled it out. What would the secretary, or Sykes, Ellison, or Murgatroyd think of his wisdom if he brought that old fool back onto the Board? There could only be one opinion amongst them, that John Storrs was losing his grip, that his judgment had ceased to be infallible; and there was no room for opinions such as that.

The house was deadly quiet. Suppose Vic were actually crying now. She would do it in complete silence. She would never show her disappointment, for fear it should cause him grief. Then John remembered that she had not said 'Good night.' There could only be one explanation of that fact; she dare not trust herself to speak. But Wilberforce must not come on the Board.

John sat up late, the paper still lying untidily on the floor, and then went quietly up to his dressing-room, where he crept into a seldom used bed and lay awake all night.

VI.

During the next ten days no stranger would have noticed anything but the most cordial comradeship between husband and wife, because neither had any intention of expressing what lay at the back of their mind. That John, for instance, had occupied the dressing-room for the first time, and still occupied it from sheer reluctance to open up the difference that lay between them, passed without comment; whilst Vic had only changed, if at all, in a greater attention to John's comfort in little details, which, of course, merely increased the tension that hung in the air.

John went out of his way to refer kindly to Mr Wilberforce on several occasions, and Vic looked gratefully at him while venturing the opinion that the old man was very comfortably fixed and much better off than he deserved. She even volunteered that her father had nothing whatever to complain of any more than had she. To which John countered, 'Still, he's your father, and for that reason I shall always be in his debt.' In fact, things could hardly have been worse.

Then came the fortnightly Board Meeting, and John, bravely reminding Vic of the fact, warned her that he might be late home.

To John the world, as he was beginning to love it, had come to an end. In business, if one disagreed with a man, well, one disagreed and talked about the disagreement so openly that in the end it often formed the basis of a friendship

that lasted through life; but with women it was different. Women were so set on having their own way—in fact you could not stop them. But he had stopped Vic. That was the awful part of it. Women should never be stopped, he felt sure of that, and yet he had done it. He sometimes wondered whether he were different from everyone else, whether, as Napoleon had said of himself, he was not a 'man' but a 'thing.' In business, yes. Business and private life, money and affection, were divorced as the poles. He had defied his wife, and made both her and himself miserable. It would last for the rest of their lives. He began to wonder whether it was worth while. Suppose he sold out and went to live in the country—let old Wilberforce onto the Board? No, that would not mend matters. The new Board would turn the old fool out and the trouble would begin all over again. Well, it could not be helped. Apparently Fate took a swipe at a man every now and then, and the man just had to grin.

The secretary coughed and looked at his watch.

'I beg your pardon,' John said; 'go ahead.'

VII.

John listened to the reading of the minutes, signed them, and thereafter for three-quarters of an hour tried to pay attention to reports and suggestions read out by the others round the Board. He wondered whether he would ever again succeed in keeping his home affairs separate from his business. In time, of course, he would get hardened, he supposed. Vic would become just an obliging lady-housekeeper and entertainer of his friends, while he would spend more time at his club. The mischief of it was that this was the ideal with which he had started off married life. It had only been lately, for the last six months perhaps, that his home had become a joy to him such as he had never expected could exist.

'I beg your pardon, Mr Sykes?' John was punctiliously polite at a meeting of the Board.

'I was saying, Mr Storrs, that it might be better if the Firm's cheques were signed by another director after being countersigned by me.'

'What for?' John snapped. There was a flavour of repetition about that suggestion. It was what Vic had proposed. He remembered now.

'It is customary,' Sykes went on rather uneasily, 'and as a matter of fact the bank would prefer the arrangement from their own point of view.'

'There's no one here who has time to do that properly,' John replied, looking round the Board. 'We're all stretched to capacity, and what use would it be for one of us to sign as a matter of form?'

'None, Mr Storrs,' Sykes agreed. 'What I suggest, with all deference, is that another director be found, part of whose work would be to keep track of finance. This business is very large and growing fast—'

'Another director!' John gasped. 'But who?'

Apparently no one cared to reply at the moment, so Mr Ellison, who was buyer to the Firm, chipped in.

'That gives me an opportunity, Mr Storrs, of pointing out a weak spot in my department, which Mr Sykes's suggestion might help to remedy. In the early days, when we were mostly concerned with broadcloths, Mr Wilberforce was of the greatest assistance, having been more or less brought up to that particular business. But now the variety of purchase is so large that it would add to the efficiency of my department if some assistance could be given, say twice a month, in that particular direction.'

'Wilberforce!' John exclaimed, gazing from one to the other of his faithful servants.

'It was more or less of Mr Wilberforce that I was thinking,' Sykes remarked. 'If you will remember, sir, Mr Wilberforce, though a little limited perhaps in vision, was a most reliable man at books.'

VIII.

John Storrs pushed the clean blotting-pad along the shiny table and sat far back in his chair. This was a most astounding thing. And then like a flash there came to him, as it had come many a time before, a feeling that Fate was on his side after all. Over and over again in a busy life he seemed to have rescued a project from wreck by clinging to some fragment of luck, and convincing himself that that showed the way if he had but nerve to follow; and over and over again his luck and courage had carried him through.

Wilberforce lay between him and happiness. The heads of departments would think him crazy if he put the old man on the Board; worse even than that was the fact that Vic had interfered with business, had tried to cloud hard facts with sentiment, and that could not be done. And now the Board themselves were asking for the very same thing, not from any sentiment, but as a matter of pure business. He saw it at once. Sykes was right, so was the bank, and Ellison, usually a most reliable man. They had talked it over, of course, as business men should, and had decided that Wilberforce was the best man. Why? Because he was a good bookkeeper and could judge broadcloth as few others could. Quite sound.

So, 'Why Wilberforce?' he asked.

'Easy man to handle,' came from the secretary, a pencil still between his teeth. 'I should do it, Mr John.'

The secretary was the only man who still spoke of 'Mr John,' and then only when he

particularly wished to impress Storrs with his earnestness and to recall with a single word the years of devotion that he had given to the Firm.

'You would?' John said slowly, but with an air of relief. 'All right, then we'll agree on that. Any other business?'

'I think not, Mr John,' the secretary replied; and as the Board filed out of the room John was astounded to notice that each man turned at the door and made him an uncomfortable, almost shamefaced, little bow.

'What's the matter with those fellows?' he asked the secretary, who was collecting his books. 'There seems something unusual in the air.'

'Times change, Mr John,' the other replied casually, 'and influences are set to work. But you're making no mistake. Leave Wilberforce to me.'

'I'm afraid of him interfering——' John began.

'I know. Leave him to me.'

'Well, I hope it will turn out all right. I can't do with him near my room——'

'Leave him to me, Mr John, and you won't know he's here.'

'There are times,' said John to his old secretary as they left the room together, 'when I feel, as you said just now, that there are influences at work——'

'Good ones, Mr John, good ones.'

'No doubt; and yet it gives one an uncomfortable feeling to be swept off one's feet.'

'It's momentary,' the other replied, helping John into his ulster. 'Just once in a while influences may conspire against a man, and he's drowned; and at other times, why, they just sweep him right up onto the shore!'

IX.

'I've got some news for you,' John remarked, after Vic and he had settled down by a blazing fire.

Vic looked up with a smile. 'It's good news, too,' she said happily.

'How d' you know?'

'How should I not know?' she replied. 'I saw it written all over your face when you came in.'

'Yes, it's good news,' he agreed. 'Your father's to go on the Board.'

Vic put down her empty coffee-cup and crossed to the other side of the hearth, sitting down by John's side on a deep settee.

'But are you sure it's wise?' she asked anxiously.

'It's necessary,' her husband corrected.

'John,' said Vic, slipping an arm round his neck, 'you don't deceive me the least bit! You're just a great big, transparent, darling bear, and there isn't another woman in all the world with a man to her name one half as good!'

'Well, well,' he said, taking gentle possession of her hand, 'maybe there were influences at

work, who can tell, but it'll be all right! It'll work out all right, you'll see!'

Of course, he ought really to have told her that he was half driven to it by his own Board; but then John Storrs was wise. Vic was getting what she wished and John was getting the credit for it, which he certainly required. A true recital of the facts could do no good and would positively do harm. So, 'Well, well,' he repeated slyly, 'maybe there were influences at work; who can tell?'

But the curious part of it all never came to John's knowledge, namely, that the wives of John's trusty directors were all added to Vic's social list and helped gently up to the heights of their several ambitions, including the Assembly balls.

After all it had been quite simple. Here was the great John Storrs driven to abject misery by a slip of a woman like herself; was it too much to assume that his directors were in some manner under like distress? The secretary had, of course, been the man to tackle. He had known her as a child. And the secretary, while non-committal as regards himself, he being a bachelor, had been of opinion that under the circumstances the heads of departments would probably agree that Mr Wilberforce was the man required. The rest was easy.

On the other hand it would have been foolish of Vic to explain to John just how the thing had been brought about. That would deprive John of his comfortable feeling of satisfaction and could do no good at all. So she nodded in sage silence and returned the pressure of John's hand.

As for Mr Wilberforce, he spent the very short remainder of his life explaining to casual acquaintances how Storrs had tried to run the concern himself, and had been obliged to bring him in at the end to keep the great Firm on its feet.

So that in that way everyone was pleased.

TRAMPING SONG.

O ROUGH the way,
And steep the brake,
But light the heart I carry;
For I've no care,
No grief to bear,
No cause to turn or tarry.

I trudge along
With idle song,
And never look behind me.
To-day's the day,
And this the way—
The past holds naught to bind me.

I love the trees,
I love the breeze,
I love the world around me.
No tears I weep,
And sound's my sleep,
For happiness has found me.

C. ETHEL EVANS.

CABLE-LAYING ACHIEVEMENTS.

AN EPIC OF THE SEA.

By J. and S. HARRISON.

I.

EMPIRE rests on communications. The Romans, with the menace of the barbarian ever at their frontiers, were able to maintain their boundaries, only because they were careful to construct fine military roads wherever they ruled. The earlier far-flung empire of Alexander the Great had fallen to pieces very soon after his death; for, in the absence of any consolidation, any welding together of subject territories by means of a network of communications, it was easily possible for a tributary monarch or governor to rebel successfully against a central government.

In comparatively recent times, in 1815, after the first phase of colonial expansion, the British Empire consisted mostly of insecure trading outposts and penal settlements. In a world of uncertain and difficult travel it seemed that the Empire was incapable of any real development. Two factors were, however, presently to enter the lives of men, which seemed to cause the world suddenly to become smaller. The steam-engine and the electric telegraph solved, in the course of a few decades, two of the chief problems which faced Britain. The railway made the unification of India and the development of Canada possible, and the steamship provided a means of transport and a weapon of defence of a potency hitherto undreamed of.

It was the electric telegraph, however, which swept away the age-long difficulty of administering over extensive sparsely-inhabited territories. Because of it the British Empire has become, in the course of only a century, a consolidated group of nations capable of infinite development. And the United States of America is an economic unit with an electric nervous system linking up all the centres of her activities.

But the civilised world is now become one wherein the oceans are the highways, and the spanning of the length and breadth of those highways with the electric cable is one of Britain's proudest achievements. In these days, when three hundred and twenty-five thousand miles of cable have been laid, and the industry is capitalised to the extent of sixty million pounds, it is hard to realise that only eighty years have elapsed since the first submarine telegraph lay on the bed of the sea.

II.

On 23rd July 1845, the brothers Jacob and John Watkins Brett addressed themselves to Sir Robert Peel (Prime Minister and First Lord

of the Treasury) with a proposal to establish a general telegraph system, including a cross-Channel cable. They were referred to the Admiralty and the Foreign Office, and, as is usual with government departments, months were wasted in futile correspondence. Eventually a concession was obtained from the French and British Governments authorising the brothers to lay a line from Dover to Calais. The cable, which was a single strand of copper wire covered with gutta-percha half an inch thick, had weights fastened to it at a hundred yard intervals. The line lived long enough to deliver a few incoherent words and a complimentary sentence to Louis Napoleon Bonaparte. It transpired that a Boulogne fisherman had hooked the cable in his trawl, and, thinking it to be a new kind of seaweed, had cut a sample out of it. But his ignorance was far more forgivable than that of the critic of those days who was of the belief that one pulled the cable after the manner of mechanical house-bells, and who gravely pointed out that the bed of the Channel was too rough for the submarine cable ever to be a success.

The message fortunately had the effect of saving the concession, which was renewed by the French Government in 1850. The failure had made investors shy, and until some few weeks before the expiration of the renewal new capital was not forthcoming. The undertaking was saved by the energy and talent of Mr T. R. Crompton, an eminent railway engineer, who raised the necessary fifteen thousand pounds, of which he himself subscribed half.

Crompton's cable consisted of four copper conducting wires, each covered with gutta-percha, the bundle being wrapped in Russian hemp. The outer cover was composed of thick galvanised iron wire to protect the insulation from chafing. This cable was the true forerunner of the modern type; it proved to be a lasting success, for it was worked until the beginning of the present century.

III.

In 1857 certain bold spirits embarked on an attempt to lay an Atlantic cable. They did so in the face of popular prejudice and scientific ignorance. The Astronomer-Royal announced that 'it was a mathematical impossibility to submerge a cable in safety at so great a depth,' and that 'if it were possible, no signals could be transmitted through so great a length.' Owing to the impossibility of finding a ship sufficiently large, the cable was carried in two

steamers. One started from the Irish coast, and the other was to meet her and join up in mid-Atlantic. When three hundred and eighty miles had been paid out the cable was broken, owing to the misjudgment of the brakeman. Besides losing a year of time and three hundred and thirty-five miles of cable, the expedition cost a hundred thousand pounds.

The many errors of the first attempt led to more care being taken with the second, and in the following year the fleet made a series of experiments in the Bay of Biscay before proceeding to actual operations. This 1858 attempt would doubtless have succeeded had not one of the cable ships, the *Agamemnon*, struck a particularly violent storm. The occasion was one of enormous hardships, for the steamer, a warship, was unsuitable for her task. The crew worked with the utmost heroism in the endeavour to keep the appointment in mid-Atlantic, the arrangement being that the two boats should splice the cable in the ocean and then proceed, one to Ireland, and the other to America. So badly was the *Agamemnon* buffeted that of her crew of two hundred, forty-five were in the sick-bay suffering from the effects of injuries and exhaustion. One had a broken leg, another a fractured arm, and a third had his fingers crushed off in holding to what he thought was a ledge in the planks. Unfortunately it was the beams straining apart, and when the ship righted herself they closed up together. One of the crew was driven out of his mind with terror.

The *Agamemnon* and the *Niagara*, however, kept their tryst and, after splicing the cable-ends, started on their journeys, only to return within a few hours because of a breakage. Again they started . . .

It was only after a return to port and an entirely fresh beginning that the cable was completed, and on 16th August 1858 England transmitted the following message to the U.S.A.: 'England and America are united by telegraphy. Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill towards men!'

Unfortunately for the life of the cable the electrical engineer of the Atlantic Telegraph Company believed in very high-tension currents for signalling, and the line breathed its last on 20th October. It had, however, proved its usefulness in transmitting messages to Canada announcing the quelling of the Indian Mutiny and cancelling an order for troops to return to England.

IV.

A considerable feeling of disappointment reigned everywhere. There was much difficulty in obtaining capital for another venture, though the American Civil War stimulated capitalists to further efforts. Mr Cyrus Field, as a special inducement to his fellow-countrymen, preached the doctrine in the U.S.A. that a cable would

be a means of helping America to capture the grain market which was so largely held by France. His mission had the warm support of John Bright and other free-traders. What success he had may be gathered from the following letter written by his brother:

'The summer of the year (1862) Mr Field spent in America, where he applied himself vigorously to raising capital for the new enterprise. To this end he visited Boston, Providence, Philadelphia, Albany, and Buffalo, to address meetings of merchants and others. He used to amuse us with the account of his visit to the first city, where he was honoured with the attendance of a large array of 'the solid men of Boston,' who listened with an attention that was most flattering to the pride of the speaker addressing such an assemblage in the capital of his native state. There was no mistaking the interest they felt in the subject. They went still further; they passed a series of resolutions in which they applauded the projected telegraph across the ocean as one of the grandest enterprises ever undertaken by man, which they proudly commended to the confidence and support of the American public. After this they went home feeling that they had done the generous thing in bestowing upon it such a mark of their approbation. *But not a man subscribed a dollar.*'

The fact must be recorded that the enterprise, like all the previous ones, was entirely British, the work of British brains, British capital, and British labour, stubbornly fighting against unprecedented difficulties.

V.

In 1865 enough money had been subscribed for a new attempt. The single cable-laying ship for this venture was the *Great Eastern*, the conception of Isambard Kingdom Brunel. It is a pity that she was not available at the time of the laying of the first cable. She was in advance of her time; for nearly ten years previous to her use by the telegraph company she had suffered three different ownerships and had, for the most part, lain idle.

On 23rd July 1865 she left Valentia. When forty-eight miles of cable had been paid out a fault was indicated, and the ship had to pick up and examine ten and a half miles of cable before it could be discovered and rectified. This happened again at seven hundred and sixteen miles and at eleven hundred and eighty-six miles, when, after a series of accidents in which the lifting tackle was lost, the *Great Eastern* returned unsuccessful.

She had, however, indicated unsuspected possibilities, and money was found for the 1866 expedition, largely through the faith and determination of Mr (afterwards Sir John) Pender. The giant steamer left Valentia on the *thirteenth* of July, and during a successful

voyage of only fourteen days laid her cable, once more joining the two continents.

On 9th August she again put to sea, and recovered the 1865 cable six hundred and five miles from Newfoundland. After repeated failures the cable was hooked, and on 2nd September the steamer was in communication with Valentia. Six days later she completed the line, thereby making two cables to join England and America within three months.

There followed upon these achievements a boom in submarine telegraph enterprises, and in 1872 Sir John Pender amalgamated the various short-length cables between England and India and formed the Eastern Telegraph Company. Within a few years his concerns were operating lines as far as New Zealand and Shanghai, southward to the Cape, and across the Atlantic to South America.

I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes,

wrote the author of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, little suspecting, no doubt, that science would so far outvie magic as to girdle the earth in eighty seconds. But His Majesty the King, when he opened the British Empire Exhibition, sent a message right round the world and back to Wembley in this amazingly short space of time. 'I have this moment opened the British Empire Exhibition' was flashed from Wembley to Penzance, and thence *via* Fayal, Halifax, Montreal, Vancouver, Bamfield, Fanning, Suva, Auckland, Sydney, Adelaide, Perth, Cocos, Rodriguez, Durban, Cape Town, St Helena, Ascension, St Vincent, and Madeira back to Wembley; also from Sydney *via* Singapore, Madras, Bombay, Aden, Suez, Alexandria, Malta, and Gibraltar.

VI.

The advances in laying and transmission have resulted in an enormous reduction in rates. The pioneer Atlantic Telegraph Company began with a minimum of twenty pounds for twenty words, with one pound for each additional word. By stages it dropped to thirty shillings for ten words of five letters each, and now it is possible during a week-end or in the night-time to send telegrams *via* Imperial or Western Union from door to door, from London to certain towns on the Atlantic seaboard of the U.S.A., for five shillings for twenty words and threepence per additional word. (The ordinary rate is a shilling per word.)

The war service of the cable companies is a proud one. The call from the Motherland reached the outposts of the Empire almost immediately after the declaration of war. In international diplomacy the cable proved itself invaluable. Without it, decisions made within a few hours, and arrangements completed in a

few days, would have taken many months. Throughout the time of hostilities much special work was undertaken in laying and repairing cables all over the world. The most remarkable of the war-time expeditions was the laying of a telegraph from Peterhead (in Aberdeenshire) to Alexandrovsk, by the ship *Colonia* under the supervision of the Post Office. This was performed in 1915 in the cold and darkness of an Arctic winter.

Within four hours of the outbreak of war, Germany was entirely devoid of cable connection with the U.S.A. One line was taken in at Penzance and another was diverted from New York to Nova Scotia. A third was captured by the French at Brest. A year later the crew of a German cruiser landed at Fanning Island and cut the All-British Pacific cable there. The notorious German raider, *Emden*, met her fate after cutting the Eastern Telegraph Company's line at Keeling-Cocos. She succeeded only after the superintendent had sent out the alarm signal which led to the *Emden's* ultimate destruction by the cruiser *Sydney*.

Twenty thousand miles of German cable was captured during the war, for these lines mostly passed through the English Channel.

VII

In the period after the war the cable companies, in common with the rest of mankind, have had manifold difficulties to contend with. During the time of fighting no cables excepting Government ones were put down, and repairs became overdue. The traffic had nearly doubled, and the result was serious congestion. In spite of the competition of wireless, however, the submarine telegraph systems continue to grow; one company alone spent three million pounds on new cables recently. Where secret and reliable transmission is essential the cable holds undisputed sway, for it is not affected by atmospherics, and its messages cannot be picked up by any ingenious schoolboy.

Among recent scientific improvements is the use of automatic relays, wherein the human element is entirely eliminated. Men are necessary only to see that the machines are working properly, and to feed the tape that has been punched out by the receiving machine into the transmitter to the new cable. When one remembers how many times the King's message at the opening of the Exhibition was relayed, it is possible to realise the immense advantage arising out of the freedom from human error that the use of the machine ensures. Carefully compiled statistics by the Eastern Telegraph Company show that the percentage of error in manual working is .190 per cent, and with machine relaying .037 per cent.

An innovation for use on duplicated cables (and all cables are now duplicated) is one which enables two messages to be transmitted simul-

taneously in one direction while another is being transmitted in the opposite one—three messages on two wires. Hence local calls can come through without interfering with long-distance telegrams.

Last year the greatest of the cables to date was completed. It extends from Weston-super-Mare to Far Rockaway, Long Island. It is capable of transmitting twelve hundred letters per minute—six hundred from each end simul-

taneously, a capacity nearly twice that of any other long-distance cable. The slender strands continue to reach out along the bed of the oceans, and the electric network is drawn more closely over the world; though through the ether spread the messages of the new wonder. Each has its sphere of usefulness, and such compelling agencies mould our civilisations, though most men are ignorant, or shut their minds to a knowledge, of their achievements.

HOW ABOUT WATER?

THIRTY years ago this was the oft-repeated question on the gold-fields of Western Australia. It was the all-important query put by the men who met on their travels in opposite directions. Each was anxious to know what were his chances of finding water on the track that lay ahead of him—for upon water life depended.

When in 1891-92 Bayley and Ford rode the 120 miles from Southern Cross and discovered Coolgardie, they 'blazed' the track for thousands of their fellows. In making the journey they took a great risk, for they would meet no one who could tell them where water might be found. They could go for two or three days on the water they carried, but if, before that time expired, they failed to find other water they must return, or die on the track. In their particular case the season favoured them. Rain had fallen not long before and here and there rock-holes had been filled. Also, there was young green herbage for their horses. But rainy seasons were rare in that part of the state, and the men who followed Bayley and Ford did not meet with equal good fortune in finding water—or gold, for that matter!

A marked feature of the country lying between Southern Cross and the eastern gold-fields is the presence of immense dome-shaped masses of granite. These rise, dark and sombre, above the surrounding forest and scrub, and, in area, may cover many acres. For the most part their surface has been worn smooth by weathering, and very little vegetation grows upon them. Here and there on these domes may be found holes worn by some process of attrition perhaps, and in these water may frequently be found. The natives named them 'gnamma' holes, but I do not know the precise meaning of the term. The capacity varies from a few gallons in the greater number of holes up to hundreds of gallons in a few. The water is fouled with the dead bodies of birds, mice, and lizards; but famished men are not faddy, and it was found that after the more solid 'remains' had been picked out, and the water boiled for tea, no harm came to the drinker.

But larger and more permanent supplies were necessary to provision the thousands of men

who tramped along the track to the wonderful gold-fields. The immediate demand was met for a time by the discovery of what were called 'soaks.' The water, shed year by year from the granite masses, disappeared in the soil at their bases. And men, urged by dire necessity, dug for it. They found it, not perfect in quality because of the presence of salt, magnesia, and other minerals in solution. But it was water, and drinkable, and that was what was wanted. Very soon, however, this supply was found too small to meet the demand. The soaks quickly drained, and the cry still was, 'Give me water!'

Wells were sunk deeper, and large supplies of water were met with at no great depth—but salt and bitter! Very much more salt than seawater, and heavy with dissolved minerals. But the men were not to be beaten by drawbacks such as these. They built condensers, and from the bitter liquid produced an absolutely pure water. It was tasteless and insipid—but it was water on which life could be maintained.

The condenser-plants were primitive, but effective. The ordinary 400-gallon iron malt-tanks were brought into use. They were usually placed tandem-fashion in pairs, with a connecting pipe. One edge of the tanks rested on a rough masonry sill, and masonry—stones and mud—was built around and upward to the edge of the tank. The end elevation was diamond-shaped. The masonry formed a flue through which the heat of a wood fire circulated freely. When once the water was brought to the boil a small fire kept it under steam. The steam passed from the boilers along hundreds of feet of piping, and was condensed into water by the air and stored in tanks. The solids in the water fell to the lowest angle of the tanks, and could be removed through an opening as required.

The sinking of wells and the erection of condensers were pushed on vigorously, and at intervals of not more than twelve miles they bordered the road to the fields. They made the journey safe for man and beast. But, as a rule, the man had to pay sixpence a gallon, and at first the price was higher. It cost money to water a team of horses, but the

teamster passed it on to his customers, and it was they who had to pay.

At these watering-places there usually were one or two eating-houses, built of house canvas and galvanised iron. Here, in addition to food, customers could get a wash; but they were cautioned not to throw away the dirty water. This had to be emptied into a near-by tub. Thence it passed back to the condenser, and again came forth as pure drinking water. The idea was not pleasant!

Then some man—name unrecorded—who was possessed of a fine stock of common-sense, deplored the loss of good water that during rains ran to waste from the granite domes. Acting on his suggestion, the Government caused deep gutters to be cut round the bases of the domes, and tanks to be excavated in the earth at the lowest point. And this simple scheme saved many million gallons of water from being wasted. Whenever these tanks were filled the condenser-men were thrown out of business for the time, and they would curse the Government heartily. But, being practical as well as profane, they set to work to overhaul and repair the condenser-plants, ready for the day on which the tanks would be dry and useless. Seeing that the average annual rainfall in that part of the state is about nine inches, they never had long to wait.

But the cry was still 'More water!'

The supplies that had so far been obtained sufficed only for the most urgent needs of the people, and were also very dear. There were few people who could afford to buy water for a decent bath; a sponge-down from a two-gallon bucket of water at long intervals was a luxury, and not within the means of everybody.

The gold-mines also were calling for water, and wanted it by hundreds of thousands of gallons per day. At first the supplies of salt water met with in shaft-sinking sufficed, and for ore treatment the salt water was not harmful, but it could not be used in boilers to raise steam. For this purpose condensing had to be resorted to, but the results were meagre in face of requirements, and very expensive. The cost amounted to a minimum of twenty-five shillings and a maximum of seventy-five shillings per thousand gallons. Strict economy was practised, and no exhaust steam was allowed to blow to waste; it was carefully condensed, and the water returned to be again used. This system still obtains, and no feathery plume of waste steam is to be seen anywhere floating in the air.

For the energetic and thorough development of the mining industry it became an urgent necessity to bring water to the mine in great quantities and at the lowest possible cost to the consumers.

This was brought about, ultimately, by means

of a scheme initiated by the late Mr C. Y. O'Connor on behalf of the Government. A weir was to be formed at Mundaring, in the Darling Ranges near the coast, and from there water was to be pumped to Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. The estimated cost of the scheme was three million pounds, and the daily supply of water to be 5,600,000 gallons. The length of the pipe-line was 351½ miles, and the maximum height of lift 1290 feet. Eight pumping stations were provided at various points along the line until, from the highest point, Bullabulling, thirty-two miles from Coolgardie, the water was able to gravitate to Kalgoorlie.

The foundations of the Mundaring weir were begun in May 1898, and the charging of the great main was started in April 1902. This water reached Coolgardie, at 328 miles, just before Christmas 1902, and Kalgoorlie in January of the year following. It was a great work well carried out, and has stood the test of time. Moreover, it reduced the price of water to five shillings and seven shillings per thousand gallons.

Not only did it serve the needs of the gold-mine—it saved the railway great expense in hauling water for the locomotives; and as time passed districts adjacent to the pipe-line demanded water, and were supplied by branch pipe-lines. Farmers drew upon it for their needs, and here and there on the gold-fields beautiful gardens came into being and glorified places which previously had been the abomination of desolation.

The pioneers of the track had carried their meagre supply of water in canvas bags or in canteens, on foot or by horse and camel. To-day the traveller on the railway follows the same old track, and the great pipe-line is in evidence the whole way.

But farther back, beyond the reach of the Mundaring supply, the travellers along the bush tracks still ask the men they meet, 'How about Water?'
E. D. C.

THE LIKENESS.

You, whom I asked for a portrait,
You, who bade me 'forget'!
Who would bury the jewels of Passion in the
grave-cold sands of Regret;
What of the night-wind's whisper, sweet and
faint as your sighs?
What of the blue of the heavens—the fathom-
less blue of your eyes?
What of the cornlands that borrowed the glorious
gold of your hair?
What of the lark's high ecstasy?—the thrill of
your voice is there;
What of the poppies that matched your lips, when
we gathered them dew-wet?
You, whom I asked for a portrait,
You, who bade me 'forget'!

WILLIAM FREEMAN.

A ROMANCE OF THE REEL.

PART II.

IV.

MRS FRASER had not much to explain to her visitor that he had not already overheard, though he paid most careful and properly astonished attention.

'And who—who is this young lady, Mrs Fraser?'

'She is Miss Sheena of the Lodge.'

'Miss Sheena Cattanach?'

'Yes.'

'Ah!'

'Perhaps you know—' suggested Mrs Fraser.

'No. Only, it was a big enough obligation to be under for the fishing; but when it comes to getting your life saved as well, it—it embarrasses, Mrs Fraser.'

'Indeed, no!' she vouchsafed. 'Miss Sheena herself would just enjoy it. She'll be round to see you this afternoon for certain.'

'You see, I got the two or three days from Mr Robertson, the factor in Edinburgh, for whom I did a little commission. It seems Mr Cattanach has an interest in antiques.'

'They say he would just sell his soul for a bit old picture, and as for the gallery of pictures he has—there's no end to it. Some of the things that queer-looking and foreign, the keeper was telling Kennie that he wouldn't be seen taking them away in a barrow for nothing.'

Davie ventured his timid smile, but no comment.

'He doesn't fish much himself nowadays, except maybe an odd time. But there are friends who come for spells now and then. The last of them is that dark, foreign-looking man—and he's just going. The fishing is really over now, but in the spring—'

'Yes, in the spring,' said Davie Dunbar. 'I can understand.' And his eyes became contemplative.

And when Mrs Fraser thereupon retired to make him something, he dreamed of the great annual spring run and the swift, strong bodies cleaner than new silver. . . . Till slowly, imperceptibly, there crept over his dreams a shadowy film, the dark pool gripping at his deathly experience became darker, the leaping fish more uncanny, more symbolic of the fear-some. He tried to shake it off as a man strives to shake off a horrible imputation on the thing he loves. And he knew it was not altogether mere fear engendered by the physical mishap as a mishap. It was something elusive, sinister, like—like that picture of his, which had so strangely been at once illusion and reality when he had been going down—down. 'Just sick fancies,' he mumbled. And after Mrs Fraser

had ministered to his needs he felt decidedly more able to cope with all shadowy things. 'And that picture—after all, it's a mere surface fancy o' a mad painter, who must aye twist every clear, sweet feeling into something contorted and unchancy.'

He shook himself. He tried to feel better, to get a grip of the philosophic imperturbability that winds with the doric. 'Ah weel, tae a richt mind the mischance was no-but the kitchen tae the triumph; an', Gudesakes, is he no' eichteen pun'! What wad Jamie say tae that!' But the picture remained, the shadow haunted. 'Mistress Fraser!'

'Yes! Yes!' She came quickly.

'I was jalousin' mebbe that as muckle speerits as wad gang i' a thim'le—'

She looked at him, vainly striving to follow.

He pulled himself up, coloured a trifle. 'I thought perhaps a spoonful of whisky—'

'How stupid of me—' And just then there came a knocking. 'Now I'm not thinking but that will be Miss Sheena herself come to see you;' and the good lady bustled to the front door.

Mrs Fraser's expectation proved to be correct, and presently Davie Dunbar saw his door open and a young woman enter, bringing with her a fresh cool swirl of air that fanned his face, his senses, with fragrance of the wide out-of-doors.

'Mr Dunbar! How glad I am to hear you are little the worse of—of—'

'Ma dookin'' were the words that rose impulsively to his lips, wildly, and that he only just managed to choke down. For the light that he thought he had visioned on her face was there naturally. His heart began to beat unreasonably. And she finished her sentence not with words but with a smile where humour blended perfectly in a soft-welling sympathy.

'No, I—I am none the worse. Thanks—thanks indeed to you!'

'That was nothing—nothing at all;' and she sat down on the chair by his bed. 'Though I take not a little credit, perhaps, for having acted the gillie so well!'

(Exit Mrs Fraser, with a mumbled reference to a 'message'.)

'It was the first time ever—ever I had a gillie,' said Davie; 'and—and,' concluded Davie in a rush, 'it was worth having gone without one for. I mean—'

Her eyes danced. Her colour rose a shade. 'It is kind of you just to mean that,' she said.

And suddenly looking into her eyes, he smiled. She was so plainly no-but a bit lassie herself. A sudden warmth whirled about his heart. 'You saved the life of a poor old man—'

'Who was fighting like ten young ones!' Plainly she was going to take no thanks. 'How stubbornly you refused to give me that rod!'

'So they have been telling me. But I had tried so hard to get into him, was it any wonder?'

As eyes met smiling eyes a perfect accord seemed to be established.

'And then—' she began, as on a sudden impulse, and paused.

He noticed the hesitation, the slight instant sobering of her expression; but in a moment it had passed.

'Tell me,' she said cheerfully, 'did you see me coming?'

And for an instant there was a slight sobering of Davie Dunbar's expression also. 'Well, yes—' he hesitated.

She looked at him.

It came in a rush. 'To tell you the truth, I saw you and yet I didn't see you.' He forced a doubtful smile.

'You mean it was just a glimpse?'

'No, it was a picture,' he said; 'but it just shows you how the mind gets all mixed up at such a moment. I have a picture in my shop in Edinburgh—and it was that picture that seemed to rise before my eyes. It sort of fitted in—and it was that I thought I saw. But really, it is foolish of me mentioning it at all. Actually I did see you, of course.'

'How interesting! And what is your picture like, really?'

'Oh, a foolish old-fashioned picture!' Drat the picture! There was no need to have mentioned it at all.

'But now you have roused my curiosity! You must tell me. You say it "fitted in."'

'Well, that's just what it didn't do in a way. In what way?'

He twisted in his bed a trifle. She laughed. 'Surely the picture is not so bad as all that?'

He gave in. After all, it was foolish to pretend there was anything in it. By holding back he was merely creating the wrong sort of mysteriousness.

'Well, you see, the picture has a great sombre pine wood in it. I don't mean your pine wood holds any of the darkness. A pine wood, and out of it a woman is escaping on horseback. That's all. It did fit in a little as a picture, didn't it?'

She nodded, but a queer intangible uncertainty had been created. 'Escaping, you say?' she asked.

'Yes, yes. One of those old symbolic things, you understand. Virtue flying before the darkness, and all that. Merely a silly hallucination of mine at such a moment!'

'That's queer,' she said quietly.

He looked at her. 'How could it be queer?' he asked with a sudden gentleness.

'Well, I can imagine how heavy is the

feeling of debt one has to carry when some one else has saved one's life. I can understand that, believe me. And I have thought it might lighten and make glad the burden—if, if at the same time some compensating great service had been done that some one else.'

His eyes watched her invitingly, waited.

She suddenly looked at him impulsively. 'You did me a service, too, by—by diverting me. Before I saw you I was not flying from that pine-wood with fear in my face. I was going into it, to an appointment, with black misgiving, yet somehow mesmerised, knowing I shouldn't, yet going—desire, fear. . . . Oh, I can't explain, but to-day—I know that I—escaped.'

There was a listening silence of revelation between them for a moment, then his hand came out and caught hers. 'You saved a poor old man's life, and now how deeply happy you have made that old man's heart in the saving! To have waited for that was worth my whole life.'

The white flame of earnestness, fear, that had touched her face, gradually receded before returning colour, a softening in the eyes. 'You said that about the gillie, you know!'

He smiled, and there was a brightness upon his face. 'But what I will say to my own heart will be known only to myself—and no one else shall hear a mystic word of it.'

v.

The year dies and the year is born. And the rebirth, according to the poets, is accompanied by many signs and wonders from the fancies of a young man to the red on a robin's breast. Yet to Davie Dunbar the poets missed the subtlest wonder of all, for the fancy and the feather, the flower and the sap—these, like the blessed poor, we have always with us. There are other things.

He moved about the shop restlessly. Twice he went through to the back-place, where, away from Jamie's measuring eye, he could behold the picture that hung above his own little desk. The amount of diplomacy, of tact, he had had to exercise in order to get it removed from the immediate purview of Jamie's salesmanship! How lame the excuse that he 'thocht he wad keep it by him a wee'! The removal of the sale ticket with its cryptic lettering that, being translated, signified £3, 3s.—Jamie's price, argued out on the basic value of the frame! He had not looked at Jamie, and putting as bold a front on it as possible, had simply walked away ben with the picture, feeling the while Jamie's eye like a shaft in the small of the back.

Not that he had dared absolutely to forbid its sale. But who, beyond a deluded and gambling Yankee, would ever offer five shillings? In its possession he felt perfectly secure.

And in the little universe of it, the picture signified much to Davie. Already time was

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lending its enchantment, smoothing over the physical harshnesses of a past misadventure, of a past Adventure, leaving only the subtle meanings, the deep significances, the strange wonder. A little universe wherein he had acted the principal part—even if too literally he had blundered into acting it. It was something to have lived for. And how exquisitely kind and just Fate had been to him, even in that matter of the salmon. Ah, that was a matter! Yes, the picture was a magical picture, even with its shadow, with its still undissolved film of the uncertain.

Not that that shadow had anything any longer to do with a dark pool and leaping fish. It stood for the life of a young woman, who had wavered within the edge of it. And that life now? Davie gazed at the fleeing figure, the fear on the bright face, till his gray eyes softened.

He turned away from it again, came through to where Jamie, with emphatic niceness, was polishing the silver on a great cairngorm brooch. Jamie did not pause in his rubbing, paid no attention to the figure that moved about restlessly, yet every rub indicated that he was enigmatically privy to much.

Davie wandered to the door, looked abroad, and found the air of a fine thin blueness tempered by an enlivening suspicion of frost. It was early afternoon, very still, and full of a sort of listening reverie. He sniffed the air. The coolness ran along his veins. No, it wasn't reverie, it was an awakening. It was spring. The time the poets speak of so inadequately. On a sudden impulse he turned to the only figure near him, and 'They will be running noo, Jamie!' he said softly.

Silence hung portentously, till there was the sound of the brooch being laid on the top of the glass case with a metallic deliberateness.

'I wad hae thoct,' said Jamie, 'ye'd 'a' been cured o' that; cured o' a' that, by now!'

Colouring a little, Davie laughed uncertainly. 'Hoots, man, it's the best winter season we've ever had! We're gettin' rich!'

'Yes, I'm no' denyin' the season; an' for the first time oor stock hes reached pre-war heicht—if no' a little ayont.' And thereupon the brooch was taken in hand again.

'Weel, then—I dinna see—'

Jamie waited ruthlessly, but apparently Davie had thought better of it.

'P'raps ye dinna,' agreed Jamie at last. 'P'raps ye dinna.'

A position of the most delicate; losing none of its difficulty because Davie knew in his heart that Jamie's concern was not altogether for the business. Had he not sternly refused to let Davie work in Davie's shop for a full week after the return from Glenuel, because he, Davie, was alleged to 'hev a colour on him that nicht weel frichten a decent customer'? Of the most delicate—yet to be faced—yet how?

His dilemma was resolved in a manner that appeared to him little short of the miraculous, though, when regarded calmly, there was possibly nothing out of the way in the fact that Mr and Miss Cattnach of Glenuel should elect, as usual, to break their long northern journey from London at Edinburgh. Yet he most indubitably glared upon them as they advanced, in the body, to his very doorstep.

'Ah, Mr Dunbar!' It was her voice, her face with the clear light on it. Her hand came out quickly. It took him yet a moment to respond, and even then his handshake was half-mechanical. She laughed. 'I have brought dad with me. Besides, I think he was a little intrigued over the perfectly lovely silver!'

That did it! Davie had sent, privily, one or two exquisite pieces of old Tudor silver by way of acknowledgement of the Adventure. The pieces were, of course, his own, and, everything considered, there was no need of running the gauntlet of any salesman's comment, verbal or silent. 'Nothing, nothing at all!' he hastened to say, and turning immediately to her father, 'How do you do, sir?'

Mr Cattnach acknowledged. 'My daughter has often spoken of you.'

In build the two men were not unlike, and the blue eyes of the owner of Glenuel Lodge had much of that dreamy quality which not infrequently lay like a mist of reverie in the gray eyes of the dealer in antiques.

'And,' said Miss Cattnach, 'this is Mr Graeme.'

Then Davie looked upon the third member of the party, who proved to be a young man of a hand-grip in which there was the friendliest lack of indecision.

'Welcome, welcome, indeed!' said Davie, half recovered, the other half still overcome.

'And now we are going to look at all the queer things you have. May we?' Her understanding was subtle. Davie as host came to himself in a moment.

He ushered them into the shop. He introduced Mr James Forsyth, and thereupon, without apology for store or stock, he indicated such treasures and curios as he possessed. He had really a rather fine collection of old Georgian silver, over which he was inclined to linger. But as he warmed to his task in front of such obvious interest, he even unearthed an unusual knowledge of the homely cairngorm—and its foreign birthplace.

In the end they reached the back-shop, where the more choice items were kept. He preceded his visitors, and then, turning to welcome them in, suddenly interrupted a little action that in its instinctive nature told him something more surely than would the most intimate words.

The light from a side window shone right across the rather small room on to the face of

ment here and there amongst the scintillating mass showed that some of the herring were still alive. This was the first time I had seen a live herring. This species is a delicate creature, and it will succumb shortly after being taken from its natural element.

I noticed, also, that the fishermen in their oilskins and sea-boots looked dignified, sturdy, and manly, harmonising beautifully with their environment, and totally different from their shore appearance. Indeed, if one wishes to see the fishermen at their best, one should see them at sea following their calling.

We repeated the above operations several times during the early morning, while several other steamers were sailing about and carrying on the same work. Sometimes there was an exciting race between two or more steamers making for the same signal, which gives a touch of adventure and spirit to the enterprise.

A flock of sea-gulls followed the steamer all night, and, during the process of transshipping, small herring were thrown overboard and others would drop accidentally into the sea. No sooner had a herring dropped over the side than a cluster of gulls, setting up a chorus of screeches and shrill cries, would dive or rather plunge for it. I often noted that a gull would miss its mark, which goes to show that these birds cannot see very well at night—the gull, of course, is not a night bird. At times a bunch of them would plane down majestically right over the hold—coming into the zone of the torches—and the light reflecting on their white bodies against the dark background of

the night gave them the appearance of a shower of gigantic snowflakes.

The gull referred to here is known as the herring-gull. It differs from the common gull in certain colour characteristics. The former has its lower mandible decorated at the angled part by a splash of red, and has flesh-coloured legs; the legs of the latter are of a yellowish green shade, and the red splash is absent from the mandible.

At dawn the gannet or solan-geese came on the scene, and the gulls then had no chance of getting any of the spoil. Every fish that went over the side was immediately caught up by a gannet. These creatures are graceful divers—taking the water at a slanting angle when fishing at a low altitude, and never missing their quarry. The dive is vertical in working from a high altitude.

About 5 A.M., as the glorious sun was rising over the rugged mountains of Arran, painting sea and land in golden hues, we left the fishing-ground, homeward bound for Campbeltown.

The other steamers left earlier in order to catch the early train at Fairlie, and send their fish off to the city for the morning market so that the citizens of Glasgow might have a fresh herring for breakfast.

My night's cruise in Kilbrennan Sound amongst the fishing fleet made a lasting impression on my memory, and gave me a fuller insight into the factors which weave so splendid a romance round the arduous calling of the fisherman.

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

CHAPTER VI.—*continued*

III.

ALL was now arranged between us, and nothing remained but to carry out the arrangements we had made. We went from Liverpool to London next day, and had the interview, which we had secured by telegram, with Thurlow.

I had known him previously; but never before had it been my lot to elicit from him a legal opinion, or to fix his attention upon a matter so important as that which now confronted Hubert and myself. He seemed to me to be just the man we wanted; the very embodiment of sound legal knowledge wedded to good common-sense.

By his advice we stayed another day in London on purpose to secure the attendance at his office of Dr Mackenzie, and also of an expert from Messrs Swallowfield, the Birmingham manufacturers.

These interviews were eminently satisfactory.

And then Hubert went with me to Richmond. It was as silent a journey as the one we had taken on our way back from Sussex Lodge to my club nine months ago. Both of us were deeply engaged with our own thoughts. It is not every thought that may be uttered, and there are 'thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.'

The surrender to the police was not so painful an experience as I had anticipated. The official attitude, the business-like tone, the routine questioning, even the good humour of the spider on seeing the fly walk into his parlour—all this tended to put us at our ease.

In due course the charge sheet was filled; and then with a promise to Hubert to return to Richmond in good time for the trial before the justices, away I went, like a homing pigeon, as straight and as quickly as I could to my own home.

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and see her on the evening of my return, as I wanted (so I wrote) to talk to her about Hubert.

Over my interview with this brave-hearted and true mother it were well to draw a veil; but let this at any rate be said, would that every son had such a mother!

IV.

I was back again at Richmond for the trial. Needless to say, it created a great sensation; and the newspapers made the most of it.

The Treasury, represented by one of the Treasury Counsel, prosecuted; and alas! the charge brought against poor Hubert was that of murder. A good deal was made of the fact that he had fled from justice, and for nine months had concealed from the police his knowledge of the event.

Another point which was pressed was the cause of quarrel between the deceased officer and the defendant, and it was argued that there must have been strong animus to provoke so much physical violence and such a deadly struggle.

I was called as a witness on behalf of the prisoner not merely to testify to the excellence of his character, which I did *con amore*, but to substantiate what he had said as to the inebriety of the deceased on that particular night.

Hubert had determined, previous to the trial, that nothing should induce him to bring Vera's name into public notice, but, in the course of the proceedings, it became obvious to me that his reticence might very seriously prejudice his case.

I took the opportunity, therefore, when I was in the witness-box, to ask that the name of the lady should be written on a slip of paper and made known only to the magistrates and to the counsel on either side; and this was done.

The evidence of Mr Mackenzie was then taken; and he described lucidly enough, and by means of diagrams, the powers and limitations of the artificial hand which he himself had designed for the most beneficent of purposes, but which, by sheer inadvertence, had been the cause of such grievous disaster.

His evidence was confirmed by the junior partner of Messrs Swallowfield & Co. of Birmingham, and also by the very mechanic who made the steel hand, and who remembered every detail of its manufacture.

The steel hand itself was brought into court, and was an object of supreme interest to everyone who could manage to obtain even a glimpse of it.

It was inspected by the magistrates, but the attention they bestowed upon it was but scanty, and I was led to suppose that after the evidence they had just heard as to its manufacture and design, they did not consider that a more

minute examination could serve any good purpose.

But as a matter of fact (so Mr Thurlow subsequently told me), the decision of magistrates in such a case as this would not be influenced by a detail of this kind, for it is upon broader issues that they have to decide whether they shall send the case for trial to the Higher Court, or not.

Nevertheless the appearance of that hand in that court, witnessing, silently but eloquently, to the part it had played in the tragedy that had taken place, was to me a very pathetic and remarkable circumstance.

Hubert had been accustomed to wear over this hand an easy but well-fitting glove, which helped to conceal both from himself and from others the loss he had sustained. Thus very few persons had ever had opportunity of seeing the hand itself, and still fewer had had opportunity of making acquaintance with its mechanism.

The tiny plates of steel of which the surface of the hand was formed were beautifully constructed, and so delicately adjusted to each other as to present the appearance of a fish's scales; and they served to give to the hand that elasticity without which it would have been but a useless appendage. Within this outer covering of steel plates a most ingenious system of pulleys had been contrived, whereby the working of the more important sinews of the natural hand had been artificially reproduced. These pulleys were riveted inside the gauntlet to the extremities of the finger-stalls, and from there they passed along the arm to a strong but elastic bracelet which encircled the arm just above the elbow.

Thus the flexing and reflexing of the fingers of the hand depended upon the contraction and expansion of the muscles of the upper arm. These muscles were brought into action by the bending and unbending of the elbow, and in process of time Hubert had acquired considerable adroitness and power in laying hold of objects and in releasing them from his grasp.

V.

There was a full bench of magistrates, and it was evident that their duty weighed somewhat heavily upon them. At the close of the trial they consulted together in private for about twenty minutes; and then upon returning into court the chairman announced that, in view of the arguments adduced by counsel for the prosecution, it became their duty to send the prisoner for trial; and that he would be tried at the Central Criminal Court at the next assize.

All this fulfilled our worst anticipation, and I left the court with very gloomy feelings.

Notwithstanding all the warning conveyed by Mr Thurlow, and by the Liverpool solicitor,

that a commitment of this kind was not unlikely, I yet had buoyed myself up with the hope that the magistrates, taking into consideration the fact that Hubert came forward voluntarily, and was the victim of his own crippled condition, would deal summarily with the case, and allow common-sense to prevail against mere legal practice. But this was not to be.

The practice of the English law is a curious thing, and the one certainty about it is that it exhibits all the glorious uncertainty of a game of cricket.

The only person, curiously enough, who seemed quite satisfied with the result, and rubbed his hands together after a joyous fashion, was Mr Thurlow, the eminent solicitor, who was responsible for the defence.

'Everything has gone much as I expected,' he said to me, 'and now we are in a position to estimate the relative strength of the prosecution and of the defence. They've had their say, and we've had ours; and indubitably we've got the best of it.'

I could but hope so: and felt very anxious.

VI.

Moreover, there were other matters of which the lawyer knew nothing, but which caused me infinite concern. Two days after the account of the trial had appeared in the newspapers a letter reached me, from Sir Thomas Weston, as follows:

'DEAR SIR,—I am given to understand that you are not only the clergyman, but also in a special sense the personal friend, of Mr Hubert Carrington, who is now in prison awaiting his trial for murder. I feel myself precluded from writing to him personally in the unhappy circumstances in which he has placed himself, and, therefore, pardon me for addressing myself to you. I do not wish to say one unnecessary word to cause pain, but it is imperative that he shall be informed without delay that no further communication now, or at any future time, whatever may be the result of the trial, can be permitted between him and my daughter Vera. I am tempted to say a great deal in justification of this decision, but with your knowledge of the world I feel that I need not enter upon further explanation. I shall be greatly obliged to you, reverend sir, if you will convey to Mr Carrington, in suitable terms, this my irrevocable decision. And I beg to remain,

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS WESTON.'

In some circumstances I should not have felt called upon to answer such a letter as this, beyond writing a bare acknowledgment. But for Hubert's sake, and, indeed, for the truth's sake, I curbed a rising feeling of irritation, and tried to view the position from the general's

point of view. In this I was partly successful, and I sent him a conciliatory rather than an indignant reply.

None the less it was with feelings of satisfaction that I wrote that as Hubert himself, out of a chivalrous regard for the feelings of Vera and her family, had already renounced his engagement and given back to the young lady her freedom, it did not seem to me at all necessary to add any further sting to his troubles by communicating to him the painful message conveyed by the general's letter.

I also took occasion to add that my fuller knowledge of all the events which led up to this trial enabled me to say that, in my estimation, Hubert's character stood higher than ever; and that, so far from his being condemned by his fellow-countrymen, I could not bring myself to believe that any judge or jury was likely to censure him, except for the one thing, that he had not communicated immediately with the police.

I added that probably General Weston was unaware that Hubert's real reason for this silence had been his extreme reluctance to have Vera's name publicly associated with the quarrel which had led to such disaster.

CHAPTER VII.

I.

THE Assize at the Old Bailey now began to draw on apace. Hubert had already been four weeks in prison, but as the charge against him had been formulated as one of murder, the question of bail could not be entertained.

Often during that period did I think of St Peter's imprisonment as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles; 'Peter was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him.'

Hubert within the walls of the prison was prayed for by some of us outside those walls; but to say that he and we, during those anxious days, were sustained by prayer might be misleading. We felt ourselves to be sustained by Him to Whom we prayed; and we tried to cast our anxiety upon Him, knowing that He careth for us.

It was now within three days of the opening of Assize, and I had come up to town so as to be at hand until the trial was over.

The authorities had been kind in the matter of allowing me to see Hubert from time to time, and as for Mr Thurlow he had been the very incarnation of patience in listening over and over again to my oft-repeated tale.

I had determined, therefore, that I would not go down to his office again, nor weary him with any last words, or final instructions. And yet, behold! here was I, to my amazement, going once more to his office as fast as motor power

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was allowed to take me, perhaps a little faster. Mr Thurlow had telephoned hurriedly for me.

Within half-an-hour I was at his office, and was shown at once into his private room. He rose from his chair alertly, and held my hand. 'She's come!' he exclaimed; and his eyes twinkled.

'Who's come?' I gasped.

'Why, who do you think? The young lady herself, Miss Vera Weston.'

'You don't mean it?' I said.

'Yes! I do; and if you had been a few minutes sooner, you would have found her here. You are surprised?' he added.

I confessed I was surprised; and then I told him of the letter I had received from Sir Thomas Weston absolutely forbidding any further communication with his daughter, and putting an end to the engagement.

'Ah! well!' said Mr Thurlow, 'he reckoned apparently without his daughter. Sir Thomas, you know, was a daring cavalry officer in his time; he was known throughout India as "Dare-Devil Tom." And now his own daughter dares her own father. Depend upon it she's a chip of the old block. But, whatever she is, she's a girl after my heart, though I myself am the most cautious man now living.'

All this seemed pleasant enough talk for Mr Thurlow, but I continued to stare blankly at him. 'Do you mean,' I interrupted, 'that she is determined to stick to Hubert, and has run away from home?'

'It looks very much like it,' he observed.

'And where is Miss Weston?' I anxiously asked.

'Oh, she's all right. She is now staying with old friends of her family; some people called Chichester, living in Lennox Gardens.'

'I know them,' I said; 'very nice people.'

'Yes!' he rejoined; 'Mrs Chichester accompanied her here.'

'That was kind of her,' I remarked; 'but tell me, what was her purpose in coming to you?'

'I see,' observed the lawyer, 'that you are more surprised by this visit than I was. The fact is, I had been somewhat prepared for it.'

II.

Mr Thurlow unlocked a safe in one corner of the room, and taking out a letter, unfolded it and laid it carefully on the table before me, but kept his outspread hand upon it.

'This is a very private letter,' he remarked; 'indeed, I may say that it is a very sacred letter.'

'It is addressed, as you see, to our client. It is the outpouring of a girl's true love for the man to whom she has given her whole heart. It is not many men who have the privilege of receiving such a letter. You and I may esteem it a privilege that we are allowed by Mr Carrington to read it.'

'Are you sure,' I asked, 'that he intended me to see it?'

'Quite sure,' Mr Thurlow replied. 'He sent for me yesterday, and placed the letter in my hands. Not, he assured me, because he wanted advice upon it; but because, being shut up in a cell, and feeling so utterly helpless to do anything himself, he wanted me and you also to do all we could to prevent Miss Weston from coming to town, or taking any step which might make a breach in her own family circle. However, she has given us no chance. She has followed up the letter promptly by arriving. But there's the letter; perhaps you will kindly peruse it.'

I required no second invitation. And this was the letter:

'MY OWN DARLING HUBERT,—When I read your letter from Liverpool I felt as mortally wounded as if I had received two death blows. One great wound was the discovery that you had not trusted my love for you sufficiently to enable you to make a confidante of me when you first got into that dreadful trouble. If only you had told me, I should have advised you to make a clean breast of everything without a moment's delay, and I should never have failed in my love and loyalty to you.

'The other great wound you gave me was your telling me that now you had got into such trouble, and were sinking so deep in the mire, you could not think of dragging me down with you, and that our engagement must cease.

'All this so paralysed my senses that I did not know how to answer you; and you also purposely gave me no clue as to where I could write to you.

'And then my father must needs come down upon me with all the weight of parental authority, saying that there must be no further communication between us. Well! I have had plenty of time for consideration, and I want now to make some amends for my long silence, and to thank you with all my heart, dear one, for all the tender and loving consideration which caused you to think more about my position than about your own.

'But oh! how mistaken you have been about me. I can't tell you how my heart has ached for you all the time you were in Canada.

'Oh! if only I had known that you were in exile on my account. I am fully resolved now what I ought to do, for I have thought and thought of you unceasingly, and of the shipwreck of my own life if you go out of it.

'Dearest Hubert, you are in a very great trouble and danger, and I could never be happy again if I failed you in such a crisis.

'I am acting on the supposition—though it is not a supposition, but the truth, is it not?—that you still love me as I love you: and so we cannot and must not be parted from each other.

'How I do wish that I could be with you

in your prison life to share it with you, and to cheer your solitude. But it won't be for long, for this horrible trial will soon come, and soon be over; and I want you to know that in it all, and at the end of it all, I am as much your own loving Vera as ever I was before, only more so. For I think when people suffer together and for each other, as you and I have, it endears them to each other. Isn't that your own feeling?

'I am coming to London at once, so as to be as near to you as I can; and also to arrange with the lawyers to let me give my own evidence in open court as to what I know of that night at Sussex Lodge. I shall be staying after to-morrow with Colonel and Mrs Chichester in Lennox Gardens. You are quite mistaken if you think that your Vera could feel any shame in taking her stand beside you. It will be a dear delight to me to testify my belief in you to the whole world. They are bound to see that it was all an accident, and I can show what led

up to it. Quite innocently I was partly to blame, and so how could I ever forgive myself if you suffered through any cowardice or backwardness on my part now?

'But, however this trial may end, whether they let you go free now, or not till a later period, I wish to be the very first to be clasped again in your dear arms when you are free again, and to feel that after all that has happened you still are mine.

'I cannot contemplate any other issue; but as the occasion of my writing this letter to you is such a solemn one, I would like you to know that if you are altogether taken away from me in this life, the one thing I shall pray for and look forward to is the meeting you again in the better country, and in the presence of Him Who judges righteously.

'I am ever, my darling, what you once called me,—Your own true
VERA.'

(Continued on page 582.)

MID-ASIA'S DEAD SEA.

By N. TOURNEUR.

MID-ASIA holds many secrets and mysteries, and her 'Dead Sea' is one of them. Few of us but know of Palestine's expanse of brine and desolation, with which many British troops became familiar when driving out the Turks. But only one or two Westerners have set eyes on the barren waters of Lake Issikul, that lies surrounded by vast mountain ranges in 'Old' Moghulistan. This stretch of very briny waters, that is some 120 miles long and 40 miles at its widest, has occupied its valley, 5300 feet above the sea level, since the prehistoric ages when Mid-Asia was the cradle of the Old World. And tradition there gives it an origin much the same as that connected with the Dead Sea in Palestine.

Old Moghulistan is to-day the land of the wandering Kirghizes and their flocks of cattle, sheep, and goats. But under its soil, and along its mountain-sides, are the remains of great and once prosperous cities, many of which were flourishing until put to the sword and destroyed by the dread Tartars in the thirteenth century. Here, too, lies Karakorum, their lost capital with its buried treasures.

In ages farther back, where Issikul laps its shores, there lay a great city and some small towns. Then came deep rumblings beneath the valley, the earth rocked, and the nearby mountains shook. Fires burst from volcanic depths and consumed the city and towns, and were followed by briny waters gushing from underground.

To-day this lake of very salt water is known among the natives of Western Turkestan as Tuzkul, the salt lake, as well as Issikul, the hot

lake, for not only are its waters very brackish, but owing to the hot springs supplying it the surface never freezes in winter—notwithstanding the severe winter in these regions, which is almost like that of Alaska.

The lake is very deep, and no islands are now found on it, although in the fourteenth century one existed, to which Timur Khan, greatest and most terrible of the Mongol sovereigns, who changed the history of the Old World, banished the Tartar chiefs of Asia Minor and their clans. In consequence of numerous springs of boiling chemical water issuing from the bottom of Issikul the temperature of its waters reaches between eighty-five and ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit. The bottom of the lake appears to contain a great quantity of pure iron ore, which is cast up on the shores after one of the frequent tempests, and out of which the tribesmen manufacture iron. The scimitars and daggers of Samarkand, so famous throughout Mid-Asia for the strength of their material and the keenness of their edge, are fashioned out of the flotsam ore of Issikul.

Like those of the Dead Sea of Palestine its salty shores are sterile, but have banks of bituminous deposits. In these, it has been stated, are embedded the remains of beast and bird of far-off centuries. But Issikul is no new discovery, for it is mentioned in the Chinese annals as early as the seventh century. All the geological evidence points out that here, in Old Moghulistan, a cataclysm occurred which was exactly like that which destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

THE WHITE HEALER.

PART II.

III.

'I DON'T know why it is, Mr Faring,' said Iris Temple, 'but I feel oddly depressed to-night—uneasy—just a little frightened.'

'Frightened?'

'Yes. That sounds rather absurd, doesn't it?'

'It doesn't seem quite like you, Miss Temple.'

'I suppose not. Still, there it is, you know. I have a sort of presentiment that something is going to happen. Something terrible——' She broke off, shivering slightly.

Dick Faring nodded, regarding her with a thoughtful air. They were standing in the lee of the deck-house, sheltered from the strong wind which was blowing across the lagoon. His face, in the pale moonlight streaming down between fast-travelling clouds, had a grave, troubled look.

'I think I understand,' he said gently. 'You are feeling the strain of this prolonged search, and are anxious as to the result. It's the uncertainty that is worrying you—getting on your nerves a bit. That is very natural, of course, since it means so much to you. But the suspense will soon be over. I feel sure that we are on the right track now; and if The White Healer turns out to be your brother, well and good. If not—and it's an even chance, after all—at least you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you've done your best. No one can do more.'

She turned to him with a grateful smile. 'Perhaps you are right,' she said. 'It has been an anxious time, and no doubt I am a little overwrought. I will try not to think about it.'

And he took it upon himself to help her, with quite an astonishing degree of success.

Perhaps, after all, it was not so very astonishing either, the circumstances being duly taken into consideration. Here were two young people, of opposite sex and attractive personality, thrown together in the daily intercourse of ship-board life for a matter of some three weeks. Add to that a common interest of no ordinary kind, with a strong feeling of sympathy on the one side, and of gratitude on the other; and it is little to be wondered at if a warm friendship springs up between them—or something even deeper, if it comes to that. And the latter, though possibly neither of them was as yet fully aware of it, is precisely what had happened in this case.

But amongst other things Dick Faring had helped Iris Temple to forget was the passage of time. She realised suddenly that they must have been standing there for the better part of

an hour. She glanced at her wrist-watch hastily, and a little gasp of dismay broke from her.

'Dear me!' she cried. 'I had no idea it was so late! I must go down now, Mr Faring. Jane will be thinking all sorts—I mean wondering where I am.'

'Why should she? A turn on deck——'

'Yes'—smiling. 'But then, you see, at dinner I happened to make some very pointed remarks about the—the chilliness of the wind.'

'And I have kept you out in it all this time! I am sorry.'

'Oh, well——' For a second their glances met, and a faint blush stole into her cheeks. 'It doesn't really matter. I expect she has forgotten.'

'Let us hope so,' he said cheerfully.

Dick walked with her to the head of the companion-way, and there bade her good-night. For some reason or other, which he could not very well have explained, he did not go down with her into the saloon, though there was nothing particular to keep him on deck. Possibly a due regard for Miss Jane Harvey's speculative habit of mind may have had something to do with it.

As he stood with one hand resting upon the frame-work of the hatch, deep in thought, a thick black shadow fell across the deck by his side. He started round, for a moment overcome by a quite absurd feeling of panic. Then, in a rather shamefaced way, he exclaimed: 'Hullo, captain! It's you, is it?'

Captain Jackson laughed heartily—perhaps even a trifle boisterously. 'Why, yes!' he said. 'Who did you think it was, Mr Faring?'

'Dashed if I know,' was the somewhat vague reply. 'I'm a bit jumpy to-night—on edge, as it were. I think something of Miss Temple's uneasiness must have communicated itself to me.'

'Oh——?' The captain stared at him.

Faring nodded. 'This business has got a little on her nerves,' he said.

'But what is there for her to be nervous about?'

'Nothing. That is—nothing definite. She just has a feeling—a presentiment, you know—that something unpleasant is going to happen.'

The two men looked at each other steadily.

'Odd that,' muttered the captain. He moved away from the hatch, drawing Faring with him by a glance. After they had taken a few steps along the deck, he said: 'To tell you the truth, Mr Faring, I've not felt quite comfortable myself since we got in here. These islands have a pretty bad reputation generally, and if there was to be trouble of any kind—well——'

'Trouble?' Faring put in sharply.

'The possibility is never very remote where these head-hunting savages are concerned. They're a treacherous lot, and devilish awkward customers to deal with, as more than one white man I could name has found to his cost. Personally, I don't mind taking the risk, of course. But—we've got two women aboard, you know.'

'I know, captain. That makes what you suggest a very terrible thing to contemplate. I wish I could have persuaded Miss Temple to let me undertake this quest alone. But she simply wouldn't hear of it, and—in the circumstances—what was I to do!'

'Quite so. I can understand how you were placed, Mr Faring, and since they're here with us we must make the best of it.'

'But do you think there is likely to be any trouble with the natives?'

Captain Jackson was silent for a few moments. Then—'Between ourselves,' he said, 'I think it would be wise to clear out of this at day-break. I didn't like the look of that old chief much. There was something shifty about his manner, I thought. The way he kept eyeing us, as if he was measuring up our strength, had a peculiar significance to my mind. Then, his sending off those vegetables and what not—'

'Doesn't that seem to indicate a friendly attitude towards us?'

'On the face of it, perhaps. But I noticed that they didn't arrive until close upon sundown, and that the matter of payment was treated with an indifference, amounting almost to contempt, very unusual on such occasions. Further, the total absence of any lights or movement ashore is in itself somewhat remarkable. As I was saying to Mr Carter, only half-an-hour ago, the thing isn't natural. These islands are visited by white men only once in a blue moon, and— Eh? What the devil—'

There was a sudden loud clamour of voices forward, and the sound of bare feet pattering along the deck. A moment later, one of the Kanakas rushed up to them in a state of apparently uncontrollable excitement. 'My word, cap'en—you come quick!' he gasped. 'Black fella he here one time catch 'm this fella ship. We plenty fright—'

'Hell and thunder!' roared Captain Jackson, striding over to the rail.

Faring sprang after him, and together they peered shorewards with anxious, straining eyes. The moon was hidden behind a mass of dark clouds, but by its diffused light they could make out dimly the line of the beach, and what at first sight appeared to be a broad curved shadow advancing slowly across the water towards them. In reality it was a vast fleet of canoes, closing in upon them from three sides. The rapid

swish of the paddles came to them like a harsh whisper out of the night, and here and there a spear-blade flashed ominously.

'Hundreds of the beggars,' groaned the captain. 'We're up against it now. There's not a moment to lose—'

He turned quickly, almost colliding with a man in a white duck suit, who had raced aft from the forward part of the ship.

'My God, sir!' cried the latter. 'D'you think the brutes mean to attack us?'

'Not much doubt about that, Mr Carter,' Captain Jackson answered grimly. 'Five minutes or so'll see hell let loose aboard. Get up the spare rifles, and arm the Kanakas—as far as they'll go. Look slippy, man!' The mate spun round, and dived down the companionway. Captain Jackson glanced at the group of dusky figures huddled round the main-mast. 'You fella Kanaka fight plenty dam' hard! Savvee?' He turned to Faring. 'We'll form a ring round the hatch. That'll give us the width of the deck, and we'll be able to keep together. We're too few to prevent them from getting aboard. Come along, Mr Faring!'

IV.

What happened immediately afterwards Faring could never very clearly remember. He had a hazy recollection of following Captain Jackson down into the saloon; of seeing Iris Temple's face, white and distressed-looking in the light from the hanging oil-lamp; and of exchanging a few hurried words with her which expressed far less than the unspoken message in their eyes. Then he was up again on the moonlit deck, rifle in hand, one of the grimly silent figures standing in a ring about the hatch, waiting for the moment that should bring the first of their savage assailants upon them.

It came suddenly, heralded by a discordant yell, as a score or more of frizzy heads bobbed up on either side of them, and dark lithe bodies swung themselves over the bulwarks on to the deck.

'Now!' Captain Jackson shouted.

The rifles cracked, and spat venomously. Unaccustomed as the Kanakas were to fire-arms, some of the bullets went wide. Nevertheless, at that short range most of them found a billet, and for a moment stopped the rush. But it was only for a moment. Other naked figures, brandishing spears and clubs, leaped on board, followed by others, until it seemed that the little band of defenders must be overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers.

It was then that Faring, who had emptied the magazine of his rifle, and was about to use the weapon as a club, felt something tapping against the calf of his leg. Glancing down quickly, he saw Iris Temple crouching under the hatch, with two automatic pistols in her hands, and a small box of cartridges on the step

before her. 'Iris!' he cried. 'What are you doing here? Go back, dear—'

She shook her head, smiling at him confidently. 'Take this,' she said, giving him one of the pistols, 'and when it is empty you can have the other while I reload. There are twenty-four—that is—twenty-two cartridges. You understand?'

And Faring, who understood only too well, bowed his head in assent.

There was, in truth, no time for any further words between them. The savages were closing in, and for the most part the conflict had resolved itself into a hand-to-hand struggle, with the odds rapidly mounting against the already diminished few. Faring, Captain Jackson, and Mr Carter still survived, the two officers fighting desperately with clubbed rifles. But six of the Kanakas had fallen, killed or seriously wounded by thrusts from the short keen-bladed spears, and in all human probability the end could not be very far off.

Then, when it seemed that nothing on earth could save them, when Faring had deliberately fired his twenty-second shot, and there only remained the last hard duty to perform, a voice rang out through the night, loud and clear above the din of battle, uttering a stern command in the Boruan tongue. 'Hold! Hold, I say! Who wars against the white man wars against me!'

The effect was magical, instantaneous. As if drawn by some invisible force, the mass of the invaders fell back slowly, with awed faces and fear-dilated eyes, leaving a wide space between themselves and the remnant of those whom but a moment before they had been seeking to destroy. Into this space stepped a tall gray-robed figure, wearing a hood which partially concealed its face. A movement swept through the ranks of cringing savages like that of wind playing over corn. The newcomer flung out his arm in a superb gesture of authority. 'Go!' he commanded. 'Return to Ka-Ka, the chief, and say that for this I will deal with him presently. You hear my words?'

'Ai, Ai!' wailed a hundred voices.

'Then go quickly, lest an evil thing befall you!'

V.

They went with almost incredible swiftness, vanishing over the side like leaves caught up in a gale. Within the space of three minutes, there were left on the deck only the dead and the wounded, the six Kanakas, Captain Jackson, Faring, Mr Carter, and their mysterious rescuer.

'Thank heaven, I was in time,' came a barely audible murmur in English from beneath the cowl-like hood.

Captain Jackson stepped forward, still clutching his rifle by the barrel in one hand, and with

the other outstretched. 'We owe our lives—and the lives of the two women on board—to you, sir,' he said.

The man pushed back the hood with a startled gesture, the moonlight falling clean upon his lean, bearded, strangely white-looking face. 'Good God!' he exclaimed. 'There are women—white women—on board!'

Then, before Captain Jackson could frame an answer, Iris Temple rushed out from the shelter of the hatch, her lips parted in a gasp of breathless astonishment, and her eyes shining with a glad light of recognition. 'Arnold!' she cried, going towards him.

He shrank back, holding out his hands as if to ward her off. 'No—Iris—you mustn't touch me,' he said in a hoarse whisper. 'You do not know—'

The girl halted, staring at him in a dumb-founded way. 'But, Arnold,' she protested, with a ring of dismay in her voice, 'what is this? I have searched for you through two long years, and now—I want to take you back with me. I want you to come home with me, dear.'

'No, no! I cannot come. You don't understand—'

'Yes, I do,' she interposed quickly. 'You are thinking of what happened long ago. But you need have no fear, Arnold. The man did not die after all.'

'I know.'

'Yes?' She looked at him wonderingly, a puzzled frown creasing her brow. 'Then, if you knew, why did you not return!'

'Because the knowledge came to me too late—as you have come, Iris.'

'Too late!' she echoed.

'Even so,' he answered gravely. 'There can be no return for me. My home is here amongst these wild untutored savages, children of the outer darkness, to whom, for the little time that remains to me, such skill as I have may be of some service. And that time is very short now.'

'Arnold! what are you saying? What do you mean?'

Suddenly he bent towards her, the blue gleam of his eyes contrasting sharply with the dead whiteness of his face. 'Iris, look—look!' he cried. 'Don't you see? Oh, my dear, can't you see that I'—his voice sank to a tone of hopeless, absolute finality—'I am that accursed thing, *a leper!*'

For the space of perhaps five seconds there was an intense, heart-gripping silence. Then a pitiful little cry broke from Iris Temple.

Faring caught her in his arms as she fell.

VI.

The schooner lay hove-to off the pinnacled mass of rock rising like a fantastic dream-castle from the sea, her bow dipping gently in the

heavy ground-swell. A couple of miles southward a faint purple blur marked the position of Ka-Ka's island, and to the north a streak of white showed where the breakers foamed against the encircling barrier-reef of a distant atoll. Westward, glittering under the tropical sun, stretched the wide sapphire-blue waters of the Pacific.

Dick Faring and Iris were standing by the accommodation-ladder with Arnold Temple, to whom they were bidding farewell ere he descended to the waiting canoe. It was a sad leave-taking; yet not without some measure of resignation and hopefulness, so far as Iris was concerned. They had talked the matter over long and earnestly the night before, and Temple had convinced his sister and Faring that any change in his present mode of living would be undesirable, if not impossible.

'It is too late to think of that now,' he had said. 'The terrible disease with which I am afflicted is advanced to a stage beyond all hope of cure, or of amelioration. I am reconciled to that, and content to spend the short remainder of my life in this beautiful island on which I have made my home. There is nowhere else I could go where I should be free to live as I do here. No, no! I have my flowers, books, everything that I want; and am even able to be of some small service to those around me. That, for such as I, is a happiness not to be relinquished easily. I could never find it again elsewhere.'

And when Iris had spoken of her desire to be with him, he had answered, with a shake of his head, 'You mustn't think of that, dear. It is quite impossible. Apart from the sacrifice involved—a sacrifice no brother would allow a sister to make—the risk of infection is too great.'

'Yet others take it. Those men of yours——'

'Ah, that is different! The natives on these islands appear to be immune from the disease. I have never known a case during the years I have been here. But for you, my dear, putting all other considerations aside, it is utterly out of the question.'

'Then I—I am never to see you again, Arnold?'

'Well,—and a smile of rare tenderness had lighted up the shrunken face—'as to that, now, perhaps it might be managed—occasionally. Let us suppose that you found it convenient to reside for a time in Borua——' He broke off, with a quick, involuntary glance at Faring. 'Then you might take a little cruise in this direction now and again, and we should be able to see something of one another. Eh?'

'Oh yes! And I could bring you things——'

'Um—perhaps——'

'Of course I shall, Arnold!'

'Provided you don't—er—give anything away, you know.—What do you think, Mr Faring?'

'I think the plan is an excellent one,' came the prompt and very hearty reply.

And so it had been arranged.

Now, therefore, that the moment of parting was come, Iris found herself able to face it more bravely than she could otherwise have done. It was very quickly over.

Temple turned to Faring. 'Good-bye, Mr Faring,' he said. 'I am glad to have known you. Our meeting was a rather strange one, but——'

'A very lucky one for us, Mr Temple. If you hadn't come just when you did——'

'I know. It was indeed fortunate that the wind had prevented my leaving the island. Otherwise—but we must not think of that!' And in a lowered voice: 'You will look after my sister, won't you?'

'Trust me for that,' said Faring, returning steadily the searching gaze bent upon him.

'Ah, yes—I do.' Then, to Iris, 'I leave you in Mr Faring's care, dear. It has been a very great happiness to me to see you again after all these years, and to know that your loving faith in me has never wavered. God bless you for that, Iris, and—good-bye, my dear, good-bye.'

'Good-bye—for the present, Arnold,' she responded, smiling at him bravely through a mist of tears.

They watched the canoe glide shoreward over the heaving water, until it vanished through a narrow opening in the coral-reef. Shortly afterwards, a small gray figure appeared on a rocky ledge running obliquely across the face of the cliff, and stood there waving its hand to them.

It seemed to be giving them to one another.

THE END.

WOODLAND ECHOES.

(Translated from Geibel.)

DEAR Love sat as a nightingale,
Beside the rose—and sang,
And hark! the sweetest melody
Throughout the woodland rang.

And as he sang, a coronal
Of fragrance crowned the air,
And softly whispered rustling leaves,
As zephyrs floated there.

The brooks were silent—from the height,
Low murmuring they fell,
The deer stood still as in a dream,
And listened to the spell.

And clear and ever clearer flowed
The sunbeam's glowing stream,
Whilst flowers, wood, and glen rejoiced
In gold and ruddy gleam.

I also listened to the spell
As soft I passed along . . .
Ah! what within my heart remains
Is but an echo's song.

EDITH C. ADAMS.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

A ROMANCE OF THE REEL.

By N. M. GUNN.

PART I.

I.

THAT there could be anything uncanny about angling had never before touched the mind of Davie Dunbar, though half a century recorded his devotion to the sport—and the art. Never before had excitement, whipped by exasperation, been held in leash by the fearsome. For it is not that the long black pool in the still hush of a late September evening contained many salmon; it was possessed by them, as, of old, bodies were possessed by spirits. From filmy copper to purest silver they launched themselves into the air, to fall again with resounding splash, in front of him, down the long vista of the pool, above him, by his very waders. And yet to his thunder-and-lightning—no slightest offer.

Covering the leaping fish became a game in excitement that wore thin to an exasperation that quivered—because in this game hope cannot die. His nerves renewed their youth as so many live wires stringing his body to an awful expectancy . . . and then *splash!* behind him, and his heart would be in his mouth. Uncanny! . . . maddening!

Yet Davie Dunbar was normally a mild retiring little man, and his gray eyes looked straightly and simply at you, notwithstanding that most of his life had been spent along the tortuous alley-ways of a dealer in curios and antiques. But then his little shop in an Edinburgh side-street had made him no fortune. For alas! he not only knew old beautiful things when he saw them—he also loved them; so that, even blindfolded, the cool, soft, almost velvety touch of old silver to him spelt a caress unmistakable. Indeed, were it not for old Jamie Forsyth, at once his managing director, accountant, salesman and caretaker, it is at least doubtful whether there would ever have been any fishing expeditions at all. Not but that these expeditions were of the most modest, and for ever winding along the dubious ways of 'free fishing'—except for the rare red-letter windfall that landed a day or two on 'private water.' Ah, private water—how it threaded its dark mesmeric way through his dreams! Some day

to sell out, to retire, to live where the autumn of his days would fall softly and coloured and exquisitely as September leaves on a dark deep-flowing pool—of private water!

And then suddenly he had had this windfall—a few days' salmon fishing on a northern river; a spring river, to be sure, yet with the wise, unfathomable autumn fish there too. The greatest windfall he had ever experienced. The real thing. The dream. Yet here the waning of the first day, and in his basket not a scale; and round him, splashing in silver mockery, a dream, nay, a nightmare of—of the brutes!

He reeled in and examined his thunder-and-lightning. 'Far too dark,' he muttered, though he had but just changed from a dunkeld. 'Ah—this silver doctor—two sizes too big—but—it might mesmerise them—it might exacerbate them!' and his lips shut firmly. He changed the fly accordingly, and then, as he was preparing to get his line out again, his eye ran naturally along the pool, to encounter what it had not encountered that day—a fish no more than breaking the surface in a fine business-like swirl.

Excitement was up again, pure and throbbing, but he strove deliberately to keep it in check. He methodically felt for his gaff. He took a steady glance about him, up to the still sombre pine wood, which persisted so involuntarily in reminding him of that old picture of his, to the opposite bank, down the river. He had the lonely scene to himself.

He fished steadily down, hoping to cover the spot naturally, cunningly. But now the water rose gradually about his waders at each short step. A fear began to grip at him that he might not be able to cover the spot. The floor sloped. The water continued to rise half-inch by half-inch; it was lapping round his waist, a lightness was coming to his feet, the black flood was beginning to suck at his body; once as he half-turned he experienced a very insecure, bobbing sensation, as of a cork. And then Davie Dunbar paused, knowing he had gone as far as he should, as he durst.

He was casting with so much line now that

it caught the water behind him. He tried to 'shoot' a few feet. Yet he was still short, though it could not be by more than a couple of yards. Only, now the off-swirl caught his fly so readily and whisked it away, he got no chance. He began to blame his luck, and the more he blamed the more certain he became that if only he could get his fly over that particular spot in front of the gray stone in the bank-face opposite, he would—he would strike! He would feel that sudden heavy resistance, that momentary incredible pause on the part of man and fish, and then—the music of the reel! He licked his lips. Perhaps he might venture a step or two, very cautiously, yet. He was getting more used to the depth, and for all he knew it might get no deeper. If only he could see bottom! Putting all his weight on his right foot, he began to feel carefully, inch by inch, with his left. But he had to admit he was going deeper. But surely one step more—two steps. . . . Things were becoming insecure. He paled. His eyes rounded a little. He felt his body sway. This was madness—but then he could always return in the attitude he was now in, little by little, side on. He would try him once more.

He reeled in till he got his line under control. Yard by yard he let it out at each cast. Yard by yard the weight of the jerk back and the throw forward was compensated by the swaying body. The line reached the maximum length he could wield. With a final effort, every muscle tense, he sent it shooting for the gray stone. The fly landed, there was a swirl, the fly was stuck, the line taut. . . . Emotion became tumultuous. With left foot he instinctively 'dug in' against the extra weight in this dangerous game of balances. With such small margins the digging in was done the least trifle too impulsively, too heavily. The small round stone under the ball of the left foot slipped, slithered. He pulled himself up, stumbled, thrashed the water, felt himself going. One lucid moment of agonised amazement, and panic rushed the brain.

A mad fight for a moment or so, with an all-engulfing, choking, deadly enemy. He cried out, thin yell on yell, cried and fought—and knew he was done for. He had long known the danger of waders, where the air trapped in the legs assist, in the case of a sudden overturning, to keep the feet up and the head down. His head was now under. The water was choking his throat in great suffocating gulps. He fought to the surface madly, but it was the hectic madness that precedes final exhaustion. Already his brain was giving way, side-slipping into phantasm—for lo! in front of him was not that his picture of the sombre pine wood, and flying from it, hair streaming, the maiden on horseback; that old old picture he had picked up in a sale lot, and that had

interested him because of its somewhat unusual medieval symbolism? Giving way . . . down . . . down . . . and the last flicker dies in a strange comforting quiescence, touched vaguely by a grotesque, fading sensation that he had a salmon on, taking him down . . . down.

II.

If death be a pale shadowy dream of earthly things, then he is dead. This body of his has at last no substance, wavers uncertain as a smoke wisp in a calm. There, apart from him a little, is his own hand knotted on the cork handle of a sixteen-foot rod, and by the rod, silvery and gleaming, the most exquisite of all shapes in the world, of all desires the most beautiful.

A legend this of the land under the waves, where the salmon is all-knowing and all-wise. And even that dark pool which seems to flow below him, this bank, that sombre wood, all this phantasmagoric dry land which wavers so uncertainly—even that dark shadow of something like a centaur coming yonder, two shadows. . . . But all gets blurred, blurred—vanishes as frail smoke.

Out of black nothingness things waver back again. The face of the maid in the picture takes on a glowing, frightful light. The glowing light is sunlight—yet no, it is spirit, it is a burning from within. And she is crouching forward, fleeing the wood. Fear . . . terror. . . . He struggles to dismiss the picture; shuts tight his eyes. But they open in spite of him, and lo! overhead is a great unsearchable whiteness, palely luminous, stretching into remote infinitudes of shadow. Nearer, nearer, it comes; nearer, till his eyes grow dazed, till his eyeballs get oppressed by the intolerable closeness of the focusing. . . . And in a sudden queer amazement, he, Davie Dunbar, realises he is staring at the white-washed ceiling of a real room. Spasmodically his fingers clutch at bed-sheets; his head rolls on a pillow; a dim night-light is burning on a table. . . . Verily, he is alive.

It was enough to go on with. He let himself slip down again into exquisite unconsciousness. He would take things easily. And presently when he returned, he decidedly felt calmer, more real. An utter stillness was about him as his eyes opened and encountered the ceiling. Then suddenly a shadow detached itself from the bed-head and stood over him. It was his landlady, smiling gently.

'You'll be feeling better now?' she asked softly.

'Yes.' He was feeling perfectly all right, though queerly enough his voice was no more than a whisper.

'I have been waiting for you to waken. Now I'll be getting you something to drink,

and then you'll sleep. I won't be a moment!' and she was gone.

She returned with a steaming bowl.

'Tell me,' he whispered, 'how—how——'

'Not a word till you take this and have a long sleep. 'Tis what the doctor ordered. And oh! it's me that's glad to see you as you are. I've been waiting and watching. But now you are well again, and in a day or two you will be fine.' Anxiety and motherliness and relief mingled in word and action. She tenderly lifted his head up, held the bowl to his lips.

'I am so sorry,' he said in a little while, 'to have kept you. Please—I am all right now, and will sleep.'

III.

Daylight was glowing in the yellow blind of the little window in his bedroom when Davie Dunbar awoke to a consciousness of an outside door opening and a half-subdued breezy voice in the passage-way.

'Well, Mrs Fraser, how's our patient this morning?'

'Not awake yet, doctor.'

'Splendid! You'll find he'll be all right—but shaky for a few days, and no more fishing this week.—Ah, that you, Kennie?'

The footsteps receded, but not far enough to render talk inaudible. There was a little laughter.

'Has he been talking, Mrs. Fraser?'

'No, doctor, no; I wouldn't let him. He was going to——'

'I'm sure he was! It must be a bit of a puzzle to him. It was the nearest thing I ever struck—and the pluckiest—ready-witted.'

'From what I've heard, it was surely,' came Kennie's soft Gaelic voice. 'She has enough pluck for many a one. I was saying to the wife just that.'

'The old fellow was game, too. Stuck to that rod and fish of his like grim death. If he hadn't stuck to the rod, of course, it would have been all up.' The doctor gave a chuckle. 'She got hold of the point of the rod, for the current, you see, had sucked him in and across a bit, so that the point walloped the bank. She got hold of it and hauled him in, waders and all, hand over fist. Then she dragged him on to the bank, turned him over on his stomach, and squeezed the water out of him.'

'She had that ambulance during the war,' said Mrs Fraser. 'It came in handy for once.'

The doctor chuckled again. 'But the old chap wouldn't give up the rod—not he. And there at the end of the line, with an odd screech now and then from the reel, was the fish, playing himself beautifully. Eh! I've heard of a man playing a fish when not quite in his sober senses, but never yet of a dead man doing the trick!'

'It wasn't canny nearly,' said Kennie.

'She couldn't get his fingers off the butt, tear at them as she might; so she just pumped the water out of him and left his hands alone. When she could do no more and was coming away for me 't seems she had a sudden queer feeling that—that the fish might pull him in, or something, eh?'

'Just that,' said Kennie.

'Why, now, you don't think it would, really, Kennie?'

'Whoever would be thinking that?' asked Kennie, laughing softly.

'You're a queer lot, all the same, and I do believe that in this sort of thing the Big House and the Black House are but and ben!'

'Nonsense, doctor! And you were saying she landed the fish. . . .'

'Yes, she landed the fish. At least, she stuck the rod up on end and began to reel in. Instead of sulking, the fish, as it happened, had played himself out. No doubt he was mad at the gut being all round his fins; then there was no strain on him after the first rush or two, so that he did not think of leaving his own ground, but thrashed about, trying to break with his tail what there was no longer any strain on.'

'I can see it happening,' said Kennie.

'But the really amazing thing was this. Of course, if we examined the ground we'd probably find an odd little hole in it, or maybe the cleft edge of a bit of rock sticking up, or something like that. Anyway, she says that when she let go the rod to get the gaff, the rod remained standing up, with his hand holding it there!'

'You're not telling me that?'

'I thought that would get you! And it's a fact. Determined, wasn't he, to play his own fish? It must have been a sight for the gods! He deserved to get the fish right enough. In fact, she felt that he had to get the fish. Must get it now. That feeling was stronger even than the commonsense which told her she ought to be rushing for help. And she got him, too. Gaffed him clean. He remained lying close in, exhausted, his white mouth opening and shutting, when she stole on him.'

'It was well done,' said Kennie.

'Wasn't it?' The doctor's tone, for all its half banter, held an undertone of something like enthusiasm. 'That twisted drowned body holding on grimly, lank wisps of gray hair, gaping eyes—it wasn't a bonny sight for a young woman.'

'No, indeed!' said Mrs Fraser. 'No, no!'

'So she laid the fish beside him, leapt on her pony again, and came fast as the beast could carry her.'

'I am wondering,' said Kennie, 'what he would be thinking himself if he had woken

up and found the rod and the fish, and no one beside him at all.'

The doctor chuckled. 'I wonder! I bet, Kennie, you'd have been looking about you for signs of the Last Day.'

'Indeed, now, and there's no saying what one would be looking for at all.'

'Not for Auld Nick, because it wasn't poaching, Kennie; he had permission from the factor in Edinburgh.'

'You will have your joke, doctor!'

'Ah, well! Have a look, Mrs Fraser, to see if he's awake yet. I must be getting on.'

And as Davie Dunbar heard the footsteps coming to his door, he closed his eyes. The door opened quietly, the footsteps came softly to his bedside. He opened his eyes.

'Ah, you are wakening, Mr Dunbar! How are you feeling now?' Her voice was all the tenderest solicitude.

'Very well, thank you,' and he smiled.

'Now, isn't that fine! And here's the doctor himself come to see you.'

The doctor stumped into the room. He eyed his patient shrewdly for a moment. 'What's this I hear you have been attempting at the Dragon Pool, sir, eh?' He stooped and gently caught the pulse in a wrist.

'Oh—I'm afraid—' stammered Davie self-consciously.

'Afraid! I hear that it did not look at all as if you were afraid. I thought such new-fangled ways of catching fish were peculiar to these parts, where they catch them every way—but quite unknown about the Water of Leith!'

Davie smiled.

The doctor nodded. 'Good! You're all

right. Bring in the real medicine, will you, Mrs Fraser, please?'

'Wh-what medicine—'

But her husband was by the door. 'Ach, woman!' cut in his voice, and in the same instant his footsteps were stamping to the kitchen.

The doctor chuckled aloud. 'When it comes to a matter of intuitive intelligence, Mr Dunbar, I am sorry to say that we of the Lowlands haven't a look in. Wait!'

Kennie reappeared, a couple of fingers at the gills supporting the weight of a most beautifully-proportioned eighteen-pounder.

And Davie's smile gradually faded in a strange gleaming increase of light. Another moment, and he was struggling valiantly to get up on one elbow, to stretch out a hand. . . . He collapsed uncertainly.

'Ay, better wait a while! You'll do it before another day is gone. Mr Fraser here says that it is a phenomenally fine specimen for this time of the year.'

'The doctor—' began Kennie, when Davie, gasping mildly, interrupted him in all seriousness: 'Yes, a silver doctor,' he said.

There was an amazed hush for a moment, then the doctor's laugh rang out. 'How's that, Kennie?'

'That's a good one, and no mistake,' replied Kennie.

And Davie, grasping their meaning, blushed.

'Now, you must be wondering how on earth all this happened to you. So I'll leave Mrs Fraser to explain. Between fish and the girls, you have most certainly created history in Glenuel. I'll look in to see you before the night is done.'

(Continued on page 603.)

THE PUZZLE OF THE SWALLOWS.

By MILDRED PERRIN.

THERE is always a certain pleasure in detecting in an occasional error the man who knows everything, and when we find the great Samuel Johnson asserting, with his usual *ex cathedra* manner, that swallows spend the winter under water, we smile our smile of superiority and feel profoundly comfortable. How absurd the words of the great man seem to us now! 'Swallows,' he says, 'certainly sleep all the winter. A number of them conglobulate together, by flying round and round, and then all in a heap throw themselves under water and lie in the bed of a river.' Johnson pronounced this choice bit of natural history in 1768, and he was really only quoting the theory generally accepted at the time by professed naturalists; his error, a serious one, lay in stating it as a proved fact.

The strange notion that swallows hibernated under water prevailed in England for close on a century and a half at least, for it is mentioned in the *Philosophical Transactions and Journal of the Learned* for 1666 and 1667, and crops up at intervals until the close of the eighteenth century.

The annual disappearance of swallows and other migrant birds in the autumn and their reappearance in the spring must have set men speculating from earliest times, wherever the ways of birds were observed, and the ancients seem to have had an inkling of the truth. To the majority of seventeenth and eighteenth-century naturalists, however, the idea that small frail-looking birds like swallows could travel over land and sea to distant countries seemed far more wonderful than that they should hibernate like butterflies and squirrels.

They had observed, too, that in the autumn swallows were wont to collect in numbers near water, and in the evening to disappear among the osier beds, their roosting-ground. The next morning there were none to be seen; hence it was concluded that they had retired to their damp winter-quarters. Some few observers believed in migration, and some thought that both hibernation and migration were practised. For example, in *Nature Displayed*, a work which appeared originally in French, and was translated into English and ran through several editions during the middle years of the eighteenth century, we read the following: 'While some cross the sea, others, in most northern countries, continue in Europe, and conceal themselves in caverns of the Earth, riveted to one another with their Claws and Bills. They flock to places unfrequented by Man and even bury themselves in the Water. The precaution they take to lubricate their Feathers with their own Oil, and to roll themselves up like a Ball, their Head within, and their Back without, preserves them in the Water, and even under the Ice.' This description certainly shows a good deal of imagination, as, of course, no one had ever seen a balled-up swallow.

Gilbert White, writing in the closing years of the eighteenth century, was greatly puzzled by the problem of migration. He could laugh at the Swedish naturalist who, in his *Flora*, 'talks as familiarly of the swallows going under water in the beginning of September, as he would of his poultry going to roost a little before sunset,' but he could not give up the hibernation theory altogether. In one of his letters he says: 'I acquiesce entirely in your opinion—that, although most of the swallow kind may migrate, yet some do stay behind and hide with us during the winter.' He arrived at this conclusion through observing that a few martins were often to be seen on the wing on a mild day in November. It is now generally thought that such loiterers are birds which were either too young or too weakly to join in the autumn migration—but this is one of those matters connected with natural history which are not yet finally proved.

White was honest enough to declare that no case of hibernation had ever been authenticated, though, like other observers, he had sometimes come across birds rendered torpid by a sudden cold spell. Some naturalists, however, gave credence to all kinds of absurd stories about birds remaining torpid for great lengths of time, and some of these stories were current until quite recent times. For example, in a book published in 1890, the writer, a F.R.S., although not committing himself personally to a belief in hibernation, gives several instances of swallows being found torpid 'which have come to our knowledge, on the most respectable authority.'

Some of the instances are likely enough, but among them is this gem: 'Again, about half a dozen swallows were found a few years ago, in a torpid state, in the trunk of a hollow tree, by a countryman, who brought them to a respectable person, by whom they were deposited in a desk, where they remained forgotten till the following spring, when one morning, on hearing a noise, he opened the desk, and found one of them fluttering about; the others also began to show signs of life, and, upon being placed out of doors in the sun, speedily arranged their plumage, took wing, and disappeared.'

We cannot imagine any present-day naturalist having the hardihood to relate stories of this kind as having come to him 'on the most respectable authority,' but it is doubtful whether we have outgrown all our 'strange notions' about migration. One that dies hard is that the larger birds carry smaller ones on their backs. This myth is of respectable antiquity, for a saying of the Tartars that 'each crane carries a corncrake on its back' was referred to as an old legend in 1740. The notion originated from partial observation and from reasoning. It was reasoned that the weaker fliers must be carried somehow, and it was observed that small birds often appeared, as it were from nowhere, immediately after the arrival of the larger species. It is probable that they had travelled in company, and that, being small, they had remained invisible until quite close to the observer. Careful modern observers have sometimes noticed birds dropping from the sky at the time of the spring migration, and it is thought that these were migrants that were flying so high as to be invisible.

Although the fact of bird-migration is indisputably established, there are many problems connected with it which are still unsolved. We have learnt to be humble before the workings of Nature since the days of the great Doctor; even the experts are shy of dogmatizing, and are content, for the most part, to record their patient observations, thus adding to the vast mass of data from which the ultimate truth will be unfolded. We of the laity may have our own theories; we may even cherish some 'strange notions,' but if we are wise we do not reveal them, except perchance, tentatively and apologetically, to some trusted friend.

THE GIFT.

HER faith is the sound of the running stream
And the breath of the child who sleeps.
Her heart is the core of the wide-open moor,
And the glorious light of the steepes.

Her love is the break of the early morn,
And the light to life's sinking day,
Her love is the gift of compassionate God—
For worthiness I pray.

J. P. DAVIES,
Pretoria.

A NATURAL PHENOMENON.

By D. E. STEVENSON, Author of *Peter West*.

I.

THE hot tropical sun beat down upon the barrack-square, turning the dry brittle surface to a pool of dust, blindingly white in the glare. Above the low white buildings the blue sky was cloudless and pitiless. George Anderson stared round him in a bewildered manner—stared from the low-roofed cantonments to the few sickly palm-trees, whose leaves were scorched and withered by the heat and long-continued drought. He had been here before—something was going to happen—but here his memory failed him. Across the square was a door—a red door—blistered and cracked. George knew that he must reach that door. . . .

Suddenly he heard a shout, and saw a huge black horse galloping down upon him. It was harnessed to a high cart, which rocked from side to side. George was held rooted to the spot by a nightmare-feeling of sheer horror. He could not move. The dust rose in a cloud. At last a shout startled him out of his apathy, and with a violent effort he wrenched his mind into action and jumped aside—but the action came too late. He tripped and fell. . . .

The pawing hoofs whirled above his head—the wicked eyes, bloodshot and staring—the huge black body, shiny with sweat. An intolerable pain tore at his body, while the dry dust, rising about him like warm smoke, clogged his lungs and muffled his cries of agony. . . . Then all was dark.

George opened his eyes, to find some one shaking him with no gentle hand. 'For Gawd's sake be quiet, can't ye!' a voice said.

He sat up, rubbing his eyes, and found himself in the familiar barrack-room which he, as a private, shared with fourteen other men.

'You bin dreamin',' the voice continued more amiably.

'Shriekin' somethin' awful,' another voice put in plaintively.

George Anderson shuddered. He had had the ghastly dream before, and each time that he had it he wakened like this, wet with fear, every nerve in his body quivering like taut wires. 'I'm — sorry, boys,' he said between his chattering teeth, so making the 'amende honorable' in the vernacular of his kind. Then, hunching up his brown blanket over his shoulder, he turned over and pretended to go to sleep. For a few moments there were murmurings of annoyance, but these soon subsided into snores, and once more comparative quiet reigned in the big dark room.

There was one man, however, to whom sleep did not come. George Anderson slept no more that night. He lay and watched the moonlight on the floor, and saw the dawn come into being over the big building on the other side of the square, which was the officers' quarters. Although he was fatigued almost beyond endurance by his hard day of physical exercise and by the tumult of his nerves, George fought against sleep with every ounce of strength and will-power that he possessed, for sleep might bring a recurrence of that terrible dream. . . .

The dream had haunted him from his boyhood. Sometimes months would pass without his having it, and then, when he was lulled into security, it would come to him with renewed horror and fear, making his nights a misery of wakefulness and his days a long slow torture of jangled nerves that cried out for the sleep which he denied them.

George never spoke of his sufferings to any one. He bore them, as was his nature, in stoical silence, with a bewildered dour courage which he had inherited from his V.C. father. The place that he dreamed of—the low cantonments, the burning sun and white powdery dust, the queer smell of burning rubbish—was like no place that he had ever seen, for the battalion had finished its tour of tropical service before he joined it four years ago.

When the older men spoke of India, George would listen with mouth agape, but his secret prevented him from wishing to go abroad and see for himself the wonders described by his companions. Most of all he liked to hear about the campaign in Tirah when his father, then a private in the battalion, had won the most coveted distinction in the British service. He had won it for his devotion under fire to his company commander, Captain Logan, and now George, his only son, was servant to that officer's son, and held a unique position in the regiment by reason of his father's prowess.

Captain Logan, junior, was a great favourite in the battalion; he was young and cheerful, and keen as mustard. His company adored him, and would have followed him through fire and water. To his seniors he was always known as 'The Boy,' doubtless on account of his round face and fair curly hair.

George liked being servant to this popular officer, not because he escaped certain parades and fatigues by this favour, but because he took a real pleasure in serving him—polishing up his buttons and boots until they outshone those of any other officer in the battalion. His pride and pleasure were therefore not unmixed with regret when he had learned the

previous day that a decree had gone forth detailing him for the next N.C.O.'s course.

'I mustn't be selfish any longer,' Captain Logan had said, with one of his boyish smiles which had endeared him to everyone, from the C.O. downwards. 'I shall be awfully sorry to part with you, Anderson, but it will only be for a time, and then I shall have you back in "A" company as a lance-corporal.'

George never thought of questioning the decision of his idol, but his eyes strayed regretfully from the shining buttons on Captain Logan's tunic to the perfectly polished field boots. 'Very good, sir,' he said; and then added, 'You'd better have Taylor, then, sir.'

'The Boy' nodded. 'Yes, I'll take Taylor; and the momentous interview was at an end.

II.

The afternoon sun was warm and golden. A cool breeze blew across the barrack-square, flapping George Anderson's kilt against his knees, and at the same time blowing the cobwebs of his miserable night out of his handsome head. He threw his shoulders back and saluted the sentry on duty at the gates with a smart gesture of greeting.

The sentry spat reflectively—there was no officer about. 'Eh my, yon's a terrible hole ye've got, Geordie!' he sighed.

'A hole?' cried the wretched George, glancing down at his braw new hose in consternation.

'Niver heed. Aiblins she'll no' see it.'

'Whaur's it?'

'In yer hairt,' was the grave reply.

Geordie's remarks, much to the point, but scarcely printable, were cut short by the timely appearance of an officer, and he sallied forth into the High Street with a little swagger which became his well set-up figure in its becoming rig-out.

Who wouldn't swagger a little with Geordie's consciousness of good looks and good conduct, with a kilt to swing at his knees and a pretty girl in the offing?

Lily was waiting for him opposite Galloway's, the big draper's shop which had usurped a dozen small holdings in the busiest part of the town. She was very conscious of a new pair of silk stockings and high-heeled shoes. A green jumper in Galloway's window had caught her eye; it was very attractive, and she was wondering in her busy little brain how many times she would have to go without dinner so as to save enough money to buy it. Several men passed and nudged each other, and she glanced at them sideways from beneath her pink hat.

Lily knew that George was coming long before he saw her; *how* it would be difficult to say, for she had never glanced in his direction. Her little squeal of astonishment, when she found him at her elbow, would have deceived a more worldly fellow than our poor soldier boy.

'Whit a stairt ye give me!' she said, raising her eyes to his face with a simper which would have completed her capture of his heart had it not been effected long before. 'I wis jis' lookin' at that jumper,' she added. 'Div ye think it would fit me?'

Thus questioned, George tore his eyes from his captor's face and looked at the garment in question, which was hanging in the window. He turned over the few shillings of his week's pay which remained to him, and looked again. The price-ticket was placed conspicuously, and alas for poor Geordie, whose pay had a habit of melting away like snow in April!

'It's real pretty,' he averred; adding in a shamefaced manner, 'weel, is it tae be the movies, Lily?'

Lily turned away with a little sigh. She had not really expected him to buy it for her—she was finding out that soldiers were generally hard-up. If George had not been so good-looking she would have given him the cold shoulder before this, and taken up with a 'clurk' who had shown her, in a delicate manner, that he was quite ready to walk out with her. But Geordie was very good to look upon—she knew that people gazed after them as they passed.

On this particular afternoon Lily voted for the park, and led her companion past the swing-doors of the 'Grand Picture Palace' with a firm little hand on his arm. She did this partly because she liked to be seen with the big handsome soldier boy, and partly because she knew he wanted to sit beside her in the dark solitude of the picture palace and hold her hand. Thus did Lily punish him for his inability to satisfy her desire for the green silk jumper.

As they walked round the park, listening to the band and watching the people, George unburdened his heart to Lily on the subject of the N.C.O.'s course. 'I dinna want tae leave Captain Logan,' he explained. 'But if I get tae be a N.C.O.—weel, I'm nearer being able tae mairry ye. An' oh, Lily, I'm wantin' ye sae bad.'

Lily was only half-listening. It took her all her time to keep pace with her companion's long-limbed saunter, with the mincing little steps dictated by her tight skirt and high-heeled shoes.

III.

The next day there was much grumbling in the barrack-room, for the C.O. had decreed a route-march of fifteen miles. This necessitated an extra polishing up of arms and equipment until they shone again, and it also entailed—in the case of many of the men—a week's purgatory from blisters and corns. George did not join in the general grouching. He enjoyed marching, loved to step out with the battalion as one man, with his kilt swinging free from his hips and the skirl of the pipes in his ears.

There was a rush to doors and windows as the battalion turned the corner of the High Street and marched up Pollock Street towards the big stone bridge. It was fine to see them. Many a woman brushed the tears from her eyes with her apron as she looked after them with misted gaze; many an old man found a lump rise in his throat.

'Eh, they're fine!' was the general opinion. 'Oor laddies; there's nane tae come up tae them!'

The song of the pipes, wailing and sweet, drew a motley crowd of followers, who kept pace with the soldiers along the congested pavements.

'I wonder if Lily sees us,' thought Geordie with a surge of pride.

Old Mr Watson (late quartermaster-sergeant of the regiment, now retired) was taking a swarm of bees, when he heard the wild music and the tramp of many feet. The sound was as strong drink to the old soldier; he dropped the hive and rushed to the gate. 'Eh, they're braw,' he whispered, his feet marking time to the familiar tune; and he was not far wrong. They came up the street marching as one man, their arms and accoutrements winking a dazzling heliograph in the bright sunshine.

Mr Watson leaned on the gate, wishing that he were twenty years younger; he had quite forgotten the bees, which swarmed out angrily from their overturned hive and flew over the fence in a buzzing cloud. The baker's cart happened to be standing outside Mr Watson's gate, and the bees settled upon the black horse, which was awaiting its master with model patience, and stung it severely. It was more than any horse could stand, and with a neigh of terror the poor creature threw up its heels and bolted down Pollock Street towards the advancing battalion.

'A' Company happened to be leading, and Captain Logan shouted to his men to break ranks and stop the animal before any accident happened. He had hardly done so when the enraged horse was upon them, snorting with pain, and quivering with fear of the unknown enemy which had attacked it. . . .

When George Anderson came to himself he found that he was in a narrow dark close; his knees were knocking together, and he felt physically sick. He had no recollection of what had happened after his first glimpse of the black horse—the incarnation of his ghastly dreams—coming towards him at full gallop. How had he escaped from the battalion? What had happened?

The shock had completely shattered his nerves, which were already on edge from insomnia, and it was some time before he regained control of his trembling limbs. When he could do so he crept to the entrance of the close and gazed up

and down the street in a bewildered manner. The street was deserted . . . no signs of the battalion, no sound of its pipe band. . . . A girl lounged on the door-step of a neighbouring shop, watching him with inquisitive eyes. 'Lily!' he gasped.

She laughed shrilly, and disappeared into the dark little doorway.

IV.

'Pull in your chair to the fire, padre,' said Jack Logan hospitably. 'It's funny how cold it gets at night, even in summer, in this—er—hole.'

'It is the damp,' replied Mr Trevor in his low musical voice. 'The place lies very low, you see, and those flats by the river exhale a thick mist at night.'

'Beastly spot,' agreed Jack Logan laconically. He was pouring some amber liquid into two small glasses as he spoke—it seemed uncommonly precious, judging from the care employed in the process.

The padre stretched out his hand and took one with a smile. 'I never can resist Benedictine.'

'Why should you?' his companion wondered. 'It is the best thing to counteract the evil poisons contained in the mess dinner. Macfarlane is the rottenest mess president we've ever had. He ought to sack that cook. Look here, padre, honestly now, don't you think it's positively—'

'It is, it is,' Mr Trevor said soothingly. 'But, Logan, it isn't the mess dinner that is worrying you, is it?'

'What d'you mean?' The young face was turned to that of the older man in surprise.

'You know quite well what I mean—you're worried about something. I suppose it has got to do with all that talk in mess. Not having the clue, I couldn't make head or tail of it, but I saw they were getting at you about some protégé of yours—'

'Oh Lord!' groaned 'The Boy.' 'Look here, padre, I just must tell somebody about it or I'll burst. You know Anderson, who used to be my servant—'

'Of course; Will Anderson's son.'

'Yes. Well, I recommended him for the next N.C.O.'s course. He didn't want to leave me, but it seemed such a waste—he appeared just the man for an N.C.O.—and then his father's record in the regiment—' The voice trailed off into silence.

'Well?' prompted Mr Trevor after a little silence.

'I was going to give the chap a first-class chit and all—he's a fine specimen; at least I thought he was—but after this morning—'

'What happened?' asked the padre. He was very fond of 'The Boy,' and admired the keen interest which he took in every detail of

the regiment, and the endless trouble expended over the men of his company. George Anderson was also a favourite of the padre's, and he wondered of what 'crime' in the army calendar the man had been guilty.

'You may ask what happened,' replied Logan. 'I almost can't believe it myself, though I saw it with my own eyes—it's like Gilbert and Sullivan; if only it were not such a tragedy I could yell with laughter whenever I think of it. Well, we were marching along Pollock Street about twelve o'clock this morning when a horse ran away. It got stung by some of old Watson's damned bees—pardon, sir!'

'All right, Logan, go on,' said Mr Trevor mildly. Nobody deprecated the use of bad language more than he, but he was wise enough to know that it really meant very little to the men who used it, and that there was as little chance of stopping it as there was of stopping the flow of the river which wound its way through the outskirts of the town.

'Well, the brute came careering down the street with the cart rocking behind it, and the loaves and cookies scattering right and left—you never saw anything so comic. I ordered my company to break ranks, and we stopped it easily—it's a tame creature, and even the bad stings didn't madden it up for long. Anderson didn't wait,' continued 'The Boy' bitterly; 'remembered an important engagement, I suppose! Anyhow, you couldn't see him for dust; he went down Pollock Street like a streak of lightning, and disappeared round the corner. Gad, it was funny!'

'But what was the meaning of it?'

'Funk,' replied the young officer grimly.

'Funk?' echoed Mr Trevor incredulously.

'I can't believe it of Will Anderson's son.'

'I know, it's—it's—— But, padre, I saw his face—sheer panic—you can't mistake the signs, if you've seen it before.'

The padre knew that you couldn't—he had 'seen it before' also. He was silent, and his companion continued with a shamefaced laugh, 'It's beastly infectious; for the moment I felt I wanted to run myself. The men were all laughing.'

'They saw too?'

'Oh, everyone saw—they couldn't have helped it, unless they'd been stone blind.'

'What happened after that?'

'I never saw him. He must have gone straight back to the barracks——'

'Perhaps it was an excuse to escape the route-march.'

'The Boy' laughed scornfully. 'Why, the man's a born foot-slogger—positively revels in a route-march; besides, there's his face. Lord, padre, I can't forget it! He must be having a hellish time now,' added his officer, looking out of the uncurtained window across the square to where the barrack-rooms were situated.

Mr Trevor leaned forward, and knocked out his pipe preparatory to re-filling it. 'Have you spoken to him?' he wanted to know.

'Of course; I sent for him as soon as ever I got back. He stood there with his face as cold and proud as Lucifer——' Mr Trevor followed 'The Boy's' eyes across the room, and seemed to see the young soldier standing on the mat at attention, with that hard defiant look marring his handsome face. 'I asked him if he had any excuse for his extraordinary behaviour.'

'What did he say?'

'“No, sir.”'

'And then?'

'Well, I made him come in, and talked to him a bit about my plans for him—and about his father—and—and all that. When he saw that I was really interested, he told me a long yarn about a dream that he had. It was about a horse that savaged him—a great black horse in an Indian compound——'

'Was it true, do you think?'

'Oh yes! Yes, I'm sure he was speaking the truth; but—— Well, you see, it doesn't make much difference so far as his promotion is concerned. What control is he going to have over the men with a ridiculous story like that attached to him?'

'He might live it down.'

'He might; but ridicule is the worst thing for undermining discipline. And then, supposing he were in a tight corner requiring nerve—N.C.O.s can't afford to indulge in dreams like that! It's a question of *moral*, you see, padre.'

The padre saw. Of course 'The Boy' was right; he had a sure touch for everything connected with the regiment. The padre was also seeing something else. 'A great black horse in an Indian compound'—these words called a memory out of some locked cell in his brain. What was it that the words conjured up? An old memory, faded with the passing of twenty-two years, a memory elusive as a will-o'-the-wisp on an Irish bog; yet with 'The Boy's' words it rose clear out of that wonderful storehouse which is in every man's brain.

'That's—odd,' he said slowly. 'A black horse in an Indian compound, savaging him.' He was thinking aloud, forgetful of his companion, who was looking at him in surprise. 'Did he—does he know of any—any reason why he should have that dream?'

'Reason!' The word was echoed wonderingly. 'There isn't any *reason* for dreams, is there, sir?'

'There is—or might be for this one,' Trevor thought. 'Rather a queer thing,' he went on, sitting forward in his chair and tapping his well-worn briar against his teeth ruminatively; 'rather queer.'

The younger man waited impatiently for Mr Trevor to explain himself, and after a few moments the latter began: 'As you know, I

was out with the battalion at Julapore in nineteen-one. I had just joined up then, and I was very keen and interested in everything. I liked the men, and, of course, I was often round the married quarters seeing the women and children. It's odd how, out there, the married quarters are so like *home*—it's a magic word, Boy!—they used to remind me so of home. I've often wondered why those women take Pollock Street east with them—as it were—and I think now that it is because they *resent* the East. They hate it, you know, all of them—hate it as if it were a living thing (women always hate like that, I think). So they take Pollock Street with them, and put it between four walls, and call it home. Their bits of rugs—rag-rugs I think they call them—and their rep curtains, and oleograph pictures, dreadful things, but just *speaking* of home. I suppose I was a bit homesick and I liked it. I was friends with most of the women, but especially with Mrs Anderson.

'Well, to get on with the story, I was crossing the square one grilling hot afternoon, when I saw an accident happen. Brown had a black waler—an awfully vicious beast. He drove it in a *tum-tum*, and had the greatest difficulty in getting a syce to touch it. On this particular afternoon the creature had broken loose, and I saw it come tearing across the compound with the *tum-tum* rocking behind it. I saw suddenly that there was a woman crossing the square towards the married quarters. She evidently did not see the horse coming until it was almost upon her—the noise of its hoofs was deadened by the thick dust which lay there inches deep. When she did look up she seemed to quiver all over; she stood quite still—hypnotised by fear, I suppose. I ran and shouted—and she must have heard, for she tried to struggle out of the way, but—but it was too late—another second, and she was down in the dust amongst those cruel hoofs. Boy, it was a ghastly thing to see. When I got to her she was unconscious. We sent for the M.O., and she was carried into the nearest house. Can you guess who that woman was, Boy? She was Will Anderson's wife and George's mother. He was born that night.' There was a little silence, and then the speaker added brokenly, 'She—died.'

'Good God!' Logan ejaculated. 'And you mean—that's what he—dreams?'

The two men sat and gazed at the fire, which was sinking into a bed of red-hot cinders. The elder was occupied with visions of the past, the younger—as befitted his calling—with plans for the future. Did this disclosure change the situation? Was Anderson any more fitted for a responsible position because his panic was the result of pre-natal impression rather than sheer cowardice? Had he the moral strength to live down the ridicule of his fellow soldiers?

It will be observed that the regiment was everything to this not very imaginative young officer.

'Should we tell him?' The words were spoken half-aloud, but the padre heard and answered them.

'I think so. You see, he may be imagining all sorts of horrors—that his brain is affected, or something equally unpleasant. It is easier to fight a nightmare if you know that there is a natural cause—better far than struggling in the dark.'

'Yes, I suppose so,' said his companion doubtfully. 'Still, I don't know that I can recommend him for the N.C.O.'s course.'

The padre smiled inwardly. Oh these boys, these mad keen soldiers! Did they ever think for five minutes without coming back to the regiment? His thoughts went suddenly to George Anderson struggling in the black grip of the nightmare which had secreted itself in his unformed brain. 'I think you'll find,' said Mr Trevor, choosing his words carefully—'I think you'll find he will be able to bear that with equanimity in view of your other communication. It is queer that he should never have heard from anyone how his mother died—his father felt it too hardly to be able to mention it, I suppose, and—well, it is wonderful how soon one is forgotten. By the time little George was old enough to understand, the regiment had come home. You must explain to George,' went on the padre, 'that it is not cowardice on his part, and that it is through no fault of his own that he is haunted by this dream—it is merely a natural phenomenon—'

He broke off as a loud knock sounded on the door, and 'The Boy' said 'Come in.'

A man entered clumsily, a heavy-built man with close-cropped black hair, and a face as white as paper, and staring eyes.

'Will you please come at once, sir;' and then suddenly the years of discipline and training dropped from him like a cloak. 'Oh Gawd!' he cried wildly, and covered his face with his sleeve, as if to shut out some dreadful sight.

Captain Logan's chair clattered to the ground as he jumped to his feet. 'Corporal Burke, stand up—attention! Now, tell me at once what is the matter.'

The man stood before his officer, blanched and trembling, with a pitiful attempt at self-control. 'It's Anderson, sir—fell out of the barrack-room window, sir—dying—'

'The Boy' pushed him aside and strode out of the room. They could hear him going down the stone stairs three steps at a time.

'Come now—er—Burke,' the padre said with intentional cruelty. 'Pull yourself together at once. This isn't a girls' school. You must have seen worse things in your time than a man falling out of a window.'

'Yes, sir,' Burke replied with a force of habit; and then, with an unconscious gesture of despair, he threw out his arms. 'But—but this is peace. He did it a-purpose. I saw him do it. If you saw him all crumpled up on the ground——' And then, in a husky murmur, 'We was chipping him. I never thort——'

Mr Trevor shook him by the sleeve. 'Pull yourself together—you're a corporal, aren't you? What kind of an example is this to show the men?' The curt words acted like magic. Burke straightened his shoulders, and the colour came back to his lips. 'Now, follow me,' said Mr Trevor sternly.

The little group on the cobbles beneath the barrack-room window moved aside to make a passage for the padre and his escort. 'The Boy' was on his knees beside the shattered heap of humanity which had so recently been full of youth and beauty. The atmosphere seemed charged with tense emotions, and when some one called out, 'Here's the M.O.,' a murmur of relief went up from the waiting men.

Only Captain Logan gave no sign of relaxed tension; he rose and faced the newcomer gravely. 'We are both too late,' he said.

The padre sensed the agony which underlay these simple words. 'The Boy' was taking it terribly to heart. If only he could help.

He stood aside while the necessary instructions were being given to the orderlies, and wondered a little at the stern, hard voice. When that was done the two friends walked back together across the square in silence. The night was darkening swiftly now, and lights had sprung up all over the big block of buildings which contained the officers' quarters.

Still 'The Boy' spoke no word, and his friend

began to be afraid. 'You couldn't help it. Don't take it to heart, Boy,' he said as comfortingly as he could.

A low even voice replied out of the darkness, 'He was my friend, and I failed him because I did not understand. I—failed him.'

V

Two days later a little cortège passed through the barrack-gates and proceeded down the High Street at the slow march with arms reversed. The sun was shining brightly, and everything looked the same as it had done on that memorable day of the route-march. A little group of officers followed the coffin, which was laid on a gun-carriage and covered by the bright folds of the Union Jack. Captain Logan, with his head erect and a hard expression on his young boyish face, walked alone, for he was chief mourner.

At the corner of Pollock Street a crowd had collected to watch the little procession pass; a motley group, such as might be found at any street corner at any hour of the day with time hanging heavy on its hands. Amongst them was a young girl in a bright green silk jumper; she was hanging on the arm of a young civilian, in a shiny blue suit, with a weak chin and a bowler hat—he was obviously a clerk.

'Come away, do,' he said, pulling her arm in an irritable manner. 'What are ye gazing at noo, Lily?'

'Whose funeral is it?' she wondered idly.

'Well, it's no' mine, anyway,' he replied with the perverted humour of his kind.

The girl in the green jumper laughed shrilly, and followed her witty companion through the swing-doors of the Grand Picture Palace.

SIAMESE SUPERSTITIONS.

By ERNEST YOUNG, B.Sc., M.A., F.R.G.S., Ex-Inspector of Anglo-Vernacular Schools, Siam.

FROM birth to death the native Siamese is enveloped in an atmosphere of superstition. There is no act of his life that is not ruled by some tradition or other that has held authority and power through many ages. The infant is a gift from the gods, and the legendary deities of the parents demand due observance of many customs. As the time of its birth approaches, the mother retires to the seclusion of her own chamber, where she lies on a long flat board in front of a fire. Kindly hands stretch a protective cord all round the exterior of the building, and this is blessed by the priests, and so forms an efficient barrier against all those evil spirits lying in wait to cause trouble. Scarcely has the tiny mite wailed its first feeble note than its nurses make three balls of rice and throw them in three lucky directions. By this means certain bene-

ficent spirits are invoked to be present and to watch over the future of the baby.

Even in these days, when an Education Department is seeking to instil knowledge into the young, there are still thousands of children in Siam who never go to school, and who gain all their ideas about nature from the stories told them by parents and friends. When the big giant in the sky above chases his cantankerous wife and hurls his hammer after her, the sound of his voice and the noise of the falling weapon, as it crashes against the floors of heaven, give rise to the rolling of the thunder; the 'sky cries.' When the long waves of purple lightning flash across the horizon, the angels are amusing themselves by striking fire with bricks. When the mighty crab comes out of its hole in the sea, the tide ebbs, and when this same denizen of the deep

retreats once more to his subaqueous residence, the tide flows again. When too many angels get into the same bath at the same time, the water pours over the side and it rains. And when the earth is wrapped in darkness, and the night winds sigh across the rice-fields and the plains, you can hear in those evening breezes, if you will but listen as you should, the voices of all the little children who have long since gone to their eternal rest.

When the Siamese child wants a fairy-tale with which to while away the hours, nothing so insipid as Cinderella will suit his fancy. His hero is the man who meets single-handed a million foes in a deep ravine. When the assembled hosts laugh at his daring he takes up the mountains in his right hand and his left and, crashing them together, annihilates the opposing forces in the twinkling of an eye.

If a person be travelling far from home he will not mention the word 'alligator' as he passes by the river-bank, or whisper the word 'tiger' as he threads the jungle, for fear the beasts should hear him and answer to their names.

And so the boys grow up to manhood and the girls to womanhood, and, as happens everywhere, they fall in love and seek each other in marriage. Then the parents of the lovers go to the astrologer and state the facts of the case, and the astrologer notes the respective birthdays of the young couple and consults his oracles. For the years run in cycles of twelve, and are ruled over by the rat, the cow, the tiger, and nine other animals. And should the man have been born in the year of the dog and the woman in the year of the cat, there could by no possible means be any happiness in the wedded life of these two. If no inauspicious births have taken place the marriage may be solemnised, and the man will build a house for his bride. But in this house the number of rooms, of doors, of windows, of everything within and without, must be an odd one, for even numbers are unlucky.

No one lies down to sleep with his head pointing to the west, for that is the point where the sun dies his daily death, and so is symbolical of the end of all things. The only safe direction for repose is north and south. On Sunday, if you travel, you must travel to the east, for that will bring you luck. On Monday you may go west; on Tuesday, south; on Wednesday, south-west; on Thursday, north; on Friday, south-east; and on Saturday, north-west.

Again, every day is ruled by some particular planet, and if you wish that planet to bring you success you must dress in the colour of the planet itself. On Sunday, when the Sun is the ruling luminary, dress yourself in red, and wear rubies. The Moon controls Monday and demands

white moonstones; Mars asks for light red and coral on a Tuesday; Mercury requires green and emeralds on a Wednesday; Jupiter looks out for the cat's-eye on a Thursday; Venus is not satisfied unless you wear silver-blue and diamonds on a Friday; while Saturn takes charge of Saturday, and expects dark blue and sapphires.

Get your hair cut on the proper day, or much woe will befall you. Go to the barber on Sunday, and long life and happiness will be your lot; but beware of Monday's tonsorial operations, for they bring disease, sorrow, and unpleasant surprises; Tuesday means peace, prosperity, and success in war; Wednesday brings trouble from your enemies; the angels grant protection to all those who lose their locks on Thursday; Friday is the glutton's day, for all food will be palatable to those who are then shorn; Saturday's haircutting brings success in all deeds and ceremonies performed on the last day of the week.

Wherever credulity flourishes the medicine man reaps a rich reward, and quacks are in great evidence. They combine, in Siam, the double function of healer and destroyer, for they will cure or kill for an adequate financial compensation. If you can afford it, you can, by the help of the doctor, rid yourself of an enemy in the following manner. The wizard will buy a buffalo at your expense, and then say charms over it. As the process of bewitching the animal continues his body decreases in size until the huge beast has dwindled to the size of a pill. Then you arrange for your enemy to swallow this highly condensed extract. No sooner has he partaken of the pill than it begins to swell to its original size. It is scarcely necessary to add details as to the dramatic close of your enemy's career.

At last the time comes to each one to die. There are several methods of disposing of the dead, and one of these is burial. None, however, are buried except those who have died of sudden death, of cholera, or by the executioner's sword. Down in the depths of the subterranean regions there dwells an enormous monster, who sits through all eternity warming his feet in the fire. In order to prevent them from being utterly consumed by the flames it is necessary, from time to time, to pour water over them. This water is brought to him by an army of slaves. The slaves are the spirits of the people who have been buried after death. To get the water they have to travel over perilous bridges, through dark ravines, and across dangerous swamps. Their every step is beset with danger, darkness, and pain. They bring their precious burdens back in sieves, and through endless ages they must perform the same ceaseless, terrible, and hopeless task.

The deceased can be liberated from this cruel existence only if their living relatives are willing to call themselves the relations of the fiend,

and to do homage to him. The method of doing homage does not appear very serious to us, but it is sufficiently efficacious. The earthly relatives bind on neck and wrist a few red and yellow strings, which they can obtain from a priest. Then they make a tiny cart, and put into it a number of clay images, one for each member of the family. With the images they

put offerings of fruit, flowers, and rice, and they deposit the whole gift in an out-of-the-way corner of a field. The wind and the mice soon play havoc with the propitiatory offering, but the demon takes no notice of that, and the minds of the living are satisfied with what they have done in mitigation of the miseries of the departed.

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

CHAPTER VII.—*continued.*

III.

IT was a minute or two before I dared look up and meet Mr Thurlow's eye.

I was aware, when I looked across at him, that he too avoided looking at me. I think we both of us felt that we had been treading on holy ground, and that we ought to have taken our shoes from off our feet.

'Our client,' and Mr Thurlow was speaking in his driest tones, 'would never have allowed us a sight of this letter, had he not been consumed with anxiety about the young lady. His chief idea is to keep her out of the affair altogether; he can't bear that the breath of scandal shall touch her. And so you and I are to devise the means for keeping her name out of it.'

'Mr Thurlow!' I exclaimed with some warmth, 'I will never lift a finger to prevent those two from coming together again. They have been parted; there has been misunderstanding; but the moment the light of truth has shone, she has seen her path of duty quite clearly, and is determined to walk in it; and in my opinion, God bless her, she is doing exactly the right thing.'

'You speak,' said the lawyer, 'as if I were of a contrary opinion; but I have not said so. What I have to consider, however, is the character of the defence which we set up; and the responsibility for this rests upon me.'

'Well,' I queried, 'would not her witness be helpful?'

'That is just the point,' he replied, 'which I have very carefully to weigh. The "pros" and "cons" seem to me to be these. The cause of antagonism leading up to this deadly quarrel was undoubtedly this young lady; but, you see, the more strongly a motive is made to appear—and that I assume is the idea in allowing Miss Weston to give evidence—the more strongly does it appear that our client's act was wilful, and as one might say of 'malice prepense.' And, of course, we don't want to show that: so that is against our putting her in the witness box.'

'On the other hand, when we were before the justices, it became practically impossible,

as you know, to keep her name out of the case altogether. Now, my experience of judges and juries is that they are apt to resent the keeping back of any witness who may seem to them to be material to the case—they become a little bit suspicious. They have, you see, to come to a decision, and they want everything that may contribute to a true verdict to be placed fairly and squarely before them.

'I should say that Miss Weston would probably make a good witness, and would be likely to impress the jury favourably; and even a judge, you know, is not wholly uninfluenced by sentiment and feelings of pity.'

He paused.

'Then, on the whole, you agree with me,' I said, 'that we should let her appear?'

The lawyer's eyes twinkled. 'I doubt if there is much "let" about it,' he remarked; 'we can't hinder it. She has appeared, and she will appear; and what we have to do is to coach her just a little bit as to the dangers of overstatement, in case she gets carried away by her feelings.'

'And what,' I asked, 'are we to say to Carrington about disregarding his wishes?'

'You can leave that to me,' was Mr Thurlow's reply. 'When a doctor of medicine has a patient very sick, and perhaps about to die, he doesn't look to his patient for orders, but gives his own orders. And a prisoner is something like a sick man—he doesn't always know what is best for him.'

IV.

I said 'good-bye' to Mr Thurlow, and as I had missed Vera at his office, I now drove to Lennox Gardens on the chance of seeing her, for I greatly wished to see her, and to speak a word of appreciation and encouragement.

By good luck she was in, and we had a great deal to tell each other.

And then Mrs Chichester came into the room, and I found she had espoused Vera's cause with great enthusiasm. 'I am going to look after Vera,' she said, 'and am only too delighted to do it. There was some talk of Hubert's mother or one of the girls coming up; but that's been vetoed. They would only have made Vera

nervous, and perhaps made themselves ill. No! I am going with her to the law-court myself; so she'll know she has one friend at court anyhow.'

'Many more friends than one,' I declared. 'She has quite won Mr Thurlow's heart already, to say nothing of yours, and mine; and if I were a betting man, Mrs Chichestcr, I'd wager you she will win the case.'

'That's just what my husband says,' she exclaimed; 'in fact, he says so much that I tell Vera I shall be getting quite jealous.'

'He has written such a funny letter to General Weston—you know they are old Indian friends—and he has told him that his old regiment would disown him if they knew he was opposing his daughter in what she was doing; and he strongly advises Sir Thomas to yield with a good grace now, and not to wait till the trial is over, when everybody, however it may end, will cry "Shame on him."'

'Poor, dear old Dad,' said Vera, 'I'm sure he meant what was right; but he so often calls me "my child" that I suppose he still thinks I am one.'

I did not attempt to see Hubert again before the trial. After what Mr Thurlow had said, I thought I would leave him in the lawyer's hands.

But I went down to Wingate for the Sunday, to take the church services, and to see Hubert's mother and Cecilia and Alice, and to tell them how matters stood.

v.

I was back again on Monday, and made my way at once to the Central Criminal Court.

There I found Mr Thurlow, and Vera and Mrs Chichestcr, and, to my great surprise and satisfaction, no less a person than Sir Thomas Weston himself.

'I wasn't going to leave my daughter,' he told me, 'to wander about in these unsavoury purlieus all by herself, so I've come up to look after her; and I only hope we sha'n't be detained here very long.'

'A good deal depends,' Mr Thurlow observed, 'upon when our case will be called. I have ascertained that there are seventy-nine cases down for trial, and over 400 witnesses are in attendance.'

'Good gracious me!' cried the general. 'Why, we may be here a fortnight! But whereabouts do we come in the list?'

'I fear,' said the lawyer, 'that the place in the list won't tell us much. There are three judges trying these cases in different courts, and the proceedings in some of them may be very protracted, while in others the prisoner may plead guilty at once. In that way some of the cases get remitted from one court to another, and the order in the list is quite upset. I shall be able probably to find out pretty early each day whether our case is likely to be taken on that

day, and if it isn't, then you will be free for that day at any rate. But it isn't safe to absent yourself altogether, so I'm afraid it means coming here every day.'

The general looked so disgusted, and so furious, that Mr Thurlow nimbly beat a retreat; while I, with a sense of the ludicrous, could hardly restrain a smile.

But, in all seriousness, if prisoners at the bar have their trials, it may be averred with truth that witnesses have theirs also, and that their trials begin long before they set foot in the witness box and face the jury.

The swarms of witnesses, many of them belonging to the great unwashed; the foetid smell of overcrowded courts; the lack of proper accommodation; the pervading sense of crime, and evil, and unhappiness, and anxiety—all these things in combination make the kicking of one's heels at the Old Bailey anything but a pleasing pastime.

However, it is a long lane that has no turning, and in the afternoon of the second day we were informed that without fail we must all be in attendance in good time on the following morning, as we were almost certain to be called before the Grand Jury.

This sifting of cases by the Grand Jury before they are actually tried in open court is sometimes a mere formality, but not always. For the Judge of Assize, previous to charging the jury, is accustomed to give special attention to such cases as demand consideration. Then, in his opening address to the Grand Jury, he is in a position to advise them as to the actual law obtaining in such cases; and if he has seen that the evidence against the accused is inadequate or contrary to the law, he directs the attention of the Grand Jury to the points in question, and sometimes will advise that an indictment must be ignored. By this means much time is saved, and also a good deal of expense to the country.

vi.

It was not without some thrills of emotion, and a deep sense of anxiety that at last we found ourselves conveyed as witnesses to the very door of the room in which the Grand Jury was sitting; and there we had to wait until such time as we might be called, individually, to give our evidence.

Our little party included Admiral Chapman and three of his servants, and one of the three doctors who had made the post-mortem examination, and Vera and myself.

Mr Mackenzie and Mr Swallowfield, junior, were also in attendance as representatives of the Birmingham firm, although they had been informed that they would not have to appear before the Grand Jury, as the Grand Jury only called witnesses for the prosecution.

In this aspect of the case, as it presented

itself to my mind, there seemed to be such a topsy-turvydom of justice, and such a jumble of proceedings in all that we were required to say and do, that I seriously debated whether, by our own fault, we had been turned into a pack of fools, or whether the law itself was 'a hass.'

For here we were, myself and my fellow-witnesses, who were all wishing to be regarded as for the defence of the prisoner, and yet some of us had been subpoenaed for the prosecution.

Moreover, the prisoner himself, as it turned out, who was presently to appear at the bar, although he was the very man who had given himself up on the plea that he had been guilty of assault, if not of manslaughter, was now about to plead 'Not guilty,' in view of the more serious arraignment by the Crown. How would it all end?

VII.

The end was not far off. First Admiral Chapman was called into the room to give his evidence before the Grand Jury. In about ten minutes he came out again, looking extremely disturbed and ill at ease.

Then came the doctor's turn. And he, too, came out again. And then I went, and at once was sworn to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

The examination was very brief, and proceeded upon the lines of evidence given before the

bench of magistrates at Richmond. I said what I wanted to say; and then out I came.

Vera looked at me with anxious and troubled eyes; but the nervous tension added a set look of firmness and almost fierceness to the whole face, as though she had prepared herself to go through fire and water, if need be, for the man she loved.

She was expecting every moment to be the next witness to be called. But we had to wait, and waiting in such circumstances is more than a trial—it becomes a martyrdom.

And then the door once more opened, and a court official came out. 'Are you the witnesses in the Carrington case?' he hurriedly asked in the gruffest and roughest of whispers.

'We are,' I said.

'Well then,' he continued, 'you needn't stay any longer; the Jury has thrown the bill out. They found there was no true bill against the prisoner, and so the case is at an end.'

And as I turned to Vera she just threw herself into my arms and cried like a little child.

Six months afterwards there was a very grand wedding at Bath. Sir Thomas Weston certainly did the thing well. And I did my little best; for I had the privilege of placing Vera's hand in Hubert's, and saying, as I joined their hands together, 'Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.'

THE END.

LONDON GOVERNMENT.

By WILLIAM ABDQUIN.

I.

THROUGH the courtesy of the Deputy Clerk of the London County Council the writer, in company with a body of Overseas engineers and architects, was recently conducted over the new headquarters of London government. The present building on the Surrey side of Westminster Bridge has been erected at a cost of three million pounds. It possesses about nine hundred rooms, and when the northern extension has been completed at the cost of another million, the housing accommodation for the L.C.C.'s tremendous staff will stretch almost half-way from Westminster Bridge to that eye-sore of the Thames, which has a crossing by the name of 'Hungerford.' Much useful information was disclosed, not only in regard to the building, but in connection with many important phases of London government.

The London County Council are the largest landlords in London, their capital expenditure exceeding twelve million pounds. They house nearly a hundred and twenty thousand persons, at an approximate rent-roll of eight hundred thousand pounds. But some of the largest

individual owners are scarcely known. The 116,000 square miles of the administrative area of the county of London are divided amongst 38,200 owners. Lord Northbrook (Eltham) and Dulwich College hold over two square miles each, and the following four persons own more than one and a half square miles: Lord Forster (Lewisham), Mr H. T. B. Barron (Plumstead), Lord St Germans (Blackheath), and Sir Spencer Maryon Wilson (Hampstead and Carlton). The Duke of Westminster is the owner of three-quarters of a square mile of London territory. The Earl of Dartmouth receives rents for over half a square mile of property in St Pancras and Lewisham; Magdalen College, Oxford, owns half a square mile in Wandsworth; and the Prudential Assurance and Mercers' Companies own about the same quantity throughout London.

II.

In connection with the furniture contained in the building there is one fact which is not generally known, and that is, the seating accommodation for members is of oak, some of which is believed to be several thousands

of years old. It was found some thirty-five feet below the level of Villiers Street, Strand, during the process of erection of the Hampstead Tube at Charing Cross Station. The columns and pilasters are monoliths of Veine Dorée, an extremely beautiful marble quarried over five thousand feet above the sea-level in the Italian Alps. 'The heating and ventilation of the chamber,' said the guide, 'are obtained by air which is drawn from alternative positions on the fifth floor, is completely saturated at a predetermined temperature, automatically controlled, and all dust is removed. In the chamber an individual supply is provided for each occupant, and the direction of the current can be regulated by the lever in front of each seat.' The clocks in all the rooms are worked by electricity; there are six boilers in the sub-basement for supplying hot water through thirty miles of pipes to 2150 radiators, 690 basins, &c., and the staff refreshment-rooms and kitchens, which are designed to supply two thousand luncheons a day. When completed there will be four miles of corridors; four million floor blocks will have been used in the work; the total area paved will be about eighteen acres; and hundreds of miles of electrical wire will be required.

One of the most interesting disclosures made concerned public health and the disposal of sewage. It appeared that formerly the drainage was carried off in open watercourses, which was unsatisfactory. Afterwards, main sewers, running approximately at right angles to the Thames, discharged their contents at different points within the London area. The great innovation, however, was the construction at different levels of sewers running from west to east, which intercepted the sewage and conveyed it mainly by gravitation to outfalls well below London—at Barking on the north and Crossness on the south side of the river, five pumping stations being erected to assist the flow of the sewage. When the sewage reaches the outfalls it is run into reservoirs. The solid matter, or sludge, is then precipitated, and the effluent, or clarified liquid, after chemical treatment, flows into the Thames. The sludge is deposited by special vessels in the black deep, twelve miles off the coast of Essex. One hundred million gallons of sewage and two million tons of sludge are dealt with every year, the length of the sewers running to three hundred and seventy miles. In addition there are two thousand miles of local sewers controlled by the authorities. The total cost of maintenance in 1922-1923 was £617,000.

III.

The L.C.C. have a million children in their schools and some 160,000 students in their evening institutes. Their new education officer, Brigadier-General G. H. Gater (who is only

thirty-nine years of age), joined the army at the outbreak of war as a private soldier.

The ages of the students in the evening classes range from fourteen to seventy-eight. The curriculum includes all subjects which are calculated to equip one for a professional, a literary, or a commercial career. Laboratories and workshops are distinct from class-room education, in which technical and scientific instruction is given right from the elementary to the most advanced stages, thereby releasing at the polytechnics and technical institute rooms for development along technological lines. Law is taught by lawyers, hygiene by medical experts, journalism by journalists, banking and the like by specialists who are well versed in their subjects, and, what is equally important, know how to teach them. At the same time 'it links up all the different grades of institutions by numerous scholarships, which enable boys and girls to pass through every grade of education from the lowest to the highest without payment of fees, and with the assistance of maintenance grants. Every London home has the chance offered to it for the clever boy or girl to pass right through from the elementary school to the university, and there win the highest academic honours that the country can bestow.'

When excavations were commenced on the site of the building, for the purpose of laying the foundation of it, an old Roman boat was discovered, which has been presented to the British Museum. The coins and rounded stones found in it have enabled students of antiquity to form the conclusion that before the upper and lower marshes (which are situate not far from the structure) were converted into arable land, the occupants were fisher-folk, who inhabited rough hovels on adjacent territory. It may incidentally be remarked that in the days of Roman London the site of Westminster Abbey was known as the 'Isle of Thorney,' and historians state that it was the centre of a busy trade. Merchants would ferry across the river and essay to negotiate the crossings of the marsh, which were precarious, expansive and swampy, and often resulted in the loss of valuable merchandise. The site of the present building was known in bygone years as 'Pedler's Corner,' a notorious resort of river thieves of the period.

SEPTEMBER.

NIGHTS full of beauty; calm and gracious days
That lay cool hands on Summer's fervid hours;
Fruit ripening fast in quiet country-ways;
The garden-beds ablaze with gorgeous flowers.

So comes September in a regal dress,
With vine-leaves crowned and golden harvest moon.

O who amid this Autumn loveliness
Could sigh for Spring, or miss a vanished June?

E. MATHESON.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

CLAY IN THE HANDS.

By EUSTACE AINSWORTH.

I.

TO say that man is the creature of circumstance may be true enough, provided that Circumstance is admitted to be of the female sex. Circumstance must be, of course, for she will not be gainsaid. John Storrs discovered that fact at the mature age of forty-two, but he will be dead and in another life before he realises how inevitable was his defeat.

For close on twenty-five years John Storrs had concentrated his whole energy upon the upbuilding and extension of Wilberforce, Storrs, and Wakefield, at the head of which he now stood. Wakefield had died very early in the venture, and Wilberforce had become so alarmed at John's ambitious notions that he had suffered himself to be bought out at a large profit, and spent the rest of his years accusing John of having swindled him out of the business. John did not mind that because it was not true, but as time passed and nothing came to him but wealth, and work that brought more wealth, John began to speculate upon the saying that it is not good for man to live alone. There was something so isolating about great success. It cooled a man's old friendships, as one by one comrades of early days found the pace too warm and dropped behind, and hung one up, so to speak, between the everyday working crowd, from which John had sprung, and Society with a capital initial, which—so far as John could detect—consisted largely of the grandchildren of such men as himself. And it was in this vein that Storrs, after much careful thought, decided to marry.

Unfortunately he knew that his choice of a wife would be limited. He had gone far enough to let go the hands of one set without reaching the feet of the layer above, and the only young woman he could think of as a possibility was Wilberforce's daughter Vic. Wilberforce was a fool, or he would not have lost his nerve and sold out when he did, but he was sound, and from what John remembered of Mrs Wilberforce, Victoria should be well-bred in the only way that John Storrs understood that much-abused phrase. Then again Victoria was distinctly pretty, and would make a splendid hostess at Holly Bank. Of course Vic might

No. 769.—Vol. XV.

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AUGUST 22, 1925.

have other ideas, and her father's constant grievance against Storrs might have prejudiced John in her eyes. But you never could tell.

So, to pass over a period rather sordidly uninteresting, John Storrs, aged forty, was married, with as much pomp as money could buy, to Victoria, aged twenty-six, only child of Robert Wilberforce, widower, of Myrtle Grove; and the happy couple left for a fortnight in Cornwall, subsequently taking up their abode at Holly Bank.

Victoria had a free hand to take up, or be taken up by, whom she wished, and on those occasions when entertainments came out of working hours, John was a complete success either as guest or as host. His simple directness and modesty made friends on all sides, and the fact that he was completely at ease himself in any company assisted Victoria's social success.

'Must I know the people at the office?' she asked one day.

'Not unless you choose. I'm the only link between this house and the business.'

'Dad thinks I should. He says it's snobbery not to be friendly with the other directors' wives.'

'Rubbish. The snobbery is on their side. I don't know them myself.'

'Dad says it's their only chance of getting onto the Assembly list—'

'That's not my department,' John replied. 'Do as you wish. Personally, if I were you, I would not. But it's all the same to me.'

'Then I won't,' she said, with a feeling of relief.

II.

The months passed, and John found that, as usual, he had made no mistake. Vic was charming, slight in figure, quick, and clever enough to conceal more intelligence than she displayed. Her manner, while apparently deferential, was fearless and unhesitating, till from small venturesome beginnings she succeeded eventually in ruling John and his household as that gentleman had never been ruled before.

Strictly speaking, it had not been a love match, of course; that is to say, it had not begun with any passionate or sentimental feelings on either side; but perhaps for that very reason it

passed the more quickly into that lasting stage of liking, confidence, and respect which, after all, is the shape into which successful marriages merge. In fact, if anything, the liking between husband and wife increased rather than dulled, until John could hardly imagine any request that Vic was likely to make with which he would not at once agree.

And Vic was wise. On the return from their honeymoon she had cast one shuddering look upon the furniture and decorations of Holly Bank, had said nothing at all, but had spent the next six months entrenching herself safely in John's heart. Once there, and a suitable opportunity arising, she had proposed a move into another neighbourhood, the purchase of a modernised old house, and refurnishing throughout. John had asked what it would cost, and eventually had left the whole thing in her hands.

He liked the new house better than the old, noticed the very few articles of furniture and decoration that Vic had preserved from Holly Bank, and noticed also that in every case they were things which had belonged to his grandfather when that gentleman was a tenant-farmer some seventy years ago. He was fully aware that Vic knew nothing of their history, and so began his first lesson in taste.

III.

John never talked 'shop' to Vic, but once or twice a month old Wilberforce would drive over for dinner and critically discuss the doings of Wilberforce, Storrs, & Wakefield before the servants, in a way that John did not like; nor did it mend matters when he more than hinted that he had been legally—oh quite legally, of course—jockeyed out of his share. Like many another, Wilberforce, living on an assured income of some fifteen hundred pounds a year, felt it deeply unjust that John, once his junior partner, should be making at least ten times that amount. John was very patient over this treatment, because, whenever Wilberforce said anything particularly galling, John knew that Vic was looking at him, and either said nothing or smoothed the point over with a soft reply. Vic's eyes, he sometimes thought, would be worth a million pounds if they could be put to their full use.

Unfortunately, too, John had discovered that his father-in-law, not content with annoying him, was actually borrowing money from Vic. So one day he told her that he had doubled her very ample allowance, and suggested that she should drop her father a hint that he had better draw in his horns.

'I can't think what he wants to spend so much money for,' he said kindly. 'Now I hear he's buying another car.'

Vic looked across the cosy study where a reading-lamp fell on John's copy of *The Times*, and said, 'I've often wondered why God was

so good as to give me you for a husband, John.'

'What's that!' John gasped. 'I say, you shouldn't say things like that!'

'Why, I hadn't a chance,' Vic went on, unheeding, 'and now, just look!'

'Well, look!' he agreed, 'and what d'you see? A man that can make money and can do nowt else'—John's rare emotion had swung him back twenty years—'and a woman that he shouldn't have dared to touch!'

Vic shook her head. 'A man's opinion of a woman, John—'

'Don't you make any mistake,' he interrupted, 'I haven't got no "opinion" about you, my lass. Opinions are things that haven't been proved!'

Vic laughed. 'You are certainly the best flatterer I ever met.'

'Flatterer!' he exclaimed indignantly.

'Of course. There are two kinds of flattery, John—that which a woman likes to hear, but which she knows is not true and is not meant to be true either; and the more rare kind which she still knows is not true, but which she also knows is honestly believed by the flatterer. That is the sweetest of all. But seriously, what are we going to do about Dad?'

'I've doubled your allowance, and if there's anything else you can suggest—'

'There is, though I hardly like to suggest it.'

'Go on.'

'Well, you know what's wrong with him—he has no work, no place in the world. He sees Wilberforce, Storrs, & Wakefield on every signboard through the land, and yet he knows that he's out of the concern. That's what makes him extravagant.'

'An odd reason,' John ventured.

'Not as odd as it seems. Dad is vain. He wants acknowledgment by other men, he wants to be looked on as Somebody. Did you see what a newspaper called him the other day?'

'No; but what matter? What do they call me?'

'They call you John Storrs, and every time the printer puts your name in type he raises his hat.'

'You certainly know something about flattery,' he remarked with a smile; 'but what did they call the old man?'

'They called Dad "Mr Robert Wilberforce, father-in-law of Mr John Storrs."'

John laughed quietly and looked into the fire.

'And you see that just makes Dad mad, and he goes out and buys a car, or does some other foolish thing, simply to attract attention to himself. Of course his view is all wrong, but it is his view all the same.'

'Well, we're not responsible for his views,' John said; 'if it's just a matter of money, up to a certain point—' But as he looked across at his wife an extra brightness in Vic's eyes nearly stopped his heart.

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'Couldn't he go on the Board?' she suggested, after suffering a long scrutiny from John's troubled gaze.

IV.

This was something entirely new. Never since their marriage had Vic asked for anything for old Wilberforce, and never had she attempted to interfere with the Firm's affairs. And not only was Vic attempting this astounding thing, but, unless he was much mistaken, she was on the point of tears.

Of course he could shelve the matter, as Wilberforce himself always did when a disagreeable question arose, but it was not in the character of John Storrs to take that line. On the other hand, suppose Vic were to lose her tense control for a moment and positively cry! It was a terrible predicament, and took John's mind back to the first week of the war when his accountant had told him, with a white face, that strictly speaking the Firm was insolvent; and John had sacked him there and then.

Wilberforce on the Board would be impossible. John's directors were heads of departments only, who spoke, each in turn, on their own specialised subjects and then held their peace. The policy of the Firm was in one pair of hands, and there it must stay. Yet supposing Vic should cry!

'Couldn't you arrange that he had no real authority, signed cheques or something like that, as lots of other directors do who don't really direct?'

'The cheques are signed by the cashier,' John replied.

'Then they could be countersigned by Dad; that makes it easier still. You once said that the only things Dad could do were to keep books and buy broadcloth, whatever that may be.'

'You don't understand, Vic,' he replied, the unusual use of her name showing that he was distressed. 'My directors are merely heads of departments. Sykes, for instance, is cashier, and runs the financial side; Ellison is buyer; Murgatroyd has charge of sales, and so on; and at Board Meetings these fellows just speak on their own particular subjects. The "directing," as you call it, is done by me.'

There was such a tone of finality in John's voice, so complete a refusal, as though the thing asked for were entirely out of his power to give, that Vic turned away to the fire. He watched her adjust one piece of coal after the other with the tongs, her face still averted, and then sat in torture as she went quietly out of the room.

V.

It was the biggest thing John Storrs had ever done. He cast his mind back to every seeming disaster that had loomed up before his path or chased him wildly through weeks of tight money and bad debts in early days, back to the time when even his bank had for the

moment lost confidence in John Storrs's ability and had shut down on the Firm in the middle of a big deal; but none of these things had shaken his nerve in the same way.

Yet what could he do? Not that the presence of Wilberforce on the Board, with limited power, could do much harm, but the cardinal principle of deciding every such thing from an absolutely hard and fast test of increased efficiency ruled it out. What would the secretary, or Sykes, Ellison, or Murgatroyd think of his wisdom if he brought that old fool back onto the Board? There could only be one opinion amongst them, that John Storrs was losing his grip, that his judgment had ceased to be infallible; and there was no room for opinions such as that.

The house was deadly quiet. Suppose Vic were actually crying now. She would do it in complete silence. She would never show her disappointment, for fear it should cause him grief. Then John remembered that she had not said 'Good night.' There could only be one explanation of that fact; she dare not trust herself to speak. But Wilberforce must not come on the Board.

John sat up late, the paper still lying untidily on the floor, and then went quietly up to his dressing-room, where he crept into a seldom used bed and lay awake all night.

VI.

During the next ten days no stranger would have noticed anything but the most cordial comradeship between husband and wife, because neither had any intention of expressing what lay at the back of their mind. That John, for instance, had occupied the dressing-room for the first time, and still occupied it from sheer reluctance to open up the difference that lay between them, passed without comment; whilst Vic had only changed, if at all, in a greater attention to John's comfort in little details, which, of course, merely increased the tension that hung in the air.

John went out of his way to refer kindly to Mr Wilberforce on several occasions, and Vic looked gratefully at him while venturing the opinion that the old man was very comfortably fixed and much better off than he deserved. She even volunteered that her father had nothing whatever to complain of any more than had she. To which John countered, 'Still, he's your father, and for that reason I shall always be in his debt.' In fact, things could hardly have been worse.

Then came the fortnightly Board Meeting, and John, bravely reminding Vic of the fact, warned her that he might be late home.

To John the world, as he was beginning to love it, had come to an end. In business, if one disagreed with a man, well, one disagreed and talked about the disagreement so openly that in the end it often formed the basis of a friendship

that lasted through life; but with women it was different. Women were so set on having their own way—in fact you could not stop them. But he had stopped Vic. That was the awful part of it. Women should never be stopped, he felt sure of that, and yet he had done it. He sometimes wondered whether he were different from everyone else, whether, as Napoleon had said of himself, he was not a 'man' but a 'thing.' In business, yes. Business and private life, money and affection, were divorced as the poles. He had defied his wife, and made both her and himself miserable. It would last for the rest of their lives. He began to wonder whether it was worth while. Suppose he sold out and went to live in the country—let old Wilberforce onto the Board? No, that would not mend matters. The new Board would turn the old fool out and the trouble would begin all over again. Well, it could not be helped. Apparently Fate took a swipe at a man every now and then, and the man just had to grin.

The secretary coughed and looked at his watch.

'I beg your pardon,' John said; 'go ahead.'

VII.

John listened to the reading of the minutes, signed them, and thereafter for three-quarters of an hour tried to pay attention to reports and suggestions read out by the others round the Board. He wondered whether he would ever again succeed in keeping his home affairs separate from his business. In time, of course, he would get hardened, he supposed. Vic would become just an obliging lady-housekeeper and entertainer of his friends, while he would spend more time at his club. The mischief of it was that this was the ideal with which he had started off married life. It had only been lately, for the last six months perhaps, that his home had become a joy to him such as he had never expected could exist.

'I beg your pardon, Mr Sykes?' John was punctiliously polite at a meeting of the Board.

'I was saying, Mr Storrs, that it might be better if the Firm's cheques were signed by another director after being countersigned by me.'

'What for?' John snapped. There was a flavour of repetition about that suggestion. It was what Vic had proposed. He remembered now.

'It is customary,' Sykes went on rather uneasily, 'and as a matter of fact the bank would prefer the arrangement from their own point of view.'

'There's no one here who has time to do that properly,' John replied, looking round the Board. 'We're all stretched to capacity, and what use would it be for one of us to sign as a matter of form?'

'None, Mr Storrs,' Sykes agreed. 'What I suggest, with all deference, is that another director be found, part of whose work would be to keep track of finance. This business is very large and growing fast—'

'Another director!' John gasped. 'But who?'

Apparently no one cared to reply at the moment, so Mr Ellison, who was buyer to the Firm, chipped in.

'That gives me an opportunity, Mr Storrs, of pointing out a weak spot in my department, which Mr Sykes's suggestion might help to remedy. In the early days, when we were mostly concerned with broadcloths, Mr Wilberforce was of the greatest assistance, having been more or less brought up to that particular business. But now the variety of purchase is so large that it would add to the efficiency of my department if some assistance could be given, say twice a month, in that particular direction.'

'Wilberforce!' John exclaimed, gazing from one to the other of his faithful servants.

'It was more or less of Mr Wilberforce that I was thinking,' Sykes remarked. 'If you will remember, sir, Mr Wilberforce, though a little limited perhaps in vision, was a most reliable man at books.'

VIII.

John Storrs pushed the clean blotting-pad along the shiny table and sat far back in his chair. This was a most astounding thing. And then like a flash there came to him, as it had come many a time before, a feeling that Fate was on his side after all. Over and over again in a busy life he seemed to have rescued a project from wreck by clinging to some fragment of luck, and convincing himself that that showed the way if he had but nerve to follow; and over and over again his luck and courage had carried him through.

Wilberforce lay between him and happiness. The heads of departments would think him crazy if he put the old man on the Board; worse even than that was the fact that Vic had interfered with business, had tried to cloud hard facts with sentiment, and that could not be done. And now the Board themselves were asking for the very same thing, not from any sentiment, but as a matter of pure business. He saw it at once. Sykes was right, so was the bank, and Ellison, usually a most reliable man. They had talked it over, of course, as business men should, and had decided that Wilberforce was the best man. Why? Because he was a good bookkeeper and could judge broadcloth as few others could. Quite sound.

So, 'Why Wilberforce?' he asked.

'Easy man to handle,' came from the secretary, a pencil still between his teeth. 'I should do it, Mr John.'

The secretary was the only man who still spoke of 'Mr John,' and then only when he

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particularly wished to impress Storrs with his earnestness and to recall with a single word the years of devotion that he had given to the Firm.

'You would?' John said slowly, but with an air of relief. 'All right, then we'll agree on that. Any other business?'

'I think not, Mr John,' the secretary replied; and as the Board filed out of the room John was astounded to notice that each man turned at the door and made him an uncomfortable, almost shamefaced, little bow.

'What's the matter with those fellows?' he asked the secretary, who was collecting his books. 'There seems something unusual in the air.'

'Times change, Mr John,' the other replied casually, 'and influences are set to work. But you're making no mistake. Leave Wilberforce to me.'

'I'm afraid of him interfering——' John began.

'I know. Leave him to me.'

'Well, I hope it will turn out all right. I can't do with him near my room——'

'Leave him to me, Mr John, and you won't know he's here.'

'There are times,' said John to his old secretary as they left the room together, 'when I feel, as you said just now, that there are influences at work——'

'Good ones, Mr John, good ones.'

'No doubt; and yet it gives one an uncomfortable feeling to be swept off one's feet.'

'It's momentary,' the other replied, helping John into his ulster. 'Just once in a while influences may conspire against a man, and he's drowned; and at other times, why, they just sweep him right up onto the shore!'

IX.

'I've got some news for you,' John remarked, after Vic and he had settled down by a blazing fire.

Vic looked up with a smile. 'It's good news, too,' she said happily.

'How d' you know?'

'How should I not know?' she replied. 'I saw it written all over your face when you came in.'

'Yes, it's good news,' he agreed. 'Your father's to go on the Board.'

Vic put down her empty coffee-cup and crossed to the other side of the hearth, sitting down by John's side on a deep settee.

'But are you sure it's wise?' she asked anxiously.

'It's necessary,' her husband corrected.

'John,' said Vic, slipping an arm round his neck, 'you don't deceive me the least bit! You're just a great big, transparent, darling bear, and there isn't another woman in all the world with a man to her name one half as good!'

'Well, well,' he said, taking gentle possession of her hand, 'maybe there were influences at

work, who can tell, but it'll be all right! It'll work out all right, you'll see!'

Of course, he ought really to have told her that he was half driven to it by his own Board; but then John Storrs was wise. Vic was getting what she wished and John was getting the credit for it, which he certainly required. A true recital of the facts could do no good and would positively do harm. So, 'Well, well,' he repeated slyly, 'maybe there were influences at work; who can tell?'

But the curious part of it all never came to John's knowledge, namely, that the wives of John's trusty directors were all added to Vic's social list and helped gently up to the heights of their several ambitions, including the Assembly balls.

After all it had been quite simple. Here was the great John Storrs driven to abject misery by a slip of a woman like herself; was it too much to assume that his directors were in some manner under like distress? The secretary had, of course, been the man to tackle. He had known her as a child. And the secretary, while non-committal as regards himself, he being a bachelor, had been of opinion that under the circumstances the heads of departments would probably agree that Mr Wilberforce was the man required. The rest was easy.

On the other hand it would have been foolish of Vic to explain to John just how the thing had been brought about. That would deprive John of his comfortable feeling of satisfaction and could do no good at all. So she nodded in sage silence and returned the pressure of John's hand.

As for Mr Wilberforce, he spent the very short remainder of his life explaining to casual acquaintances how Storrs had tried to run the concern himself, and had been obliged to bring him in at the end to keep the great Firm on its feet.

So that in that way everyone was pleased.

TRAMPING SONG.

O ROUGH the way,
And steep the brier,
But light the heart I carry;
For I've no care,
No grief to bear,
No cause to turn or tarry.

I trudge along
With idle song,
And never look behind me.
To-day's the day,
And this the way—
The past holds naught to bind me.

I love the trees,
I love the breeze,
I love the world around me.
No tears I weep,
And sound's my sleep,
For happiness has found me.

C. ETHEL EVANS.

CABLE-LAYING ACHIEVEMENTS.

AN EPIC OF THE SEA.

By J. and S. HARRISON.

I.

EMPIRE rests on communications. The Romans, with the menace of the barbarian ever at their frontiers, were able to maintain their boundaries, only because they were careful to construct fine military roads wherever they ruled. The earlier far-flung empire of Alexander the Great had fallen to pieces very soon after his death; for, in the absence of any consolidation, any welding together of subject territories by means of a network of communications, it was easily possible for a tributary monarch or governor to rebel successfully against a central government.

In comparatively recent times, in 1815, after the first phase of colonial expansion, the British Empire consisted mostly of insecure trading outposts and penal settlements. In a world of uncertain and difficult travel it seemed that the Empire was incapable of any real development. Two factors were, however, presently to enter the lives of men, which seemed to cause the world suddenly to become smaller. The steam-engine and the electric telegraph solved, in the course of a few decades, two of the chief problems which faced Britain. The railway made the unification of India and the development of Canada possible, and the steamship provided a means of transport and a weapon of defence of a potency hitherto undreamed of.

It was the electric telegraph, however, which swept away the age-long difficulty of administering over extensive sparsely-inhabited territories. Because of it the British Empire has become, in the course of only a century, a consolidated group of nations capable of infinite development. And the United States of America is an economic unit with an electric nervous system linking up all the centres of her activities.

But the civilised world is now become one wherein the oceans are the highways, and the spanning of the length and breadth of those highways with the electric cable is one of Britain's proudest achievements. In these days, when three hundred and twenty-five thousand miles of cable have been laid, and the industry is capitalised to the extent of sixty million pounds, it is hard to realise that only eighty years have elapsed since the first submarine telegraph lay on the bed of the sea.

II.

On 23rd July 1845, the brothers Jacob and John Watkins Brett addressed themselves to Sir Robert Peel (Prime Minister and First Lord

of the Treasury) with a proposal to establish a general telegraph system, including a cross-Channel cable. They were referred to the Admiralty and the Foreign Office, and, as is usual with government departments, months were wasted in futile correspondence. Eventually a concession was obtained from the French and British Governments authorising the brothers to lay a line from Dover to Calais. The cable, which was a single strand of copper wire covered with gutta-percha half an inch thick, had weights fastened to it at a hundred yard intervals. The line lived long enough to deliver a few incoherent words and a complimentary sentence to Louis Napoleon Bonaparte. It transpired that a Boulogne fisherman had hooked the cable in his trawl, and, thinking it to be a new kind of seaweed, had cut a sample out of it. But his ignorance was far more forgivable than that of the critic of those days who was of the belief that one pulled the cable after the manner of mechanical house-bells, and who gravely pointed out that the bed of the Channel was too rough for the submarine cable ever to be a success.

The message fortunately had the effect of saving the concession, which was renewed by the French Government in 1850. The failure had made investors shy, and until some few weeks before the expiration of the renewal new capital was not forthcoming. The undertaking was saved by the energy and talent of Mr T. R. Crompton, an eminent railway engineer, who raised the necessary fifteen thousand pounds, of which he himself subscribed half.

Crompton's cable consisted of four copper conducting wires, each covered with gutta-percha, the bundle being wrapped in Russian hemp. The outer cover was composed of thick galvanised iron wire to protect the insulation from chafing. This cable was the true forerunner of the modern type; it proved to be a lasting success, for it was worked until the beginning of the present century.

III.

In 1857 certain bold spirits embarked on an attempt to lay an Atlantic cable. They did so in the face of popular prejudice and scientific ignorance. The Astronomer-Royal announced that 'it was a mathematical impossibility to submerge a cable in safety at so great a depth,' and that 'if it were possible, no signals could be transmitted through so great a length.' Owing to the impossibility of finding a ship sufficiently large, the cable was carried in two

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steamers. One started from the Irish coast, and the other was to meet her and join up in mid-Atlantic. When three hundred and eighty miles had been paid out the cable was broken, owing to the misjudgment of the brakeman. Besides losing a year of time and three hundred and thirty-five miles of cable, the expedition cost a hundred thousand pounds.

The many errors of the first attempt led to more care being taken with the second, and in the following year the fleet made a series of experiments in the Bay of Biscay before proceeding to actual operations. This 1858 attempt would doubtless have succeeded had not one of the cable ships, the *Agamemnon*, struck a particularly violent storm. The occasion was one of enormous hardships, for the steamer, a warship, was unsuitable for her task. The crew worked with the utmost heroism in the endeavour to keep the appointment in mid-Atlantic, the arrangement being that the two boats should splice the cable in the ocean and then proceed, one to Ireland, and the other to America. So badly was the *Agamemnon* buffeted that of her crew of two hundred, forty-five were in the sick-bay suffering from the effects of injuries and exhaustion. One had a broken leg, another a fractured arm, and a third had his fingers crushed off in holding to what he thought was a ledge in the planks. Unfortunately it was the beams straining apart, and when the ship righted herself they closed up together. One of the crew was driven out of his mind with terror.

The *Agamemnon* and the *Niagara*, however, kept their tryst and, after splicing the cable-ends, started on their journeys, only to return within a few hours because of a breakage. Again they started . . .

It was only after a return to port and an entirely fresh beginning that the cable was completed, and on 16th August 1858 England transmitted the following message to the U.S.A.: 'England and America are united by telegraphy. Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill towards men!'

Unfortunately for the life of the cable the electrical engineer of the Atlantic Telegraph Company believed in very high-tension currents for signalling, and the line breathed its last on 20th October. It had, however, proved its usefulness in transmitting messages to Canada announcing the quelling of the Indian Mutiny and cancelling an order for troops to return to England.

iv.

A considerable feeling of disappointment reigned everywhere. There was much difficulty in obtaining capital for another venture, though the American Civil War stimulated capitalists to further efforts. Mr Cyrus Field, as a special inducement to his fellow-countrymen, preached the doctrine in the U.S.A. that a cable would

be a means of helping America to capture the grain market which was so largely held by France. His mission had the warm support of John Bright and other free-traders. What success he had may be gathered from the following letter written by his brother:

'The summer of the year (1862) Mr Field spent in America, where he applied himself vigorously to raising capital for the new enterprise. To this end he visited Boston, Providence, Philadelphia, Albany, and Buffalo, to address meetings of merchants and others. He used to amuse us with the account of his visit to the first city, where he was honoured with the attendance of a large array of 'the solid men of Boston,' who listened with an attention that was most flattering to the pride of the speaker addressing such an assemblage in the capital of his native state. There was no mistaking the interest they felt in the subject. They went still further; they passed a series of resolutions in which they applauded the projected telegraph across the ocean as one of the grandest enterprises ever undertaken by man, which they proudly commended to the confidence and support of the American public. After this they went home feeling that they had done the generous thing in bestowing upon it such a mark of their approbation. *But not a man subscribed a dollar.*'

The fact must be recorded that the enterprise, like all the previous ones, was entirely British, the work of British brains, British capital, and British labour, stubbornly fighting against unprecedented difficulties.

v.

In 1865 enough money had been subscribed for a new attempt. The single cable-laying ship for this venture was the *Great Eastern*, the conception of Isambard Kingdom Brunel. It is a pity that she was not available at the time of the laying of the first cable. She was in advance of her time; for nearly ten years previous to her use by the telegraph company she had suffered three different ownerships and had, for the most part, lain idle.

On 23rd July 1865 she left Valentia. When forty-eight miles of cable had been paid out a fault was indicated, and the ship had to pick up and examine ten and a half miles of cable before it could be discovered and rectified. This happened again at seven hundred and sixteen miles and at eleven hundred and eighty-six miles, when, after a series of accidents in which the lifting tackle was lost, the *Great Eastern* returned unsuccessful.

She had, however, indicated unsuspected possibilities, and money was found for the 1866 expedition, largely through the faith and determination of Mr (afterwards Sir John) Pender. The giant steamer left Valentia on the *thirteenth* of July, and during a successful

voyage of only fourteen days laid her cable, once more joining the two continents.

On 9th August she again put to sea, and recovered the 1865 cable six hundred and five miles from Newfoundland. After repeated failures the cable was hooked, and on 2nd September the steamer was in communication with Valentia. Six days later she completed the line, thereby making two cables to join England and America within three months.

There followed upon these achievements a boom in submarine telegraph enterprises, and in 1872 Sir John Pender amalgamated the various short-length cables between England and India and formed the Eastern Telegraph Company. Within a few years his concerns were operating lines as far as New Zealand and Shanghai, southward to the Cape, and across the Atlantic to South America.

I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes,

wrote the author of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, little suspecting, no doubt, that science would so far outvie magic as to girdle the earth in eighty seconds. But His Majesty the King, when he opened the British Empire Exhibition, sent a message right round the world and back to Wembley in this amazingly short space of time. 'I have this moment opened the British Empire Exhibition' was flashed from Wembley to Penzance, and thence *via* Fayal, Halifax, Montreal, Vancouver, Bamfield, Fanning, Suva, Auckland, Sydney, Adelaide, Perth, Cocos, Rodriguez, Durban, Cape Town, St Helena, Ascension, St Vincent, and Madeira back to Wembley; also from Sydney *via* Singapore, Madras, Bombay, Aden, Suez, Alexandria, Malta, and Gibraltar.

VI.

The advances in laying and transmission have resulted in an enormous reduction in rates. The pioneer Atlantic Telegraph Company began with a minimum of twenty pounds for twenty words, with one pound for each additional word. By stages it dropped to thirty shillings for ten words of five letters each, and now it is possible during a week-end or in the night-time to send telegrams *via* Imperial or Western Union from door to door, from London to certain towns on the Atlantic seaboard of the U.S.A., for five shillings for twenty words and threepence per additional word. (The ordinary rate is a shilling per word.)

The war service of the cable companies is a proud one. The call from the Motherland reached the outposts of the Empire almost immediately after the declaration of war. In international diplomacy the cable proved itself invaluable. Without it, decisions made within a few hours, and arrangements completed in a

few days, would have taken many months. Throughout the time of hostilities much special work was undertaken in laying and repairing cables all over the world. The most remarkable of the war-time expeditions was the laying of a telegraph from Peterhead (in Aberdeenshire) to Alexandrovsk, by the ship *Colonia* under the supervision of the Post Office. This was performed in 1915 in the cold and darkness of an Arctic winter.

Within four hours of the outbreak of war, Germany was entirely devoid of cable connection with the U.S.A. One line was taken in at Penzance and another was diverted from New York to Nova Scotia. A third was captured by the French at Brest. A year later the crew of a German cruiser landed at Fanning Island and cut the All-British Pacific cable there. The notorious German raider, *Emden*, met her fate after cutting the Eastern Telegraph Company's line at Keeling-Cocos. She succeeded only after the superintendent had sent out the alarm signal which led to the *Emden's* ultimate destruction by the cruiser *Sydney*.

Twenty thousand miles of German cable was captured during the war, for these lines mostly passed through the English Channel.

VII

In the period after the war the cable companies, in common with the rest of mankind, have had manifold difficulties to contend with. During the time of fighting no cables excepting Government ones were put down, and repairs became overdue. The traffic had nearly doubled, and the result was serious congestion. In spite of the competition of wireless, however, the submarine telegraph systems continue to grow; one company alone spent three million pounds on new cables recently. Where secret and reliable transmission is essential the cable holds undisputed sway, for it is not affected by atmospherics, and its messages cannot be picked up by any ingenious schoolboy.

Among recent scientific improvements is the use of automatic relays, wherein the human element is entirely eliminated. Men are necessary only to see that the machines are working properly, and to feed the tape that has been punched out by the receiving machine into the transmitter to the new cable. When one remembers how many times the King's message at the opening of the Exhibition was relayed, it is possible to realise the immense advantage arising out of the freedom from human error that the use of the machine ensures. Carefully compiled statistics by the Eastern Telegraph Company show that the percentage of error in manual working is 1.90 per cent, and with machine relaying 0.37 per cent.

An innovation for use on duplicated cables (and all cables are now duplicated) is one which enables two messages to be transmitted simul-

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taneously in one direction while another is being transmitted in the opposite one—three messages on two wires. Hence local calls can come through without interfering with long-distance telegrams.

Last year the greatest of the cables to date was completed. It extends from Weston-super-Mare to Far Rockaway, Long Island. It is capable of transmitting twelve hundred letters per minute—six hundred from each end simul-

taneously, a capacity nearly twice that of any other long-distance cable. The slender strands continue to reach out along the bed of the oceans, and the electric network is drawn more closely over the world; though through the ether spread the messages of the new wonder. Each has its sphere of usefulness, and such compelling agencies mould our civilisations, though most men are ignorant, or shut their minds to a knowledge, of their achievements.

HOW ABOUT WATER?

THIRTY years ago this was the oft-repeated question on the gold-fields of Western Australia. It was the all-important query put by the men who met on their travels in opposite directions. Each was anxious to know what were his chances of finding water on the track that lay ahead of him—for upon water life depended.

When in 1891-92 Bayley and Ford rode the 120 miles from Southern Cross and discovered Coolgardie, they 'blazed' the track for thousands of their fellows. In making the journey they took a great risk, for they would meet no one who could tell them where water might be found. They could go for two or three days on the water they carried, but if, before that time expired, they failed to find other water they must return, or die on the track. In their particular case the season favoured them. Rain had fallen not long before and here and there rock-holes had been filled. Also, there was young green herbage for their horses. But rainy seasons were rare in that part of the state, and the men who followed Bayley and Ford did not meet with equal good fortune in finding water—or gold, for that matter!

A marked feature of the country lying between Southern Cross and the eastern gold-fields is the presence of immense dome-shaped masses of granite. These rise, dark and sombre, above the surrounding forest and scrub, and, in area, may cover many acres. For the most part their surface has been worn smooth by weathering, and very little vegetation grows upon them. Here and there on these domes may be found holes worn by some process of attrition perhaps, and in these water may frequently be found. The natives named them 'gnamma' holes, but I do not know the precise meaning of the term. The capacity varies from a few gallons in the greater number of holes up to hundreds of gallons in a few. The water is fouled with the dead bodies of birds, mice, and lizards; but famished men are not faddy, and it was found that after the more solid 'remains' had been picked out, and the water boiled for tea, no harm came to the drinker.

But larger and more permanent supplies were necessary to provision the thousands of men

who tramped along the track to the wonderful gold-fields. The immediate demand was met for a time by the discovery of what were called 'soaks.' The water, shed year by year from the granite masses, disappeared in the soil at their bases. And men, urged by dire necessity, dug for it. They found it, not perfect in quality because of the presence of salt, magnesia, and other minerals in solution. But it was water, and drinkable, and that was what was wanted. Very soon, however, this supply was found too small to meet the demand. The soaks quickly drained, and the cry still was, 'Give me water!'

Wells were sunk deeper, and large supplies of water were met with at no great depth—but salt and bitter! Very much more salt than seawater, and heavy with dissolved minerals. But the men were not to be beaten by drawbacks such as these. They built condensers, and from the bitter liquid produced an absolutely pure water. It was tasteless and insipid—but it was water on which life could be maintained.

The condenser-plants were primitive, but effective. The ordinary 400-gallon iron malt-tanks were brought into use. They were usually placed tandem-fashion in pairs, with a connecting pipe. One edge of the tanks rested on a rough masonry sill, and masonry—stones and mud—was built around and upward to the edge of the tank. The end elevation was diamond-shaped. The masonry formed a flue through which the heat of a wood fire circulated freely. When once the water was brought to the boil a small fire kept it under steam. The steam passed from the boilers along hundreds of feet of piping, and was condensed into water by the air and stored in tanks. The solids in the water fell to the lowest angle of the tanks, and could be removed through an opening as required.

The sinking of wells and the erection of condensers were pushed on vigorously, and at intervals of not more than twelve miles they bordered the road to the fields. They made the journey safe for man and beast. But, as a rule, the man had to pay sixpence a gallon, and at first the price was higher. It cost money to water a team of horses, but the

teamster passed it on to his customers, and it was they who had to pay.

At these watering-places there usually were one or two eating-houses, built of house canvas and galvanised iron. Here, in addition to food, customers could get a wash; but they were cautioned not to throw away the dirty water. This had to be emptied into a near-by tub. Thence it passed back to the condenser, and again came forth as pure drinking water. The idea was not pleasant!

Then some man—name unrecorded—who was possessed of a fine stock of common-sense, deplored the loss of good water that during rains ran to waste from the granite domes. Acting on his suggestion, the Government caused deep gutters to be cut round the bases of the domes, and tanks to be excavated in the earth at the lowest point. And this simple scheme saved many million gallons of water from being wasted. Whenever these tanks were filled the condenser-men were thrown out of business for the time, and they would curse the Government heartily. But, being practical as well as profane, they set to work to overhaul and repair the condenser-plants, ready for the day on which the tanks would be dry and useless. Seeing that the average annual rainfall in that part of the state is about nine inches, they never had long to wait.

But the cry was still 'More water!'

The supplies that had so far been obtained sufficed only for the most urgent needs of the people, and were also very dear. There were few people who could afford to buy water for a decent bath; a sponge-down from a two-gallon bucket of water at long intervals was a luxury, and not within the means of everybody.

The gold-mines also were calling for water, and wanted it by hundreds of thousands of gallons per day. At first the supplies of salt water met with in shaft-sinking sufficed, and for ore treatment the salt water was not harmful, but it could not be used in boilers to raise steam. For this purpose condensing had to be resorted to, but the results were meagre in face of requirements, and very expensive. The cost amounted to a minimum of twenty-five shillings and a maximum of seventy-five shillings per thousand gallons. Strict economy was practised, and no exhaust steam was allowed to blow to waste; it was carefully condensed, and the water returned to be again used. This system still obtains, and no feathery plume of waste steam is to be seen anywhere floating in the air.

For the energetic and thorough development of the mining industry it became an urgent necessity to bring water to the mine in great quantities and at the lowest possible cost to the consumers.

This was brought about, ultimately, by means

of a scheme initiated by the late Mr C. Y. O'Connor on behalf of the Government. A weir was to be formed at Mundaring, in the Darling Ranges near the coast, and from there water was to be pumped to Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. The estimated cost of the scheme was three million pounds, and the daily supply of water to be 5,600,000 gallons. The length of the pipe-line was 351½ miles, and the maximum height of lift 1290 feet. Eight pumping stations were provided at various points along the line until, from the highest point, Bullabulling, thirty-two miles from Coolgardie, the water was able to gravitate to Kalgoorlie.

The foundations of the Mundaring weir were begun in May 1898, and the charging of the great main was started in April 1902. This water reached Coolgardie, at 328 miles, just before Christmas 1902, and Kalgoorlie in January of the year following. It was a great work well carried out, and has stood the test of time. Moreover, it reduced the price of water to five shillings and seven shillings per thousand gallons.

Not only did it serve the needs of the gold-mine—it saved the railway great expense in hauling water for the locomotives; and as time passed districts adjacent to the pipe-line demanded water, and were supplied by branch pipe-lines. Farmers drew upon it for their needs, and here and there on the gold-fields beautiful gardens came into being and glorified places which previously had been the abomination of desolation.

The pioneers of the track had carried their meagre supply of water in canvas bags or in canteens, on foot or by horse and camel. To-day the traveller on the railway follows the same old track, and the great pipe-line is in evidence the whole way.

But farther back, beyond the reach of the Mundaring supply, the travellers along the bush tracks still ask the men they meet, 'How about Water?'
E. D. C.

THE LIKENESS.

YOU, whom I asked for a portrait,
You, who bade me 'forget'!
Who would bury the jewels of Passion in the
grave-cold sands of Regret;
What of the night-wind's whisper, sweet and
faint as your sighs?
What of the blue of the heavens—the fathom-
less blue of your eyes?
What of the cornlands that borrowed the glorious
gold of your hair?
What of the lark's high ecstasy?—the thrill of
your voice is there;
What of the poppies that matched your lips, when
we gathered them dew-wet?
You, whom I asked for a portrait,
You, who bade me 'forget'!

WILLIAM FREEMAN.

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A ROMANCE OF THE REEL.

PART II.

IV.

MRS FRASER had not much to explain to her visitor that he had not already overheard, though he paid most careful and properly astonished attention.

'And who—who is this young lady, Mrs Fraser?'

'She is Miss Sheena of the Lodge.

'Miss Sheena Cattanach?'

'Yes.'

'Ah!'

'Perhaps you know—' suggested Mrs Fraser.

'No. Only, it was a big enough obligation to be under for the fishing; but when it comes to getting your life saved as well, it—it embarrasses, Mrs Fraser.'

'Indeed, no!' she vouchsafed. 'Miss Sheena herself would just enjoy it. She'll be round to see you this afternoon for certain.'

'You see, I got the two or three days from Mr Robertson, the factor in Edinburgh, for whom I did a little commission. It seems Mr Cattanach has an interest in antiques.'

'They say he would just sell his soul for a bit old picture, and as for the gallery of pictures he has—there's no end to it. Some of the things that queer-looking and foreign, the keeper was telling Kennie that he wouldn't be seen taking them away in a barrow for nothing.'

Davie ventured his timid smile, but no comment.

'He doesn't fish much himself nowadays, except maybe an odd time. But there are friends who come for spells now and then. The last of them is that dark, foreign-looking man—and he's just going. The fishing is really over now, but in the spring—'

'Yes, in the spring,' said Davie Dunbar. 'I can understand.' And his eyes became contemplative.

And when Mrs Fraser thereupon retired to make him something, he dreamed of the great annual spring run and the swift, strong bodies cleaner than new silver. . . . Till slowly, imperceptibly, there crept over his dreams a shadowy film, the dark pool gripping at his deathly experience became darker, the leaping fish more uncanny, more symbolic of the fear-some. He tried to shake it off as a man strives to shake off a horrible imputation on the thing he loves. And he knew it was not altogether mere fear engendered by the physical mishap as a mishap. It was something elusive, sinister, like—like that picture of his, which had so strangely been at once illusion and reality when he had been going down—down. 'Just sick fancies,' he mumbled. And after Mrs Fraser

had ministered to his needs he felt decidedly more able to cope with all shadowy things. 'And that picture—after all, it's a mere surface fancy o' a mad painter, who must aye twist every clear, sweet feeling into something contorted and unchancy.'

He shook himself. He tried to feel better, to get a grip of the philosophic imperturbability that winds with the doric. 'Ah weel, tae a richt mind the mischance was no-but the kitchen tae the triumph; an', Gudesakes, is he no' eichteen pun'? What wad Jamie say tae that!' But the picture remained, the shadow haunted. 'Mistress Fraser!'

'Yes! Yes!' She came quickly.

'I was jalousin' mebbe that as muckle speerits as wad gang i' a thim'le—'

She looked at him, vainly striving to follow.

He pulled himself up, coloured a trifle. 'I thought perhaps a spoonful of whisky—'

'How stupid of me—' And just then there came a knocking. 'Now I'm not thinking but that will be Miss Sheena herself come to see you;' and the good lady bustled to the front door.

Mrs Fraser's expectation proved to be correct, and presently Davie Dunbar saw his door open and a young woman enter, bringing with her a fresh cool swirl of air that fanned his face, his senses, with fragrance of the wide out-of-doors.

'Mr Dunbar! How glad I am to hear you are little the worse of—of—'

'Ma dookin'' were the words that rose impulsively to his lips, wildly, and that he only just managed to choke down. For the light that he thought he had visioned on her face was there naturally. His heart began to beat unreasonably. And she finished her sentence not with words but with a smile where humour blended perfectly in a soft-welling sympathy.

'No, I—I am none the worse. Thanks—thanks indeed to you!'

'That was nothing—nothing at all;' and she sat down on the chair by his bed. 'Though I take not a little credit, perhaps, for having acted the gillie so well!'

(Exit Mrs Fraser, with a mumbled reference to a 'message'.)

'It was the first time ever—ever I had a gillie,' said Davie; 'and—and,' concluded Davie in a rush, 'it was worth having gone without one for. I mean—'

Her eyes danced. Her colour rose a shade. 'It is kind of you just to mean that,' she said.

And suddenly looking into her eyes, he smiled. She was so plainly no-but a bit lassie herself. A sudden warmth whirled about his heart. 'You saved the life of a poor old man—'

'Who was fighting like ten young ones!' Plainly she was going to take no thanks. 'How stubbornly you refused to give me that rod!'

'So they have been telling me. But I had tried so hard to get into him, was it any wonder?'

As eyes met smiling eyes a perfect accord seemed to be established.

'And then—' she began, as on a sudden impulse, and paused.

He noticed the hesitation, the slight instant sobering of her expression; but in a moment it had passed.

'Tell me,' she said cheerfully, 'did you see me coming?'

And for an instant there was a slight sobering of Davie Dunbar's expression also. 'Well, yes—' he hesitated.

She looked at him.

It came in a rush. 'To tell you the truth, I saw you and yet I didn't see you.' He forced a doubtful smile.

'You mean it was just a glimpse?'

'No, it was a picture,' he said; 'but it just shows you how the mind gets all mixed up at such a moment. I have a picture in my shop in Edinburgh—and it was that picture that seemed to rise before my eyes. It sort of fitted in—and it was that I thought I saw. But really, it is foolish of me mentioning it at all. Actually I did see you, of course.'

'How interesting! And what is your picture like, really?'

'Oh, a foolish old-fashioned picture!' Drat the picture! There was no need to have mentioned it at all.

'But now you have roused my curiosity! You must tell me. You say it "fitted in."'

'Well, that's just what it didn't do in a way.'

'In what way?'

He twisted in his bed a trifle. She laughed. 'Surely the picture is not so bad as all that?'

He gave in. After all, it was foolish to pretend there was anything in it. By holding back he was merely creating the wrong sort of mysteriousness.

'Well, you see, the picture has a great sombre pine wood in it. I don't mean your pine wood holds any of the darkness. A pine wood, and out of it a woman is escaping on horseback. That's all. It did fit in a little as a picture, didn't it?'

She nodded, but a queer intangible uncertainty had been created. 'Escaping, you say?' she asked.

'Yes, yes. One of those old symbolic things, you understand. Virtue flying before the darkness, and all that. Merely a silly hallucination of mine at such a moment!'

'That's queer,' she said quietly.

He looked at her. 'How could it be queer?' he asked with a sudden gentleness.

'Well, I can imagine how heavy is the

feeling of debt one has to carry when some one else has saved one's life. I can understand that, believe me. And I have thought it might lighten and make glad the burden—if, if at the same time some compensating great service had been done that some one else.'

His eyes watched her invitingly, waited.

She suddenly looked at him impulsively. 'You did me a service, too, by—by diverting me. Before I saw you I was not flying from that pine-wood with fear in my face. I was going into it, to an appointment, with black misgiving, yet somehow mesmerised, knowing I shouldn't, yet going—desire, fear. . . . Oh, I can't explain, but to-day—I know that I—escaped.'

There was a listening silence of revelation between them for a moment, then his hand came out and caught hers. 'You saved a poor old man's life, and now how deeply happy you have made that old man's heart in the saving! To have waited for that was worth my whole life.'

The white flame of earnestness, fear, that had touched her face, gradually receded before returning colour, a softening in the eyes. 'You said that about the gillie, you know!'

He smiled, and there was a brightness upon his face. 'But what I will say to my own heart will be known only to myself—and no one else shall hear a mystic word of it.'

v.

The year dies and the year is born. And the rebirth, according to the poets, is accompanied by many signs and wonders from the fancies of a young man to the red on a robin's breast. Yet to Davie Dunbar the poets missed the subtlest wonder of all, for the fancy and the feather, the flower and the sap—these, like the blessed poor, we have always with us. There are other things.

He moved about the shop restlessly. Twice he went through to the back-place, where, away from Jamie's measuring eye, he could behold the picture that hung above his own little desk. The amount of diplomacy, of tact, he had had to exercise in order to get it removed from the immediate purview of Jamie's salesmanship! How lame the excuse that he 'thocht he wad keep it by him a wee'! The removal of the sale ticket with its cryptic lettering that, being translated, signified £3, 3s.—Jamie's price, argued out on the basic value of the frame! He had not looked at Jamie, and putting as bold a front on it as possible, had simply walked away ben with the picture, feeling the while Jamie's eye like a shaft in the small of the back.

Not that he had dared absolutely to forbid its sale. But who, beyond a deluded and gambling Yankee, would ever offer five shillings? In its possession he felt perfectly secure.

And in the little universe of it, the picture signified much to Davie. Already time was

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lending its enchantment, smoothing over the physical harshnesses of a past misadventure, of a past Adventure, leaving only the subtle meanings, the deep significances, the strange wonder. A little universe wherein he had acted the principal part—even if too literally he had blundered into acting it. It was something to have lived for. And how exquisitely kind and just Fate had been to him, even in that matter of the salmon. Ah, that was a matter! Yes, the picture was a magical picture, even with its shadow, with its still undissolved film of the uncertain.

Not that that shadow had anything any longer to do with a dark pool and leaping fish. It stood for the life of a young woman, who had wavered within the edge of it. And that life now? Davie gazed at the fleeing figure, the fear on the bright face, till his gray eyes softened.

He turned away from it again, came through to where Jamie, with emphatic niceness, was polishing the silver on a great cairngorm brooch. Jamie did not pause in his rubbing, paid no attention to the figure that moved about restlessly, yet every rub indicated that he was enigmatically privy to much.

Davie wandered to the door, looked abroad, and found the air of a fine thin blueness tempered by an enlivening suspicion of frost. It was early afternoon, very still, and full of a sort of listening reverie. He sniffed the air. The coolness ran along his veins. No, it wasn't reverie, it was an awakening. It was spring. The time the poets speak of so inadequately. On a sudden impulse he turned to the only figure near him, and 'They will be running noo, Jamie!' he said softly.

Silence hung portentously, till there was the sound of the brooch being laid on the top of the glass case with a metallic deliberateness.

'I wad hae thocht,' said Jamie, 'ye'd 'a' been cured o' that; cured o' a' that, by now!'

Colouring a little, Davie laughed uncertainly. 'Hoots, man, it's the best winter season we've ever had! We're gettin' rich!'

'Yes, I'm no' denyin' the season; an' for the first time oor stock hes reached pre-war heicht—if no' a little ayont.' And thereupon the brooch was taken in hand again.

'Weel, then—I dinna see—'

Jamie waited ruthlessly, but apparently Davie had thought better of it.

'P'raps ye dinna,' agreed Jamie at last. 'P'raps ye dinna.'

A position of the most delicate; losing none of its difficulty because Davie knew in his heart that Jamie's concern was not altogether for the business. Had he not sternly refused to let Davie work in Davie's shop for a full week after the return from Glenuel, because he, Davie, was alleged to 'hev a colour on him that micht weel frichten a decent customer'? Of the most delicate—yet to be faced—yet how?

His dilemma was resolved in a manner that appeared to him little short of the miraculous, though, when regarded calmly, there was possibly nothing out of the way in the fact that Mr and Miss Cattanach of Glenuel should elect, as usual, to break their long northern journey from London at Edinburgh. Yet he most indubitably glared upon them as they advanced, in the body, to his very doorstep.

'Ah, Mr Dunbar!' It was her voice, her face with the clear light on it. Her hand came out quickly. It took him yet a moment to respond, and even then his handshake was half-mechanical. She laughed. 'I have brought dad with me. Besides, I think he was a little intrigued over the perfectly lovely silver!'

That did it! Davie had sent, privily, one or two exquisite pieces of old Tudor silver by way of acknowledgement of the Adventure. The pieces were, of course, his own, and, everything considered, there was no need of running the gauntlet of any salesman's comment, verbal or silent. 'Nothing, nothing at all!' he hastened to say, and turning immediately to her father, 'How do you do, sir?'

Mr Cattanach acknowledged. 'My daughter has often spoken of you.'

In build the two men were not unlike, and the blue eyes of the owner of Glenuel Lodge had much of that dreamy quality which not infrequently lay like a mist of reverie in the gray eyes of the dealer in antiques.

'And,' said Miss Cattanach, 'this is Mr Graeme.'

Then Davie looked upon the third member of the party, who proved to be a young man of a hand-grip in which there was the friendliest lack of indecision.

'Welcome, welcome, indeed!' said Davie, half recovered, the other half still overcome.

'And now we are going to look at all the queer things you have. May we?' Her understanding was subtle. Davie as host came to himself in a moment.

He ushered them into the shop. He introduced Mr James Forsyth, and thereupon, without apology for store or stock, he indicated such treasures and curios as he possessed. He had really a rather fine collection of old Georgian silver, over which he was inclined to linger. But as he warmed to his task in front of such obvious interest, he even unearthed an unusual knowledge of the homely cairngorm—and its foreign birthplace.

In the end they reached the back-shop, where the more choice items were kept. He preceded his visitors, and then, turning to welcome them in, suddenly interrupted a little action that in its instinctive nature told him something more surely than would the most intimate words.

The light from a side window shone right across the rather small room on to the face of

his picture, lighting it up with an arresting glow. Sheena Cattanach saw it on the instant of entry, caught her breath, paled, and before the instant had fled had gripped instinctively at the arm of the young man by her side. So plain was it that she sought shelter there, protection, from some suddenly resurrected nightmare of the past, sought it naturally, spontaneously, that Davie Dunbar's eyes shifted to the face of young Graeme with a sudden benign understanding. He saw the young man's face quicken, a fine face, as he instinctively pressed the arm that caught at his and looked from the frightened face to—the frightened face on the canvas! Then the young man laughed, the tolerant laugh of the young male who is lording it protectively over life's beatitudes. 'You look nearly as scared yourself!' he said.

But Mr Cattanach had also seen the picture. 'Ah, I think this is a little more in my line, Mr Dunbar. Allow me.' He went up to the picture.

'Tell me—why did it scare you?' asked young Graeme quietly, still smiling.

'Oh, nothing!' she replied, the blood stealing back as she removed her arm. 'Nothing!'

He looked at her a trifle curiously, if still smiling. She felt the scrutiny; could not help showing confusion, discomfort. Then Davie intervened. 'I'll tell you,' he vouchsafed. 'Did Miss Cattanach ever relate to you how she once saved an old man from drowning?'

'Perhaps, from other sources—I have heard—something —'

'Well,' said Davie, 'there's the pool, there's the lady herself coming headlong, and I have the honour of being the old man who was rescued.'

'Well, by the horn spoon of my forefathers——' began young Graeme; when Mr Cattanach, doubling up his pocket lens, quietly observed, 'If it's agreeable to you, Mr Dunbar, I should like to make an offer for this picture.'

And in a sudden, stark moment Davie, overwhelmed, turned his gaze blankly on the speaker. 'An—an offer?' he stuttered.

Mr Cattanach smiled. 'Yes. Your price?'

'But—but,' searched Davie desperately, 'it isn't—it isn't worth buying.'

'Possibly, to be frank, you're right; but still, as it is, I should like to buy it. We have our whims, Mr Dunbar.'

There was a little hollow of silence.

'Perhaps, dad, Mr Dunbar does not care to sell.'

Her father paid her not the slightest attention. Indeed, he ventured equably, 'Would ten pounds meet you?'

Davie's lips twitched a little. 'It's really not worth——' he began, and failed.

'Well, let us say twenty,' pursued Mr Cattanach.

There was a hollow of silence this time large enough to include them all, to include the whole shop. Davie heard his heart beating in it. Sheena gazed at her father as though she had never seen him before, gazed for the first time on the smooth, gentle, but deadly inscrutability of the sale-room. The tension had to be broken. Something must be said. It was said, however, after such a fashion that Davie nearly jumped.

From the doorway leading to the front-shop, Jamie coughed. At twenty pounds the picture changed hands.

(Continued on page 620.)

CHOUNANE—ONE OF LIVINGSTONE'S AFRICAN HOMES.

By DUNCAN MACKENZIE MACRAE, M.A., M.D.

I.

SINCE my first visit to the Bechuanaland Protectorate, some sixteen years ago, I had often heard, from old government officials, that Dr Livingstone's first missionary settlement among the Bakwenas—of which Sechele was chief—was not far from my present station, Gaberones, a place which, since this territory came under the protection of the Crown, has been the seat of a magistracy, as well as the chief centre for the police and medical establishments for the Southern Protectorate. I had, however, never met any one who had been on the spot, or who could give me any more precise information as to its actual locality than that it was 'somewhere in the Transvaal—not very far from here.'

Gaberones Camp is situated on the northern

bank of the Notwani River, a periodical stream which, with the neighbouring Marico and other watercourses, gives its annual tribute to the beautiful Limpopo, or Crocodile River. It even receives honourable mention from Gordon-Cumming, who, as he tells us, sometimes gazed with delight upon its crystal waters. It is only, however, after very heavy rains that it ever approaches to the tint ascribed to it by the great hunter; for, during the summer season, with the exception of a few pools, it is a dry watershed.

Men who knew Livingstone and Gordon-Cumming I have met and conversed with, notably Chiefs Khama and Gaberones. The latter (at the moment of writing) is still living in this village, hale and hearty, at an age not far short of a century. A native missionary still lives at Molepolole, the present seat of the Bakwena tribe, some thirty-seven miles distant

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from Gaberones, who saw Livingstone at Kolobeng in 1848 or thereabouts. In the same village lives one white man, the son of an old elephant-hunter of Kolobeng—Lottering by name—who saw him about the same time. All this, however, by the way.

I had read in a South African paper, in 1913, that the site of Livingstone's house at Chounane had been enclosed by a fence, under the direction of the National Bible, or the London Missionary, Society, I forget which. As my duties invariably confined me within the limits of this territory, I had all but despaired of ever being able to see a place which I very much wished to see, if for no better reason than that it was once the home of one who, possessing no assets beyond that immortal energy and lofty idealism which have raised the Anglo-Saxon race to its present position of supremacy in the world, has carved his name deep in the hearts of his fellow-men. My wish was at last gratified in quite an unexpected way.

II.

One morning, in August 1922, I received an urgent message to go at once to a farm in the neighbourhood at Ramoutsa, a little railway siding distant eighteen miles from my station here. I got into my car—motoring is a comparatively recent innovation here—and started on my journey in a drizzling rain, which, by wetting the hot sandy road, made travelling quite delightful. Here I may say that, as most of the roads in the Southern Protectorate follow the tracks of the old hunters, some of them for considerable distances are admirably suited for motoring.

On my arrival at Ramoutsa, I was told that the farm at which my services were required was still about fourteen miles distant, right across in the Transvaal.

Taking for my guide and companion a weather-beaten Scot, who had spent thirty years of his life as a trader in this part of the Protectorate, I turned away sharply to the left, passed through part of the village (or *stad*) which gives its name to the railway siding already mentioned, and crossed over into the Transvaal, where I found myself on a road made and kept in excellent condition by the Union Government. After proceeding for less than a mile on this road, I again turned off to the left along a somewhat rougher road. After little more than half-an-hour's easy driving, I found myself at a comfortable-looking farmhouse, which, on inquiry, proved to be my place of destination.

As soon as I had attended to the farmer's wife and children, the inevitable cup of coffee, which the traditional hospitality of the Dutch South African almost religiously prescribes for the stranger within his gates, was handed to myself and my companion. During the oppor-

tunity for general conversation afforded by this gracious custom, I asked my kind host, *inter alia*, what the name of his farm was. He replied that it was called 'Sechele's Old Stad.' The name Sechele set me thinking, and I again asked him if the Bakwena tribe had, at any time, lived here. He replied that they had lived here before they went to Kolobeng; that Dr Livingstone had also lived here with them; that the remains of his house were about a mile distant; and that, if I cared to see it, he would be very pleased to show me the way along a good road which he had made to his cattle-dip. I was not slow to accept his offer, and, in a few minutes, I found myself at the ruins of Livingstone's house.

Here I may state that the wooden fence which was erected to protect it a few years ago is now level with the ground. The larger corner-posts alone remain; for the smaller posts have been eaten by white ants. I could not help thinking it a pity that nothing more durable than a wooden fence should enclose a spot sacred to the memory of Livingstone. For, though it may be truly said of empire-builders such as he, '*Si monumentum queris, circumspice*,' yet, something more worthy of his fame might have been erected here at very little cost. If the Scottish churches would be willing to do anything in the matter, it would give me great pleasure to carry out their wishes. The English, and even the Irish, have already done something in the way of preserving the sites of some of his African homes.

III.

It was not without emotion that I first beheld the ruins of a house in which, nearly eighty years ago, one of the greatest men of the nineteenth century, with his heroic wife, braved the solitude and dangers of the African wilderness. The place is not, by any means, beautiful, and the cloudy skies under which I first saw it quite obscured whatever attractions it might possess under the brilliant African sun. It stands quite close to a long low range of hills, below which winds the dry bed of a large periodical stream, or *spruit*, at which the Bakwena tribe once watered their flocks and herds. The cattle-dip referred to occupies the site of the original well which supplied the settlement with water, while, not far away, on a barren, stony slope, may still be seen a slight trace of the old native village.

The mound of earth which represents all that is now left of Livingstone's house is roughly about 120 feet long, by about 30 feet wide. It was evidently built of raw brick, as may be proved by a careful inspection of the foundations. To this place Livingstone came from Mabotsa, a spot which lies farther south, where he had his all but fatal encounter with a lion. The house at Chounane was the second he had built

with his own hands; that at Kolobeng was the last in sub-tropical Africa.

The physical aspect of the country here has not, I should say, greatly changed since Livingstone's time. More trees there may have been, for it was then virgin forest; but I doubt if it was even then a heavily-timbered country. The present trees are of a stunted kind, consisting mostly of low scrub and bush, as well as the ubiquitous mimosa. Eighty years ago, however, this part of the Marico valley had much of the fascination which might well 'lend to loneliness delight,' for it was practically alive with innumerable species of wild animal—lions, elephants, buffaloes, and even that now rarest of big game, the white rhinoceros, as well as buck of almost every variety and size. To-day, beyond the small species of buck called the 'duiker' and the 'steenbok,' or an occasional covey of guinea-fowl or Francolin partridge, there is little to attract the sportsman. On his moving from here to Kolobeng, Livingstone tells us that the lions became so bold that they walked up to the house, much to the alarm of his wife and servants, who were afraid to go out of doors after evenfall. What a change indeed 'twixt then and now!

Here Livingstone was visited by Gordon-Cumming and Oswell, and here also, if I mistake not, he did some kindness to Mr Webb of Newstead Abbey, which the latter right royally returned on Livingstone's first visit to England.

Before leaving the place on my first visit I promised to return some day to get a photograph of it. A year later, with my wife and two children—recently arrived from England—I again paid homage at this all-but-forgotten home of one who was an honour, not only to the medical profession, but to the human race. We remained on the spot until nearly sunset, and the glory of the African sun alone redeemed it from the appearance of desolation which struck me on my first visit to it in a drizzling rain. While I tarried, musing on the paltriness of the lives of so many of us, by comparison with that of this great altruist, the evening shadows, shrouding in purple splendour those hills which he knew so well, warned me that I had still before me a journey of thirty-two miles. I left the place with a feeling of sadness, the immortal words of Thucydides sounding in my ears during my homeward drive: '*Andrōn gar epiphānōn pasa Gē Taphos*' ('For of illustrious men the whole earth is the sepulchre').

INDIAN TRICKS AND THE CAMERA.

A SUBSCRIBER writes *à propos* the article on 'Collective Hypnotism' published in a recent issue of *Chambers's Journal*:

When I was travelling with a friend in India, a few years ago, we came one day upon one of the Indian jugglers, who was just going to perform the famous mango trick. He was squatting upon an absolutely bare piece of ground with no one near him. His apparatus consisted of a flower-pot, in which he put some earth. In this he planted something that he said was a mango seed. He waved his hands over the pot, and in a few minutes we saw a green shoot appearing through the earth. This grew and grew while we were watching, until a tall, full-grown mango plant appeared before us.

My friend was rather keen on photography, and always carried a small pocket camera about with him, and I thought this would be a good opportunity to use it. 'People at home have often heard of the trick with the mango plant,' I said, 'and I am sure it would interest them to see a photograph of it.'

My friend assented, and immediately took a snap-shot of the scene. Later on, the film was developed and proved to be an excellent photograph. The people round about came out most clearly; so did the juggler, and so did the flower-pot; but—there was no mango plant!

My second story describes an episode that is the exact antithesis of the last. It was told to

me by a young friend of mine who was an assistant physician at a large lunatic asylum. He told me that one of the patients suffered from the uncomfortable delusion that he was always being followed, and he kept constantly looking over his shoulder with a terrified expression.

Every means that could be thought of was resorted to, to prove to him that he was mistaken, but in vain. At last, the chief physician told his assistant that he had thought of a plan that might be successful. When the patient was walking in the grounds, the young doctor was to take a photograph of him, without letting him know that he was being watched. Although the patient would not believe their assurances that there was nobody near him, he would surely be convinced when he saw a photograph of his own solitary figure.

Accordingly, one day the young doctor hid behind some trees, and, waiting till the patient slowly passed, managed to get a snap-shot as the poor man was jerking his head to look over his shoulder.

The doctor hurried to the house, well pleased with himself, to develop the plate. The photograph came out most satisfactorily, and provided a good portrait of the patient, but—it never was shown to him, for close behind him was an indescribably horrible face that seemed to be just peeping over his shoulder.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

THE railway centenary has been celebrated prematurely, mainly for the convenience of some foreign visitors, for this is a world affair; but our own country, with a prideful sense of invention and leadership, specialises in the event. We made and maintain as relics the first locomotives, and a certain honour and distinction are associated with the highly industrial town of Stockton-on-Tees in the north of England, as little beautiful as such places must inevitably be, a concentration of blast furnaces, engineering shops, and the like, which appropriately indicate the roaring, ugly development of the mechanical and industrial age to which the railways gave a start. For it was on the 27th of September 1825 that the first railway passenger train made its first journey, starting from Darlington amidst much whistle-blowing, and proceeding to Stockton at the rate of about six miles an hour, preceded by a man on horse-back. Contemporary pictures of the occasion show George Stephenson and his assistants standing by the boiler or on the tender, this being also occupied by a man with a flag. Many small wagons, making up what in those days must have been considered a grandiose train, were coupled to 'Locomotion I,' that being the name given at its baptism of utility to the prime ancestor of the 'Pacific' type of engine, and the other heroes of the steam-speed of our time. The first six of these wagons, it appears, were loaded up with coal and flour, an odd and somewhat incongruous combination, yet accidentally representing two of the chief elements of human life and existence as no others could have so fairly symbolised. Some passengers sat upon the coal and the flour as if to mark the point, though innocent of such intention. An 'elegant covered coach,' as it was described, being the body of a road coach of the period set upon flanged wheels, came next, and it was occupied inside and out by the proprietors of this new 'Rail-Way' in all their pride and pomposity. Twenty-one wagons equipped with seats for passengers followed, and in the first of them was a brass band and a banner with the motto 'Periculum Privatum Utilitas Publica.' Then more coal, six wagons of it completing the train. The locomotive

weighed six and a half tons, and made an average speed with its train on that famous journey of about five miles an hour, attaining at one thrilling, ecstatic period as much as fifteen. The invaluable contemporary chronicler tells us that the fields and lanes through which the railway ran were thronged with elegantly-dressed females, and that nothing could exceed the beauty and grandeur of the scene. Yet even then doubts existed in the public mind as to whether this new-fangled contrivance would displace, as a means of transport, the admirable horse, which would always 'go,' and had been relied upon from the time of the Hittites, some twelve centuries before the opening of the Christian era. At one stage of this initial journey a stage-coach drawn by horses in the usual manner bravely challenged the train, and amid great cheering from lovers of the old order, drew level and passed it. Then it was that 'Locomotion I.' disdainfully drew upon its reserves, spurted to its fifteen miles an hour, and administered a shock to the prestige of the horse that was repeated with crushing effect a generation back from now when the automobiles came upon the roads, and left the racecourse as almost the only remaining field of distinction for the superbest quadrupeds evolved through blood and time. When the train arrived at Stockton a salute of guns was fired. Yet the victory of steam and rails over horse-flesh and the plain country roads with their pleasant hostleries at intervals was not complete. The 'romance of the railways,' of which now we often speak and write, was not established, not begun; and even when long after we came to perceive and wonder at it, was not this romance after all of that order so cold and dry, of mechanics and industrialism, permeated with the materialistic spirit? Steam was by that time hissing through the world; but let us respect and not censure our dear grandfathers for some hesitation they displayed in adopting the steam railway for their occasional transitions. The sense and romance of the road were within them; something noble abided in their resisting conservatism. Surely they felt in their more pious moments that horses and roads were things of God, while steam and rails were just the toys of man. So the horses galloped along

the roads, the horns were blown, the stage-coaches rattled up to the sign of the White Lion as of yore, and the Turpinian spirit was still maintained. Let us bless their memories for it.

* * *

Steam has been like a high priest of the god of Progress; but in these days we probe into the old religions, and some pertinently ask if the world be truly better and happier for the steam and the Progress—and the wars which they assist—and likewise if we should have sensed the need of such had we never known them. Railways have been the mainspring of all the fierce industrial and mechanical progress of this age, and now we have reached a trembling point of doubt and fear. A thesis might well be developed at a Union debate at one of the universities, where primary problems are treated by the students with a fresh and vigorous regard for essential causes, on the question, 'Have the railways been an unmixed blessing to our modern civilisation?' The young orator would argue plausibly upon the strife of industrialism, the rapid expansion of populations through the increase of speed and the extension of the world, accompanied by its virtual shortening of distances, and he would discuss the greater necessities created by these results, the ferocity of competition fomented by political jealousy, and so with good logic would he reach his climax, that had there been no railways there would have been no Great War as we so sadly knew it—other wars certainly, but not like that—and the world would not have contained the suffering and the dread with which it is permeated now. The speakers in opposition would assuredly reply with great force of argument and evidence, maintaining that railways had brought immeasurable happiness to humanity, and had assisted towards the refinement of human life. In the end the voting would be in favour of these defenders, and the railways would gain the official blessings of these wise young men. They are now as the basis and the beginning of every form of industrial effort and world expansion of every kind. Let us suppose a new piece of country is being claimed for the white men from its savage possessors. Then three things happen in usual order: the flag of the pioneering nation is planted in the soil; a number of the demurring natives are slain; and the construction of the first railway is begun. Nothing in this affair of railways could be more impressive than the fact—to which, for some political reasons, less than the utmost publicity is given—that a network of quite excellent railways is being laid over the Sahara Desert and the rest of French central and west Africa. Myself I have travelled on them whole days in the desert, with only a rare oasis to relieve the terrible monotony of these vast sandy plains, and in such circum-

stances time and opportunity have been afforded for hard thinking, and also temptations towards some uneasy ruminations. For the main purpose of these railways is the tapping of a source of ten million black troops and making quick transport facilities to bring them north when needed. Now we may be less disposed to cast scorn upon our great-grandparents for such hesitation as they showed in adopting railways when they were first presented. Superficially they had doubts upon efficiency and speed; deep within them I think their instincts were subtly touched with formless fears upon the consequences of such a gigantic disturbance in the prevailing order. And, to those who had known nothing better, nor conceived any future chance of it, ten-miles-an-hour on the main roads behind good horses, in a coach to carry fifteen, was good travelling; and if a wheel were shed and a gentleman atop were pitched into the ditch, it was taken as a common part of life in a frequently irritating world—as missing a connection in a journey of changes through the lateness of our first train, or the bursting of a tire of our automobile is now. Ten miles an hour was the best that could be done; often the pace was less. It is in the records that a man who left Sheffield at three o'clock arrived in London thirty-six hours later, though the distance is only 165 miles. Yet he probably grumbled less than would an Edinburgh gentleman who, leaving Waverley before eleven o'clock at night, and sleeping all the time, reached London at only forty minutes past seven in the morning—or twenty minutes late, after fifty miles an hour. Again, I imagine that they regarded the world, the scheme of things and the degree of progress that had been achieved, with less discontent than do we now. Education, scientific discovery, invention, and industrialism, while supplying them with many pleasures and conveniences, had not whirled them dizzily into a state of existence where, panting and uncontrollable, they could only ask for more of these drugs that had captured them. Did not many of us living now, so much possessed by the delirium of progress, feel when we were very young, a peculiar sympathy, even an attraction, for the old mail coach that we read about, though even then we were travelling forty or fifty miles an hour on the railway?

* * *

Most of those now in the section of elders have keen memories of certain scenes of their childhood that may have had a thrilling interest for them at the time or, in the opposite, have been of no interest or importance, having caught upon remembrance in that capricious manner which makes diversion for our personal human records. The eye of my memory has retained many of these visions, old and dear friends peopling them in love and kindness; but the other senses have been less diligent and exact

in their perpetuations. The palate has kept perhaps one odd trophy from its youth, the ears the same, touching can produce nothing from the past, but no scene is more vivid to me now than are certain odours that in those early days seemed to strike upon the nasal sense with a magic exhilaration. They were strangely diverse, and all were not sweet so much as pungent. Remembrance of the scent of hawthorn blossoms in the lanes when so lightly we loitered there, is common to us all, and the smell of the hayfields too. Malt and hops were heartening odours. Many scents, some of which have never since been smelled, can be remembered, but chief of them is the peculiar penetrating smell exuding from a railway steam engine in certain circumstances, most commonly when it is at rest, and, maybe, engaged in 'blowing off steam.' This smell seems made from a mixture of special locomotive steam, some smoke, and a breath from the hills and valleys from which the engine has come, for distance and travel are plainly suggested in it. It is not produced in any other way. Fixed boilers and engines and those belonging to ships cannot prepare it, and it is good that the most modern engines with all their wonderful contrivances do not seem less efficient in the production of travel scent of steam. Each of you knows the smell; it cannot be described. Such perfume, as I think of it, is one of the most vivid remembrances of my childhood. I think I can fix upon the occasion and circumstances of my first knowing it, and probably others who once were boys or girls remember it the same. And was not a tiny railway train of tin among the first of their toys? Things of travel and wonder were at work among the early instincts. Though this magic of the railway engine, the 'Puffing Billy' as we called it, worked upon our youthful spirits, wafting a seduction from the future back to us, yet the instincts of the fathers and grandfathers, the love of a good horse, the sense of the road, the colour and variety were also strong. As little boys did we not often feel that it would be fine to return to school after holidays in the way that Tom Brown went to Rugby, by the coach? So it happened that our ancestors, in their conservatism, refused to accept immediately the railway trains as masters of the situation, and neither abandoned the coaches and horses nor showed less inclination to patronise them. The railway steam engine at the time of its beginning was not reliable. 'Locomotion I.' was always giving trouble, and the company controlling the Stockton and Darlington railway were so much provoked that at one time they seriously considered whether they should not abandon the engine entirely and use only horses for haulage. Observe that at this crisis the railway, that is, the way of metal rails for reducing the friction of haulage, was of the essence

of the change, and not the locomotive. They might have had what we call a traction engine plodding upon the roads, or horses pulling a train along the railway. Two alternatives there, and which the better to our own mind and imagination? The Stockton and Darlington company, feeling uncertain upon the combination of steam engines and iron lines, positively used horses to draw single coaches on their railway for some time after its opening, employing the engines for the transportation of coal, which after all was their main business. These horse-rail-coaches moved along at about the same speed as the road coaches, but, of course, in this way the horses were able to pull heavier loads. Stephenson was worried; many discouragements were piled against him.

* * *

George Stephenson was not really a brilliant man of fine imagination. No hero-worship need be exerted at this moment, for only in a small degree is Stephenson to be credited with the invention of railways as we, like passengers, think of them. He was an applier and an adapter rather than an inventor; but he was an excellent engineer, with a delicate comprehension of the issue from the union of steam and wheels, and he was a hard-headed Northumbrian, gifted with unrelaxing courage and perseverance. Railways existed before the Stockton and Darlington. At about 1805, a railway was constructed from Wandsworth near London to Merstham, following the direction of what is now the Brighton road. A double track was made, and the rails were laid on stone sleepers. Some of these old stones, it is said, are now used in these same parts for kerbs. But this railway was meant for horses and not locomotives, and was a success in its way for a full generation. Horses, like engines, can do better with rails than roads, and we hear of one animal drawing forty or fifty tons at a time on this railway, which served a number of mills, and lasted until the Brighton steam locomotive railway took it over. Then Richard Trevithick, an eminent engineer of Cornwall, might have started the era of the locomotive earlier than it happened, could he have found men with money to back his ideas, for he was certainly ahead of Stephenson in some respects. He, a mining engineer, worked assiduously at improvements on the steam engine, and so early as 1796 presented the high-pressure principle, and exhibited models of steam locomotives, while it seems that about 1802 he made a real one, and two years later constructed an engine which hauled wagons on a rail-road at Merthyr. But five miles an hour was the speed limit of this affair, and so long as steam in the matter of speed was no more than one-horse power, as we might say, it had no chance. Stephenson watched, adapted, improved, and kept his mind on the

essentials of reliability and speed. An engine of his, christened 'Blücher,' was tried at a colliery in 1814, and other public experiments were made before the Stockton and Darlington achievement in 1825. He, more fortunate than Trevithick, found an enthusiastic believer to finance him. Edward Pease, a Quaker manufacturer, was the man, and honour is due to him as much as to Stephenson, for he too struggled against discouragement, and spent vast sums of money in laying the rail-road, manufacturing the rolling-stock, and securing the necessary parliamentary powers. Yet, as said, the Stockton and Darlington was a doubtful venture as a locomotive railway, and we can imagine the little sneers, in the manner common to human nature at such times, of those who were being drawn along the high-ways by spanking bays, laughing that it would still be a good long time ere they were called upon to transport themselves by means of any of these new contraptions. At one moment the management of the company hesitated, and nearly abandoned the locomotives; but at a critical moment, Hackworth, manager to Stephenson, made a better sort of thing which he called the 'Royal George,' whose main feature was six coupled wheels. That was in 1827, and it staved off the horse again, though the noble and galloping quadruped was not yet defeated. Stephenson braced himself for a master-stroke. A Liverpool and Manchester Railway Company existed, and the management held a competition for locomotives not heavier than six tons. For that competition Stephenson produced the 'Rocket' with its tubular boiler, and a maximum speed of twenty-four miles an hour. The prize was his, and the future was determined. Nothing could have prevented its being settled in this way very soon. Steam, the engine, and rails were presented; the grand evolution from them was a quick certainty in spite of prejudices and failures. It would have come long before Victoria reigned, even though Stephenson had never been born. Hundreds of engineers would have swarmed to the idea. Yet, with these reservations, our thanks and praise are due to the memory of this resolute Northumbrian, who strove without ceasing, and never lost his faith.

* * *

The 'Rocket' later did better than in its competition trials. Thirty miles an hour was a speed that it often attained, and some said that once it fairly flew at fifty-two, which those who have gazed upon the 'Rocket' can only think of as an empty legend. But the main point was that the new Manchester to Liverpool railway soon began to pay as a steam-engine passenger-traffic concern. A family of 'Rockets' settled down to covering the thirty-one miles separating these cities, which were at the front

of the new industrial movement, in an hour and an half, and the receipts in the first year, estimated in advance at £10,000, amounted to £102,000! Then it was railways, railways everywhere. The country, yes and the whole civilised world, leaped to the new idea. In 1842 Queen Victoria first travelled by a train from Windsor to Paddington. Even by that time, and with all the constructive enthusiasm, railways were not familiar to the multitude, and old customs still hung upon the day. I like the idea of the queen's fussy old coachman in his powdered wig and scarlet finery pompously insisting that, steam or no steam, only he could drive Her Majesty, and thereupon mounting the engine and pretending that it was he who made it go. Even up to that moment a few grand old irreconcilables, refusing in the die-hard manner to accept facts though they loomed like mountains, had ignored the railways and declined to travel on them. The Duke of Wellington was at the head of this staunch brigade; but, hearing of the queen's journey, loyalty and sense compelled him to admit that the new day had dawned and the light would spread. Britain then was at her best. Keen and energetic, not bothering about hours and profits so much as loving her labour and her enterprise, she was setting the example to the admiring and copying world. It is curious and significant to see with what varying quickness the nations followed her in this matter. America was first in 1829, and she bought her engines in Britain. France nibbled at the idea in 1833, but the first German railway was opened in 1835. The fact in this historic series at which I wonder most is that Russia started the construction of a railway as soon as 1835; but she was not trusting everybody, especially the neighbours on her west, and so she adopted a gauge of her own, as did Spain, thinking of France, when she started a line laggardly in 1848. Austria hesitated, and Italy came in very late; but what did it matter? All of them knew that the end of one old world had come.

* * *

Strange that at this very centenary that seems to come upon us warningly, ominously, we should have reached such a crisis with our railways as they have not known since the time of their father, Stephenson; and even as the future and the good of Britain were then at stake, no less certainly is that the case to-day. Nay, we may lose more now than ever we could then have lost. We may be as proud of our railways now as then. They have serious faults, no doubt, of which in the manner of our people we ceaselessly complain; but as one who has travelled much on the railways of many countries, I am not sure that on a balance of points we are not still well the first. Only France, Germany, and America are in our class, and I give our-

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selves the best. The Americans do strange things in a lurching speed over vast distances. Huddled in our green-curtained sleeping-bunk with a nigger for our attendant in the car, hearing that strange melancholy clang of the engine bell, the low sonorous tone of its occasional siren, we may feel, when forging through the middle-west and on the edge of dreams, something of the power of America as in no other way. The railways made America as they made no other country so thoroughly, and our cousins and creditors are right, apart from considerations of advantage and convenience, to build their railway stations in a grand and solemn style, suggesting cathedrals of industrialism. The first time I boarded a German train I was impressed with a sense of its material quality and efficiency. Through many railway experiences I have captured each of the special and elusive two that make completion: that is to say, I have been provided with a special train at a foreign government's command, and from a partly demolished train have been carried out to hospital after a smash upon a continental line. But of all experiences there is one, happily recurrent, which is the most emotional, and that is the immense spiritual delight that is felt by the traveller coming home after a long absence when he makes the two hours' journey from Dover to London. Doubtless the homecoming of its abstract self accounts for much of this joyous tension. The sweet, the lovely placidity of the smooth fields and gardens of Kent sings to us, with the clicking rhythm of the wheels, of the beauty and well-ordered goodness of our native land. Yet a point in this pleasant case is the quality, the comfort, and the neatness, with the politeness of the service, on our British trains. It seems better to the returning traveller than at any other time, and perhaps an effort is made to be nice to the homing vagrant. Anyhow, the clear impression exists.

* * *

At this railway centenary we smile upon the earliest locomotive, in appearance a confused apparatus whose main feature was the long, thin chimney stuck out from its front like the neck of an ostrich, while upon its back was a cage-like formation of iron rods and other engineering tackle. Power was surely here, yet not a noble suggestion of it, and we do not wonder that some of the ribald spectators of 1825 were inclined to make fun of 't' iron 'oss.' But regard the modern flyer, its hundred years' descendant, and the British strain, the handsomest locomotive of them all. By evolution that ungainly chimney has now been bred almost completely out, appearing only like a little knob to make balance at one end of a finely harmonious mechanical whole. The long, unencumbered boiler poised high is awesome and magnificent; and when at the starting a sound

and sign of force are exploded from the little chimney, and the giant wheel makes a fast slipping turn upon the rail, we take as good a sense of the pride of man as is to be gathered in the contemplation of any other thing. In time there will be no locomotives; they will die out. Much do I doubt if in another hundred years there will be railways anywhere save in some lonely parts that are distant from all new movements. Mount high in an aeroplane and, looking down upon our lovely landscapes with the fields squared out so clearly and so smoothly and in such dainty colourings as though they were a toy world for the children, see the small white smoke mark of the moving train. Thus observing it from high, free air, wondering if it moves or not, sorry that this poor slow thing should be chained down to earth like that, our instinct determines that the railways' years, many though they yet may be, are numbered. Yet flying posterity shall admire the nobility and majesty of these our modern locomotives. They seem, too, like a good sign of Britain, and there is pathos in the sign. We led the world in railways; no better symbol stands of the energy and greatness by which we strove to power. But at the very time of this centenary the will and the way to work and trade seem fading from us, these railways are drooping, and the money stock that represents their value is falling as none has ever known it fall before. The case is frightening. Britain clearly is not being true to herself as once she was. So this may be one of two things: it may be the tragic centenary, the dating of the fall, or we may take up again the sign of the noble railway engine, so strong and willing, docile, and seize the wonder of the world again.

IN SUMMERS LONG AGO.

WHAT master's pencil caught a grace
So delicate and fair?
Who flung that too-bewitching face
Upon the canvas there?
What girl was this whose budding charms
(For fancy feigns it so),
In many a breast woke loud alarms,
In summers long ago?

Did life fulfil her hopes, or cheat?
And was she wooed and wed?
What fate was hers—this daughter sweet
Of generations dead?
Divine who can; guess on; suppose;
And this is all we know:
She breathed—a fair and human rose,
In summers long ago.

Like dream, maybe, she passed away;
Too soon, perhaps, she died!
How many ardent hearts, and gay,
Have perished in their pride?
And still, to make the old heart well,
And kindly eyes to glow,
Her pictured brow preserves the spell
Of summers long ago!

D. R. ROSS.

MICHAL, DAUGHTER OF SAUL

By GEOFFREY BRADLEY.

CHAPTER I.

I.

LANE led to cart-track. Cart-track gave way again to lane. A nick across country here. A few hundred yards of main road there. And still more lanes.

What metalling there was was inches deep in winter mire. High hedges shut the darkness in and turned the lane into a gloomy tunnel, down which poured wind and rain; a lashing, drenching rain, merciless in its desire to soak through every crevice to the bone of man and horse.

As I trudged on, head down, hands under arm-pits, a bridle-length before the mare, the very tautness of the reins seemed full of protest. I told her I was sorry for my share in the unhappy business, but reminded her the fault was not all mine. 'How was I to know you'd choose to-night to lose a shoe, my girl?'

She seemed to understand. Sometimes I think horses do. The strain upon the bridle ceased. A few quick steps and she was lipping my shoulder, as if to say, 'Let's go on talking. I like to hear you talk; it breaks the loneliness.'

I rubbed her steaming muzzle with my glove. 'We were a couple of fools to leave that little pub, weren't we, old lady?' She tossed her head in most complete agreement.

The advertisement of a hunting-box had tempted me into a strange country. It seemed the very thing I wanted, and the owner had courteously suggested seeing hounds and house together. Unhappily the day was being just as bad as any day could be. A succession of blank coverts; eventually a hunt of sorts, patchy and in a chopping wind; finally to lose the fox on the edge of the country remote from my temporary home. The few stalwarts who had stayed with hounds until the end had gone their ways. None of their ways seemed to be my way, and I was left with many miles to make upon a tired horse, across a country quite unknown. Some execrable brandy and a six-inch Ordnance map upon the parlour wall had conspired to send me from the only inn that came into our line. And now? . . . John Jorrocks on a by-day was never in worse case.

Suddenly the mare began to take an interest in things. The dragging walk ceased; the drooping head was raised to bring ears and nostrils into better play. Another twenty yards and a cut-flint wall broke the monotony of hedgerow. I blessed the sight of it, not caring if it surrounded cottage or castle. Human habitation meant direction to the nearest inn at worst, and it might mean shelter for the night.

A gate appeared—an ample carriage-gate

between twin lichen-covered posts of brick. I stopped and considered. When it comes to the point, unless the case be one of real necessity, one hesitates to worry strangers at half-past nine at night. But the mare had her opinion. She made towards the gate, and her snuffing whinny clearly said, 'You surely can't be such a fool as to pass by what might mean corn and comfort!'

I pushed through the gate, agreeing. Some thirty yards of carriage-drive and we were in the shadow of a brick Georgian pile with—oh, joy!—light streaming from a shell-shaped fanlight. I found a sword-handled bell-pull and wondered if it were the rectory.

The maid had hardly heard my prologue when a door opened somewhere inside, and a voice said, 'Who is it, Martha? Mr Smith?'

'No, sir. A huntsman lost his way.'

Servant fell back, giving place to master. The glare of the hall-lamp made vision difficult, but, even in that fleeting first impression, the charm of the man's face took hold of me. His eyes were soft and strangely full of sadness. I noticed a short gray beard, well trimmed into a point. His black evening waistcoat was covered by a dark brown velvet coat; and oh, he looked so very dry!

I murmured an apology and named my destination. Would he kindly put me on my road? Or perhaps . . . as my horse had lost a shoe . . . ?

At this his face lit up. 'Of course, my dear sir. Appleford? You can't make Appleford to-night. Why, how it rains! Upon my word, I hadn't noticed it.' He turned about. 'Come, Martha! Bustle up. Run out to Tom and bid him come round for the horse. What a night it is! Appleford indeed!' He rubbed his hands in hospitable contentment. 'You mustn't dream of going on. What a blessing you didn't pass. Cator my name is—Saul Cator. Where can that Tom be?'

I mumbled what thanks he gave me time for, and added, 'My name is Guye. They call me "Major".'

Came Tom, as anxious for the welfare of the mare as his master was for mine.

'Now, come in, Major. Come in.'

That kindly Fate that watches over hunters was in good mood to-night.

II.

Ten minutes of steam-clouded joy and my mind began to move again. Here was I, wrapped in a stranger's bath-gown, having just used his bath-room as my own, sitting before the newly-kindled fire in what was, for to-night,

my bedroom. No stitch of clothing was left to me but the borrowed bath-gown. Well; I was content. The house was clearly the house of a wifeless man. Be he bachelor or widower, he was the very High Priest of hosts.

The struggling fire needed coaxing. It may be that the clatter of the poker drowned a knock; perhaps no knock was given. I faced about, and there was Martha looking down upon my limbs. Her arms were full of garments and her face was full of smiles. I felt like an infant in its bath beneath the gaze of an admiring aunt.

'Lord bless your scarlet cheeks!' she said. 'Don't you mind me, sir. I'm old enough to be your mother. Master's sent you these.' Unblushingly she wreathed a chair in underclothes and tossed a dressing-gown upon the bed. 'Not that they're *my* idea of body-linen for the dead o' winter,' she chattered on. 'But master won't put on what isn't silk, and yours are wringing still. They'll be small, too; you're such a fine one. Master's making the salad.'

The salad! I suddenly remembered I was hungry; before, it had been merely emptiness. Prospect of food and drink on top of unexpected comfort brought me near to the awful indiscretion of hugging the only person in reach.

'Martha,' I said, 'yours is the most comfortable house in England, and quite the kindest.'

She should have smiled. Instead, she slowly shook her head. 'Ay, sir. 'Tis a good house and a kind, for all its sadness.'

I tried again. 'What do you suppose I've done to deserve hot baths and salads—I, a benighted fox-hunter on a limping horse?'

Again the answer was a strange one. 'You'll have your chance to deserve it by-and-by.' She made towards the door, but turned with the handle in her hand. 'You're a bachelor, now, I'll be bound? All you huntsmen are bachelors.'

'Yes, Martha, I'm a bachelor. Otherwise I shouldn't have got lost.'

She looked me up and down as though I were a show-horse in the ring. 'I'm glad you're still a bachelor,' she said, and closed the door behind her.

Thoughtfully I donned the silken 'body-linen.' What a strange old girl she was! By Jove, though, she was right about the garments being small. As I endeavoured not to split them, I tried to sort the impressions of the last half-hour.

Why should this old servant talk of sadness in the midst of all her jollity? And what was it to her if I were bachelor or bigamist?

And, now that I thought of it, her master had left much the same impression. He too was bursting with good nature, yet his face was lined with the marks of care and sorrow. I wrapped the dressing-gown around me. After all, it must be devilish lonely living miles away from everywhere. He didn't hunt, either. No wonder the poor chap looked sad.

His knock came at the door. 'Now, sir, what about some food? May I come in? Why, you look splendid! Can you get into the slippers? It's a good thing they haven't any heels!' He led me down a shallow oaken stairway, and shouted as we reached the hall, 'We're ready, Mrs Mitchell. Mrs Mit-chell!'

'All right, sir. All right!' came cheerfully out of the distance. I found myself hoping Mrs Mitchell was the cook.

By now I was getting broke to comfort, but the sight of the room he took me into was a new sensation.

'We use this room a good deal in the winter,' said my host. 'The dining-room is bad to warm.'

No glaring electrics broke the softness. Firelight played upon the moulded ceiling; and on a polished table, naped with a single strip of lace-edged linen, two brown wax candles burned.

My host put me into a carving chair at one end of the cloth and busied himself behind me at a sideboard. I was content to listen. 'There's more harm done by that little sentence "take the chill off" than any other in the English tongue,' I heard. Reverently he brought a decanter to the fire. 'Now, where's that Mrs Mitchell? A minute and a half and it will be ready for drinking. Longer will sap the flavour.'

At the end of a minute Mrs Mitchell came. In a restaurant it would be called 'mixed grill.' I have no words for it except that it was grilled perfection. The burgundy was even better than the grill. As the last mushroom went its way, my host brought galantine and tongue. 'You help yourself,' I was instructed. 'Ah! that foolish Martha has given us steel to eat the salad with. Sacrilege! Sacrilege!' Silver was rummaged for and found.

I remembered that the salad was of his making, and stopped my simple carving to watch the service. He handled it reverently, leaf by leaf, as gardeners prepare their wonders for a show. Clearly he was to be numbered among the noble few to whom the making of a salad is an art. The chasm between bowl and salad-plate was crossed at last. I smiled for very joy to see his pride. 'There, sir!' He straightened his back. 'The dressing *should* be oil of walnuts, but Fortnum is out of it, and I never go to Paris till the spring. Still, this red-wine vinegar goes pretty well?'

I sought appropriate adjectives, mixing them freely with questions on his art. Had he been discussing theology with a pontiff he could not have given the subject greater reverence.

'Of course, it's *not* the same as in the spring.' He spoke as one convinced. 'Glass is all very well. Without glass one could never struggle through the winter. But there's something missing in the glass-raised leaves. A lack of

crispness, is it? Or something in the flavour? I've never satisfied myself.'

III.

When I had convinced him I could eat no more, he rang a bell. Came Martha smiling, and was bidden take away the broken meats.

I would willingly have kept my unlovely legs beneath the table. But there was no chance. I was put into a leather reading-chair and the protecting table wheeled away.

My host produced cigars. I expected more ritual. But now that the salad had been eaten, a load seemed lifted from his mind. He was no smoker. Tobacco leaf was clearly weed, not to be grown in the same continent as endive.

And then the thing happened. The door opened slowly and a woman came into the room. Her dress was black. Plain black, falling in graceful lines about her perfect figure. Her neck and arms were bare, and from her shoulders fell a pure white Spanish shawl, its edges drooping to below her knees. I have never seen a more beautiful effect—but then I have never seen a more beautiful woman.

You must not think I noticed all this at the moment of her coming in. Indeed, her coming completely demoralised me. I sprang up and hissed a command that my host should, for the love of mercy, hide me.

A shadow passed across the old man's face, a shadow of accustomed pain. 'Don't worry, friend,' he said. 'Your clothing does not matter.' And there was something in the way he said it which calmed my panic.

The girl walked to him, and laid a hand upon his chair-back. He was his genial self again, and embarked on formal introductions.

'My darling, this is Major Guye.—My daughter, Major.'

I took the hand—and then I saw my clothing did not matter. Her voice was just as sweet as her expression.

'How good the smoke smells!' Then, 'You are creating chaos in this house, Major Guye.'

I was. But there were dimples round her mouth.

'Since your coming, my maid no longer obeys me: I have to obey her. That is why I am here now.'

'Martha?' I asked.

'Yes, Martha. You have made a great impression. She refused to stir hand or foot until I consented to spend the evening with "the huntsman," as she calls you.'

'Well done, Martha!' I wished I *had* hugged her now.

After a while Mr Cator took his daughter's hand and patted it. 'Do you know what we should like?' he said coaxingly.

She was sitting on the arm of his chair, swinging a silken leg in and out of the massive edges of the Spanish shawl. She kissed the

top of his head. 'I know what *you* would like; but how do you know what Major Guye would?'

I was enlightened, and my entreaty added.

At one end of the room there was a heavy leather curtain shutting off an alcove. I had noticed it during my meal. A lovely thing, stamped, and with scalloped edges, like those one sees in Spanish and Italian churches.

The girl stood erect for a moment, wheeled, and walked straight to the curtain. There was a rattle of rings, a dexterous sweep of the shawl, and she was sitting at a boudoir grand. The glow of the fire and the light of the two candles hardly reached her. Only her face and the beautiful white of her neck and arms were visible. The Spanish shawl lay negligently across the top of the piano, where she had thrown it.

She played the moderns: chiefly Debussy. I felt my conservative love for the older schools melting into complete conversion. Her eyes were fixed high above our heads, but she *never* played a wrong note, and her whole soul was in the music. Such playing is seldom heard outside the concert hall.

When she had done her father said, 'Thank you, Michal.'

There was a pause; then something said, 'Michal, daughter of Saul.' It was my voice, but I was unconscious of having spoken.

I stammered a profuse desire to be forgiven. 'Really, Miss Cator, it was your playing dragged it out of me. Though I am guiltless, I apologise most humbly for my rudeness.'

She laughed away the little episode. 'Aren't they absurd old names! We might be creatures of the Bible.'

CHAPTER II.

I.

I TOOK that hunting-box, and moved my horses down as soon as possible. The season was still young, and hounds were often on that side of the country where the Cators lived. If we ran within three miles of Owlsrattle—by which strange name their house was known—I shamelessly forsook the Field and called.

As I got to know them better, I called more often. They seemed willing to throw off the veil of shyness which hid them from the rest of the county. If we were due to meet at a place nearer to their house than mine, I received a courteous invitation from Papa Cator to sleep at Owlsrattle. 'It will save your using inns,' he was wont to write. I did not mention that in these days of motor covert-hacks the need to 'lie out overnight' has disappeared.

They led a lonely life, these two. It shocked me when I discovered that I was *practically* the only visitor they had. People *had* called.

Neighbours had sent invitations. But circumstances made them naturally reserved, and the callers dropped away. He became 'old Mr Cator,' and she 'that poor girl.'

They seemed to exist solely for their hobbies. The old man had his garden. A beautiful old garden, prolific of flowers as well as of everything that goes towards the making of a salad. Michal loved her music. Sometimes a well-known pianist would be called down at great expense to give her his ideas. And once a year she would go up to town to hear some great exponent. Otherwise the house and gardens were convent and cloisters to her.

I did my best to alter it. To me it seemed all wrong that this sweet girl should have no friends; no company at all but Martha and her father. But she would not hear me. 'It is so difficult. I cannot go to other houses. I only know my way about our own. And if people come here they are uncomfortable.' I tried to persuade her it was not so. Then she would smile and say, 'Oh, but it is so. I know it is. We "see" a lot, you know.' And I would go back to my side of the county and fall to wondering if she would treat all my dreams like that.

II.

The season came to an end, as seasons must. I managed to secure a lease of the hunting-box. The country suited me, and I had made other friends besides the Cators. Thus do we justify our weaknesses!

Came a day when Cator Papa went off to Oxford. He was a man of learning and attended conferences where men discuss strange theories.

He bade me see to it that his daughter was not lonely.

The day was a fine one, and I arrived early in the afternoon.

Michal and I had often taken walks together in the gardens, but always with Martha or her father for pilot. To-day I begged her let me be the pilot. She hesitated; then put her arm in mine. 'And if you pilot me into the lily pond I'll never, never speak to you again.'

Said Martha, 'There's no need to hold her so tight, sir. She isn't going to run away.' The dear old thing pinched Michal's cheek. 'God bless you both,' she muttered; 'now I can get on with my sewing.'

It was wonderful how the girl knew her way about. She would stop in the middle of a thirty-yard path. 'We'll steal some of Hunt's violets, shall we? He's good at violets.' And there was the frame at my hand. She knew just where the seedlings were, and wanted a report on all of them. In the melon-house she astounded me by going straight to each fruit to feel how it was growing.

When we turned back I contrived to choose a way that took us through the stable-yard. My car was in a corner. I had driven the big

one over in the hope of interesting her in it. I put her into the deep back seat.

'It is shamelessly comfortable for a thing that runs about the roads,' she said. 'Now show me your seat.'

'No,' I said, 'never mind my seat. My seat is full of wheels and levers. I'll show you your seat.'

I took my place at the wheel and shut her in beside me.

How often had I driven her in my imagination! Surely it would give her pleasure to feel the wind playing through her hair as the spring sunshine was playing through it now. I put it to her.

'But isn't there a lot of noise?' she asked.

'I'll show you. Don't be frightened.'

I pressed the self-starter, and the six cylinders gently purred. After a while she said, 'How wonderful! To see a different picture every time the road bends!'

III.

We had tea in her boudoir; a tiny room, but exquisite in every detail. She knew her way about it as a cat knows her basket.

In course of time a contented Martha came to take away the tea-things. When she had gone we sat down on a deep sofa facing the dying sunset.

Talk drifted to some neighbours—the M'Gills.

'Yes, Laura M'Gill is going to be married,' Michal said. 'Her man's a sailor. A Commander Somebody. He's brave. Laura has been an invalid for years, father says.'

'But she walks about. I saw her at the Point-to-Point.'

'Oh yes, she goes about. But she is very ill, you know; that's why they go to Switzerland so often.'

'Then if she's ill she has the greater need of a Commander,' I said firmly. Michal was silent. 'And her Commander isn't brave at all; he's lucky.'

'Is Laura so attractive?'

'No; but she will need him. She will be dependent on him, and there can be no greater joy than to be needed by the woman one loves.' I was warming to my subject; it had suddenly become a most congenial one. 'If Miss M'Gill were well, her man would have nothing more to do than just to make her happy. As she is ill he'll have a hundred opportunities of being useful too. When they are married he will take care of her, and for every little thing she wants she'll look to him. And if a steam-roller ran over Miss M'Gill to-morrow and left her absolutely helpless, with nothing but her mind to fight life with, I tell you her Commander would be still luckier. People would say, "Poor man, he cannot marry her now. She can't stir hand or foot." And he, if he is a *man* and loves her, would marry her

to-morrow, and by doing so reach happiness undreamed of.'

She heard me out and said, 'You think like that?'

'I do indeed,' I answered hotly.

She spoke so softly I could hardly hear her: 'Then you must never come again.'

'Not come again?'

'I am afraid not.'

Somehow a crisis had arisen. A ghastly, nameless fear had hold of me. It had become my second nature to obey her. Supposing she should mean that I must never come again!

I bent to look at her, for she had turned away. Great tears were falling down her face. Seeing her like this drove fear and caution from me, and left me at the mercy of my passion. I took her in my arms and pressed my cheek to hers. She alone knows what I said; the form it took has left my memory. I only know my soul went out of me to her. I told her of the love I had been mastering for all these weeks. I told her that my only thought was for her to be my wife. I tried to tell her all the little plans I had for making her life different from the caged affair it had been up to now.

I could see that she was suffering. 'You do not know,' she cried; 'you do not understand.'

We cannot love what we cannot see. It is a law of nature.'

Then suddenly she struggled free and took my face between her hands. With her poor sightless eyes she gazed at me, and in that gaze was concentrated every particle of will-power she could muster. I heard her almost wail, 'My man, my man! If only I could see you!' And then some awful physical reaction took control of her. I think it is called 'rigor.'

She shook and sobbed as a waking child does after nightmare. A terrible spasm of pain twisted her; her cheeks paled, and she lost consciousness.

Perhaps I should have called for Martha. Most certainly I should have been afraid. Instead, I took her on my lap, as though she were a little child, and watched her heavy breathing. For I had seen that which filled me with hope undreamed of—hope which, in a moment, turned to happiness. Not ordinary happiness—ecstasy.

She opened her eyes, and covered them with her hand. Then she raised her head, and a hand went straight to my pocket, and drew out a green silk handkerchief.

She held it out to me and, with the calmness of complete exhaustion, said, 'Do bind my eyes, dear. The light is so very very strong.'

DEMOLITION OF A FAMOUS RUSSIAN CATHEDRAL AT WARSAW.

By 'AILSA.'

IN a country which has so much unemployment and labour unrest as Poland it seems a short-sighted policy to employ people to destroy, and yet that is just what is being done in Warsaw to-day. At the mere mention of Warsaw anyone who is familiar with the city will at once visualise in all its beauty the magnificent Russian cathedral standing in the Saxon Square, and this is the church which is now being demolished by order of the Polish Government. No matter what the beauty of the building; no matter what its purpose—it was Russian, and therefore unloved by the Poles. And one can almost imagine, if the question of its existence or destruction were put to the masses, the cry would be, as of old, 'Let it be destroyed!' There has been talk of demolition since 1920, and the building has been barricaded for years, but now its demolition is almost *un fait accompli*. It was in a state of great disrepair, and the powers-that-be said they were not disposed to spend money on reparation. Some truth in that, and yet . . . could they not let such a building venerably decay? Whatever the reason, however, one must not inquire too closely into the whys and wherefores of

continental policies; there are too many wheels within wheels. The fact remains that the cathedral will soon be no more, and one hears that the Saxon Square is in future to be used as a drill-ground for soldiers.

Since the war the capital of Poland has worn such a forlorn and dilapidated appearance that the few beautiful buildings which there are in the city have been somehow forgotten—shades of a bygone splendour, too much overshadowed by the grim reality of recent years and the drab present day. But even such beauties as did exist were swept into insignificance by the almost insolent majesty of the Russian church, built in the very heart of the capital. Situated in the centre of the immense Saxon Square, once the courtyards of the Palace Royal where lived the former rulers of Poland, Augustus II. and Augustus III., it was an imposing monument, with its one-time golden domes flashing in the sunlight. Indeed, one can hardly imagine a prettier sight than that of the cathedral seen on a summer day through the arches of the entrance to the Saski Ogród (Saxon Park), which faced the cathedral—the foreground a carpet of brilliant flowers surrounding an artistic fountain; beyond,

the simple arches, with the straight line of the bridged pillars above, giving a somewhat stern look, which contrasted vividly with the softening contours of the cupolas of the cathedral towering above, and made an effective framework for the exquisite mosaic-work which decorated the entrance. The Saxon Square itself is surrounded on three sides by uninspiring and dreary-looking stone houses, but these emphasized in an almost startling manner the isolated grandeur of the Russian church.

This immense Russian Sobor (Russian Cathedral) was erected at great expense by the Russians between 1890 and 1910, and since 1915 and until recently was used as the Catholic Garrison Church. The building was designed to give the Saxon Square a Byzantine appearance, and to dwarf the importance of other buildings in the vicinity, which was no difficult task. Later a campanile seventy metres in height was built near the Sobor in the same style of architecture. This was intended to be a lasting monument to the victory of the Russians over the Poles. Alas for the intentions of the Russians, however, for the Poles demolished the belfry tower in 1921.

The Byzantine domes—of which there were five, one at each corner and a larger central one—were originally covered with copper-gilt, but it is alleged that the Germans, during their occupation of the capital, removed all valuable metal from the church and belfry roofs. They are also said to have carried away the immense bells, the chandeliers, and even to have torn off the bronze metal plates covering the heating apparatus. Quite a different rumour was also rife, however, to the effect that it was not the Germans but the Russians themselves who removed the copper and gold, ikons, &c., before they evacuated Poland; when they did so they simply painted the domes with gilt paint. This version of the happenings goes on to say that, when the Germans arrived, they got ladders and men to work in the hope of removing the copper-gilt from the cupolas, &c., only to find to their dismay that all is not gold that glitters! Which story is true is a matter of controversy, but latterly the domes were covered only with slate-coloured tiles. Obviously whoever was responsible for the re-roofing of the domes, when the original covering was removed, cared nothing for the sacredness of the building or for the works of art within, for the repairs were carried out in such a careless manner that the roof was no longer water-tight, with the consequence that the wall and ceiling paintings of the interior were much disfigured through the constant dripping of rain-water or melted snow. Indeed, so much damage was done that that was the reason put forward for the demolition of the building.

The exterior walls of this square, massive building were of white stone, and were notice-

ably lacking in ornamentation, this perfect simplicity accentuating the richness of the mosaics which adorned the three principal and side entrances, throwing into greater relief the crowning glory of the golden cupolas.

The interior, however, contained so much to admire that it needed more than one brief visit to appreciate it all. The vaulted ceiling was supported by gigantic granite pillars, and all the walls were adorned with oil paintings depicting biblical scenes. It was a veritable gallery of Russian art, revealing the true Russian spirit. The entire ceilings, the domes, and the walls of the church, including the choir, side chapels, and vestibule, were covered with immense paintings, which combined Byzantine and modern influences in a curious fashion. The scenes represented phases from the life of our Lord, the characters sometimes being portrayed in quaint and ancient Russian peasant costumes. These paintings were mainly the work of three famous Russian artists, Rajlan, Machowski, and Sudkowski, and it is more than a pity that these gems of art should be for ever lost. One cannot dwell at length on the beauty which characterised each painting, but there was one which will remain for ever impressed upon the minds of those who have visited the cathedral. This work—which occupied the whole of the ceiling of the central dome—was a many times larger than life-sized reproduction of the head of Christ wearing the Crown of Thorns. It can be imagined what rare talent, skill, and patience must have been required to carry out such an immense painting on the concave surface of the dome. As one stepped from the sordid street into the shadowy sanctuary of the cathedral one's attention was at once arrested, and one was held spell-bound by this superb portrayal of the suffering Christ. . . . And when one dwelt on the horrors and hardships of recent years, the present uncertainty with all its attendant evils, one felt that there was an intangible significance in that Crowned Head—looking down with strangely mingled sorrow and aloofness.

TWILIGHT.

THE day is slowly trembling into night;
The winds are still; within a silken sea,
That mirrors back the sunset's last glory,
Enchanted islands dream. No sail's in sight;
No sound of oar disturbs the deep quiet;
Only the crying of a sheep is heard,
'Mong the gray corries, where the light airs shred
And piece again the bracken's lace; and, wet
With dew, wild thyme and myrtle fill the air
With fragrance sweet.—Anon, the west grows
gray;

From loch and pool the rose light slips away;
And in the ever deep'ning silence, clear,
Behind the purple hill-top, once again
The 'still small voice' of twilight speaks to men.

MARY C. CHRISTIE.

A ROMANCE OF THE REEL

PART III.

VI.

THE only thing that Davie regretted, when he had had a day or two to reflect on the transaction, was the price. It had been exorbitant. It had been iniquitous. He should have made a present of the picture. That troubled him. In the awful first blush of the business the selling of the picture had been like the selling of his Adventure. And certainly (he now assured himself—privily) not to anyone else on earth would he have parted with it—nay, verily, though Jamie had had a complete fit of the whooping-cough. However, it had served his purpose. If shadow of the uncanny remained at all to gloom his Adventure it merely remained on the surface of the canvas. It was perhaps a great pity it should remain even there, considering its destination. Ay, the great pity . . .

He moved towards the front door, the late afternoon of a spring night never failing to send its mystic call. He sniffed the air.

Suddenly a voice from within, 'Ye nicht as weel gang, an' be done wi't!'

A whimsical smile came to Davie's face. 'Ay, I'd be off this very meenit, Jamie, gin I knew where to gang.'

'Ay, nae doot it's some early for the reservoir in the Pentlands!'

'Ah, I'm afeerd, Jamie, that never again will a' the reservoirs an' burns 'tween this an' Cape Wrath hae the same appeal. Man, they're runnin' noo, Jamie, the clean silver bodies o' them, in the private waters that are as weel guardit as was the Gairden itsel' i' the Beginnin'. . . . An' if this is no' Maister Cattanach! Gudesakes!'

It was Mr Cattanach. He came and greeted Davie. They agreed on the beauty of the evening. They drifted into the shop. They eventually reached the back room.

'About that picture you may remember I bought the other evening?' ultimately said Mr Cattanach.

Davie remembered.

'I have good reason to believe—in fact,' and Mr Cattanach's voice cracked the least trifle, 'in fact, it may be taken as proven to the last twist of the monogram that it is a genuine Vermeer!'

Plainly Davie doubted if he had heard aright. 'Van der Meer of Delft?' he whispered.

'The same.'

Eyes looked into eyes for a long moment; then Davie's hand came out. 'Mr Cattanach—how glad I am!'

It took Mr Cattanach a little while to realise the gesture, to appreciate its overwhelming

genuineness. 'My daughter assured me of as much,' he muttered, taking advantage of the chair beside him.

For a little there was silence. Then Davie's visitor gave a preparatory little cough and faced him. 'Now, Mr Dunbar, we are only too well aware of what this means. My risk at £20 was insignificant compared with my reward, which was altogether beyond all dreams of worth. I should not care to say, frankly, how far I should have been willing to go had authenticity, in the first instance, been guaranteed. I readily admit that. However, my daughter, sir, has seen fit to discuss this matter with me. Possibly I see fit to defer to her in most affairs, but, as I assured her, in a matter of this sort she is—ah—incompetent; that is, she does not appreciate, understand. The matter, so to speak, is outwith her province. In other words—er—'

'Sir,' said Davie, 'you will permit me to understand you to the uttermost. Yours the risk, yours the gain. It's the law; and I myself live by the law. I congratulate you, sir, and, may I say, if there was anything on your mind of the nature of—of reparation, then, sir, in a word, I should feel black affrontit!'

Mr Cattanach was up from his chair, eyes shining. 'Thank you,' he said. And presently, on a softer note, he continued, 'Possibly we all have our dreams, Mr Dunbar, and this realises for me a double dream: first, that I should become the possessor of a Vermeer; but second—second, sir, that for the first time in my life—for the first time in my life—' he took occasion to clear a huskiness of the voice—'that, sir, for the first time in my life I have had the collector's exquisite pleasure of discovering an unknown masterpiece and—and buying it for an old song.'

To which Davie, not without a certain simplicity of dignity, 'I understand so well that I may account it something to myself even to have been the innocent instrument of your dreams' fulfilment.'

'Thank you. Thank you. Such understanding, considering your position in the matter, is, believe me, rarer than an old master.'

After which complimentary and genuine passages Mr Cattanach added in a sudden, almost sprightly manner, 'By the way, I hope you'll forgive my thoughtlessness in making no reference to the fishing on my last visit. I had fully intended, but really—the picture—'

'And I had intended to thank you—'

'My dear sir—the most trivial matter! However, I am anxious for my own sake, I may

say, to mark this occasion in some small way. It requires it, you'll agree. Now, I felt that a mere verbal invitation to you would not—life is uncertain at the best—would not— In short, I have requested my factor, Mr Robertson, to have prepared an instrument which gives you legal permission during your lifetime to fish any and all of the waters of the Glenuel Estate at any and every season of the year—barring, eh? the close season!’

And for the first time that evening Davie Dunbar failed to respond. His hand gripped at the top bar of the chair till the knuckles stood out white and taut, while he gazed at his visitor almost vacantly.

‘Yes, the salmon are running now—the spring run, you know. Mr Graeme is a capital fisher, and would introduce you everywhere, if you could spare a few days just now. My daughter would be delighted, and wishes me to impress the invitation. Meantime, if you'll allow me,

I wish to make some tangible acknowledgment to Mr Forsyth, to whose delicate interference the other night I was possibly not deaf!’

And he left Davie still standing by the chair in the back-shop.

Presently, like a man in a dream, Davie found himself by the front-door, with his visitor about to take his leave.

‘You know, you have not yet asked me about the Vermeer, eh? It was the light on the face that drew me, the quality of it. It was the only genuine thing visible on the whole canvas, as the experts have revealed. And I am not a little proud, perhaps, that so little was yet enough! The rest, including even the horror twist to the features, is all superimposed. Marvellously cleverly, I admit. But, like a dark shadow, it is being wholly removed—to leave beneath a beauty that will be imperishable.’

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

AN IMPROVED GAS-COOKER.

MANY improved gas-cookers have been brought out during the last few years, several of which have been described in these pages. A new model was placed on the market not long ago, which, while presenting no startling departures from previous types, possesses one or two special features that are worthy of mention. In general the design is similar to that of other gas-cookers. There are two boiling burners near the back of the hot-plate, each of which is fed by two distinct gas-supplies from one tap. These give respectively a full flame, or a reduced one for simmering. Each has its own adjustable air inlet, with the result that very perfect Bunsen flames are obtained. The tap has three positions: ‘off,’ ‘full on,’ and ‘simmering.’ Each burner consists of two simple loose parts which can be picked out of a socket for cleaning, this operation being very easy, because the gas holes become open notches when the two parts are separated. A commendable feature of these cookers is the enamelling or nickel-plating of all parts, which therefore look smart and are easily cleaned. Another advantage is that all parts except the hot-plate and the framing are of sheet steel; this is light, and gives a smooth surface when enamelled. The hot-plate is a very light, brown-enamelled iron casting, which lifts off. Over the burners are fitted circular bright-steel covers, and these are removable for saucepans if desired. At the back of the hot-plate is a white-enamelled wall-plate, which carries a combined plate-rack and warming-shelf. The oven is built up of white-enamelled steel sheets.

The back is single, and has openings to let out the burnt gases. Removable linings with ledges for shelves are fitted to the sides, leaving air spaces which minimise the escape of heat. A white-enamelled drip-tray is also removable, so that the oven can be completely cleared for cleaning, leaving smooth enamelled surfaces. Double doors are fitted to the oven, each having double walls with asbestos between them. These gas-cookers are made in various types and sizes, and in one pattern the modern plan of mounting the oven by the side of the hot-plate, high enough up to avoid any need for stooping, is adopted.

WIND DYNAMOS.

In our issue for December 1921, what was called a ‘wind dynamo’ was described, consisting of a small dynamo with a two-bladed wind-mill like an aeroplane propeller, mounted on its spindle. This machine gave about 40 watts, and by itself was not powerful enough to do much in the way of lighting. But five of these little generators mounted on a crossbar give quite a respectable amount of current, which is enough to keep the lighting battery charged in a small country house. Two new uses have been found recently for wind dynamos. One is for charging accumulators for listening-in sets; the other, to provide illuminated advertisement signs on motor-cars or motor-lorries. For charging accumulators for wireless sets the apparatus is very simple. The wind dynamo, which weighs only 10 lb., is mounted on the end of a pole with a swivelling head, the machine having a tail to keep it pointing into the wind. To transmit the current without.

twisting up the wires, it is led to insulated metal rings at the swivelling joint, and picked up by brushes connected to fixed wires on the pole. This pole, with the wind dynamo on the top, can be carried on the shoulder and placed in a socket in the ground when charging is to be done. The dynamo begins to charge with the wind at from twelve to fourteen miles an hour, being connected to the battery, so soon as the speed is high enough, by an automatic device, which breaks the circuit again when the wind drops. No attention whatever is required, and the machine keeps on charging day and night when there is enough wind. For advertising purposes, a wind dynamo is mounted on a car, a lorry, or a van, and is worked by the wind due to the speed of the vehicle through the air. It is fitted with a tail which is illuminated by the current generated. In this case no automatic device is fitted, the dynamo being always connected to the battery. With a speed of twelve miles an hour or over, the dynamo charges the battery which maintains the lights. When the vehicle is slowed down, the current runs back through the dynamo and runs it as a motor, so that the windmill is always rotating. The device may be fixed in front of the radiator, on a pole at the side, or on the roof of a covered van. But wherever it is located, it never fails to draw universal attention to any advertisement set forth on the tail.

THE LARGEST CARILLONS IN THE WORLD.

Very few carillons exist in this country, the best known being that in the Royal Exchange, London. In Holland and Belgium they are common, and several carillon players are noted men. Carillons have recently come into favour in the United States and in Canada. One of fifty-three bells, which has recently been completed, is the largest in the world. It is for the Park Avenue Baptist Church of New York, the authorities of which were able to purchase this carillon owing to a munificent donation from Mr J. D. Rockefeller, jun., in memory of his mother. The total weight of the bells is 50 tons, the largest weighing $9\frac{1}{4}$ tons, and the smallest only 15 pounds. With the steel framing and fittings, the total weight is about 80 tons. Forty-five of the bells are fixed in three frames, one above the other, in the beautiful Gothic tower of the church, which was designed by the famous American architect, Mr H. C. Pelton. But the eight largest bells are to be hung in a campanile, built specially for the purpose up to the level of the existing tower. These carillons are played by means of keyboards, which closely resemble those for organs, but with wooden levers instead of ivory keys; the larger bells are rung with the help of pedals. Wires and bell-cranks connect the levers and the pedals with the clappers which strike the inside of the bells.

The clappers do not move with a big swing, but have only a short stroke of from two to three inches. A sister carillon is to be installed in the memorial tower which is being erected on Parliament Hill at Ottawa. Both, together with many smaller ones, have been or are being made by Messrs Gillett & Johnston, the noted clock-makers and bell-founders of Croydon. At Ottawa a clock with four sixteen-foot faces is also being installed in the tower, and mechanism will be provided for striking the hours and chiming the quarters on the carillon. Provision has been made for adding at some future time an automatic machine which will play tunes at certain hours in the day. These bells will, of course, provide an interesting attraction for the public, who will be taken up the tower in a lift. To increase the attraction, the works of the clock, with the striking mechanism, are to be visible through glass sides to the case.

A PORTABLE HAMMOCK STAND.

For enabling one to take a peaceful rest in the open air a hammock is not easily excelled. But to sling it, two trees or two posts are required at the correct distance apart. In either case the position of the hammock is fixed. A hammock stand is now obtainable which, while being strong and stable, can be moved about by one person—even by a child. In principle the contrivance is not unlike a deck-chair, the two chief components of the frame forming a horizontally-extended X. The upper ends of these components, however, overhang the lower; hence an A-frame at each side, pivoted to the ends of the X members, rises at an outward slant. The hammock is hooked on at the apex of one A-frame at the 'head-end,' and a few inches lower down at the other, so as to give a fall towards the feet. All the joints are connected by zinc-coated bolts which pass from one side of the frame to the other. Where the X members cross each other, slots are provided for the bolt. This allows of adjusting the slant of the A-frames, giving any length between the hammock hooks of from 9 feet to 12 feet. A short upper portion is pivoted to the apex of each A-frame for the suspension of an awning, and is adjustable to awnings of various lengths, the awnings themselves being steadied by guys to the hammock frame. A slightly-modified stand is made for a camp-bed; this type is also convertible into a sun-chair or a hammock-chair. A valuable feature of these hammock stands is that all the components are the same length, and will fold up together into a flat package for transit without the frame having to be taken to pieces. If the bolts are removed—the work of ten minutes—the stand resolves into eight lengths of timber and a small bundle of bolts. The frames may be left in the open all the summer. Should rain

threaten. the hammock and the awning can be detached in a few seconds, and brought indoors. The frames are made in solignumed Oregon pine; in the same wood stained and varnished; in oiled oak; or in oiled teak.

MIXING THE 'GAS' FROM THE CARBURETTER.

It is a well-known fact that some of the 'gas' supplied by the carburetter of a motor reaches the cylinders in liquid form, instead of being suspended in the air, with which it is supposed to be mixed. Any contrivance which will break up the gas into numerous separate streams would aid the mixing. This is exactly what is done by a device which can be fixed on any motor between the carburetter flange and that of the induction pipe. It is made from a short length of thin brass tube. One end is nicked for a quarter of an inch at frequent intervals all round, leaving a number of teeth that can be bent out at a right angle. The result is a flange which can be clipped between the carburetter and induction-pipe flanges. From the other end deep cuts are made which divide the tube into fingers. Alternate fingers are cut to about half the length of their neighbours. These short fingers are bent over towards each other until they almost meet in the middle. The long fingers are also bent over towards the middle, and each is twisted. This device effectively mixes the air and petrol which are drawn swiftly through it; hence much less petrol is wasted, the saving claimed by the makers being from 20 to 30 per cent. Another effect is the reduction of carbon deposits in the cylinders, due to the more complete combustion.

FILTERING THE PETROL.

It is now generally agreed among motorists that a fine gauze strainer does not exclude all impurities and water from the petrol-tank of a car, and that some sort of filter is desirable through which to pass the petrol on its way to the carburetter. An effective petrol-filter was described in these pages in December 1923; another has been brought out lately in which the filtering medium is chamois leather. The body of the device is a thick, toughened glass cup. In one model, that for fixing in the bonnet, the body is mounted on a tubular spindle between a metal cap with inlet and outlet sockets, and a nut at the bottom. A coned gauze ring in the upper part of the body is covered with chamois leather, while the inside is in communication with the outlet to the carburetter. Entering at the top of the spindle, the petrol from the tank passes through cross holes into the body below the filter, where it has to rise through the chamois leather to reach the outlet. Impurities are removed by unscrewing a plug at the bottom. In another model, especially designed for direct

connection to carburetters, the glass body is flanged at the top and clamped to the cap by a ring. There is no central spindle, and the chamois leather is stretched over a plain gauze cone. Sediment and water are left behind in the bottom of the cup, where they can be drained off by a needle valve which is opened by a knurled plug on the top of the filter. In other respects it closely resembles the previously-described model. A metal guard is supplied with this type if desired. These filters are substantially made, and the metal parts are nickel-plated.

POWER FROM WOOD FOR FOREST REGIONS.

Gas-producers must have been seen, even if their method of working has not been understood, by all readers of *Chambers's Journal*. These devices make gas for engines from coal, coke, wood, or charcoal, at a far lower cost than that supplied by gas companies or local authorities; but they have some drawbacks. One is the consumption of water for cooling and cleaning the gas; another is the difficulty of getting rid of the foul water or effluent, this being so offensive that many town authorities prohibit its discharge into their sewers, while it would destroy the fish if turned into a river. A producer has been brought out lately which requires no water for its operation, and from which, therefore, there is no offensive effluent to be got rid of. It has been especially designed to facilitate the burning of wood fuel, coco-nut shell, or other tropical vegetable matter. Gas-producers are very similar to slow combustion stoves, but with a still further reduced air-supply, producing just enough combustion and heat to carbonise the fuel and drive off the gas. In many, a certain amount of steam is mixed with the air-supply to the grate; in all, except the one we are about to describe, water is also used for cleaning and cooling the gas, and for removing the tar, which would otherwise clog up the engine. The new producer is in two parts. One is a cylindrical chamber in the centre; the other, an annular chamber surrounding it. Both have grates at the bottom, that for the central part being coned downwards. The gas is drawn off from below the central grate and passes into the lower part of a gas-filter, whence it rises through steel shavings, gravel, or some other non-combustible material to the outlet, and thence to the engine. An ordinary petrol motor will work on the gas produced, which it draws from the filter on the suction strokes, thus creating a degree of draught through the apparatus according to the position of the throttle. To start the producer, a fire of wood is lit in both the inner and outer chambers, a damper leading to a short chimney is opened, and air is admitted at the bottom. With natural draught the producer will become hot enough to work in about forty-five minutes, but

the process can be hastened by a hand blower. When the producer is ready for work, the damper is closed, and a few turns of the engine draw the gas through the filter. Alternatively the engine can be started on petrol. Now we come to the novel and essential feature of this producer, which is that air is admitted to the annular grate and rises upwards through the fuel. At the top the resulting gas is drawn downwards through the glowing fire in the central part, which consumes the tar. With the compression increased to that customary in gas engines, a petrol motor running on this gas develops 75 per cent. of the power it would develop with petrol, or nearly as much as it would with paraffin. The consumption of wood fuel is from 2 to 2½ lb. per horse-power per hour, according to the size of the plant. Coconut shell gives off a rich gas which furnishes an amount of power nearly equal to that from petrol. These producers should prove invaluable abroad where wood is the only fuel available, especially as they are eminently suitable, in conjunction with marine motors, for river craft. Steam is the only alternative, but it needs from four to six times the weight of fuel, according to the size of the plant, for a given power, while the boiler is much bigger and heavier than a producer of equal power. Moreover, the producers can be taken to pieces for transport up country by native carriers or mules. One for a 5 h.-p. engine weighs only 50 lb.

A GAS FIRE-LIGHTER.

There is something to be said for the portable gas-burner as a means for lighting coal fires. It saves the cost and the trouble of 'laying' a fire with sticks and paper, while one that has died down can be quickly restored to a cheerfully-blazing condition. A recent gas-burner for this purpose is of the Bunsen type with the usual air adjustment, and has a flattened snout which gives a fan-shaped blue flame. A wooden handle through which the gas passes on its way to the burner terminates in a spigot for the attachment of flexible tubing connecting it with the gas tap. A grate filled with coal without any paper or wood can be lit in a few minutes with this burner, while the danger of flying sparks from burning wood is avoided.

A NEW FORM OF LAMP SHADE.

A new form of lamp shade of which we have recently made careful inspection possesses a distinctly novel and ingenious feature which should commend it alike to the artistic housewife and to the up-to-date shopkeeper. Made in a variety of sizes and designs, it is provided with patent hinge-flaps which enable the glass panels forming the essential portion of the shades to be easily and quickly removed for cleaning purposes, or for other panels to be put in their places. All that is needed is to

press back a small knob, when the panel is instantly released, and can be at once removed without the necessity of taking the shade from the lampholder. As the glass panels can be obtained in any colour, either plain or artistically decorated, the housewife of artistic leanings can readily change the colour of the artificial light in a room to suit her individual taste and the prevailing scheme of decoration. For advertising purposes these shades are unique in the advantages they offer, for not only can panels be obtained already provided with suitable wording, but stencilled or written advertisements can be readily prepared by the advertiser himself, and effectively displayed on plain panels. The shopkeeper is thus enabled to vary his advertisements at will, and to draw special attention at any time to particular features of his business or portion of his wares. It should be added that no extra fittings or wiring are required for hanging shades, as they fit on ordinary shade-carrying holders.

AN EFFECTIVE FLOOR-POLISHER.

Any effective device for the saving of unnecessary labour in the home is always welcomed by the busy housewife. Such a device is a floor-polisher which we have recently had the opportunity of testing. The polishing surface is naturally of bristles. These are fitted into a wooden head of a large size and oblong in shape, and sufficiently weighted to give the necessary pressure. But so well is the weight distributed that the exertion involved in the use of the polisher is reduced to a minimum. Round the wooden part of the head goes a strong, resilient leather pad, thus obviating the possibility of damage to wainscoting or furniture while the polisher is being used. The head is secured to a long handle by means of a patented universal joint, which permits of easy movement in any direction, and thus greatly facilitates the accomplishment of the task. By means of this 'all-British' appliance an ideal polish is rapidly given to a polished or parquetry floor, or to one covered with linoleum, without the necessity for stooping or kneeling.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

*. TO CONTRIBUTORS.

All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.' For its return in case of ineligibility, a stamped and directed envelope (or postage-stamps) should accompany every manuscript.

To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them in FULL.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE FIRST SCOT.

By Lieutenant-Colonel GORDON CASSERLY, F.R.G.S.,
Author of *The Elephant God*, *The Jungle Girl*, *The Red Marshal*, *Algeria Today*, &c.

PART I.

I.

THE sea boiled with fury before the wild south-easterly gale; and the uprooted tree, drifting through the seething water, was hidden by the flying spume blown by the fierce breath of the storm. Again and again the waves broke over it in fountains of foam that spouted high above the longest leafy branches rising up from the angry sea. Sometimes the trunk, tossed about in the heaving water, rolled heavily as if going to turn over; but the weight of the submerged roots and boughs kept it from doing so—fortunately for the scared, strange being that clung to it in a desperate struggle for life.

An ugly hairy ape it seemed, low-browed, heavy-jowled, chinless, the wet fur of its body plastered to its yellow skin. Yet the long hair streaming from its scalp in the wind, the hands clenched in desperation on the rough-barked branches, proved it a human being. A woman! A woman of a very far-off age, yet an ancestress of the humans of to-day—humiliating thought! But more than a million years have passed since she drifted before the gale out into the Atlantic Ocean, since the convulsion of nature that drove the tidal wave against the west coast of Europe and swept away the great tree in which this strange creature had made her home. And the storm was blowing her and it through a raging sea that rolled a hundred fathoms above England; for a subsidence of this portion of the earth's surface had buried deep beneath the ocean the Britain that formerly had been a vast land joined to the continent of Europe from Denmark to Spain. Of it nothing remained but a few scattered islands, which before the cataclysm had been the summits of the highest Scottish, English, Welsh, and Irish mountains.

The wretched waif clinging desperately, half-drowned, smothering, blinded by the flying spume, was just an ordinary specimen of mankind of that early pre-Eolithic Age, of almost the most helpless carnivorous animals that then existed, more guileless than many of the harmless beasts on which they preyed, much inferior in strength, power, and daring to the terrible brutes

that preyed on them. The neighbouring continent from which she had been swept was being peopled for the first time in the world's history by human beings. Immigrants from east and south were pushing up northward as the ice of the Glacial Epoch retreated again towards the Arctic Circle. And with them was coming a varied, a countless, host of strange animals; so that monster straight-tusked elephants and woolly rhinoceroses filled the forest of France, and giant lions and sabre-toothed tigers chased the elk and wild horses over her grassy plains. The hairy ape-like human beings disputed the tree-tops with the monkeys and the birds; for they feared to encounter the terrible beasts of prey that roamed the ground below. Their rude weapons—stones snatched up at random, or clubs that were only broken-off branches—were poor defence against grizzly bears that would dwarf the largest specimens of their species in modern America, or cave-lions far bigger than their African representatives to-day.

Who that saw this miserable creature clinging to the tree would believe that in her kind glimmered feebly the spark of intelligence that was in ages unborn to make their descendants masters of all created things, of sea and air, of Time and Space? She was so utterly helpless, powerless to make any effort to save herself. But for the fact that she was wedged in among the tangled branches she would have been torn from her refuge a hundred times by the hungry waves. Soaked, chilled to the bone, despairing, life in her battered body was at its lowest ebb. Her hardy frame could not have endured another day of this misery. But luckily the gale had reached its climax and was beginning to blow itself out—to subside almost as swiftly as it had arisen.

II.

Suddenly the flying clouds parted, to let a ray of sunlight stream down on the troubled sea; and the woman looked up hopefully as a strip of blue sky appeared and gradually widened. Before long the almost tropical sun was warming her chilled body.

But as its fierce heat made itself felt, there
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was a movement in the branches; and through the tangle a big animal forced its way out into the welcome sunshine. It was a giant, cat-like brute with barred yellow face and bristling whiskers, a thick white ruff, and an orange hide striped with black; and the two glistening fangs, six inches long, curving down on each side, from the upper jaw to well below the lower one, showed it to be the most dreaded beast of prey that the continent of Europe then knew. It was a sabre-toothed tiger, far bigger and more terrible than any tiger that roams the jungles of India to-day.

The shuddering woman crouched lower as it revealed itself. She had all along known of its presence; but in the perils of the storm it had seemed negligible, and indeed had been too terrified to be dangerous. But now that it had apparently recovered its courage, she feared that hunger would drive it to attack her.

But the animal ignored her. With muzzle pointing in the direction of their course, and head thrown up, it was sniffing the air as though it scented something; and presently, as the mirk over the sea thinned and vanished, the woman's straining eyes saw straight ahead a conical island that seemed to rise by magic from the whitened waters. A lofty peak clad with forest almost to the jagged summit, it towered above the sea, which on that blustering day was lashing its rocky base, but now is far from it indeed.

For that island is to-day Ben Nevis, the highest mountain of a historic land; and it and the similar isles that were gradually revealed as the sea-fog lifted were all that then existed of what is now Scotland.

To the poor wretch the land ahead meant salvation, life—if only the wind that had been her foe, and now might prove her best friend, would last long enough to blow her tree ashore.

It was falling rapidly; and the tiger whined impatiently at their slow progress. Hours passed, but still the land seemed no nearer. The waves dulled down to a sullen swell, the heaving surface only rippled by the falling breeze. Here and there it was broken by the rounded back of some enormous whale-like marine creature, or the gambols of a shoal of big fish resembling porpoises. Half a mile from the slowly-drifting tree a fearsome dragon head with curving horns and an immense mouth studded with sharp teeth was thrust out of the water to a height of twenty feet, the goggle eyes scanning the sea, which for fifty yards behind the scaly neck boiled with the writhing of the innumerable coils of the serpent body.

The woman shuddered as she looked at it. But the tiger paid no attention to the creatures of the sea, and, whimpering petulantly, fixed its gaze on the distant land. All too slowly they drifted towards it. At last, when it was but a mile or so away, the yellow beast lost patience

and, to the woman's relief, plunged into the water and began to swim to the shore.

But it had hardly gone twenty yards before there was a sudden flurry in the water around it. Uttering a wild scream of pain and terror, the tiger splashed furiously as it snapped at a shoal of thin-scaled, swimming reptiles, like elongated porpoises with paddle-fins and snake-like loose jaws studded with long curved teeth, which rushed at it from all sides, leaping over each other's silvery bodies in their savage eagerness to attack the hapless beast. The sea reddened as, despite its struggle, the tiger was pulled under and literally torn to pieces in a minute; and the trembling woman, watching, tried to drag herself higher up among the branches away from the crimson-tinged water lapping against the tree-trunk.

Or the scent or sight of the blood brought other monsters to the dread feast. As the ravenous sea-reptiles fought over their prey, the shining shapes of hungry sharks shot up through the green depths of the sea to dispute it with them; and the horny backs of big marine crocodiles rose to the discoloured surface, their enormous jaws clashing like gigantic traps as they snapped at the scared reptiles, which scattered and eluded them by swift movements.

III.

As the woman clambered affrightedly out of reach of these terrible enemies, and got as high as she could above the sea, a loud and measured beat of wings made her look up—only to see a new danger approaching her through another element. Flapping swiftly towards her from the land came a horrible creature such as even she, who lived in an age of nightmare horrors, had never dreamed of.

Was it monster bird or flying reptile? It looked like a giant lizard with the leathery wings of a bat twenty feet from tip to tip; wings that were thick membranes stretched between the fore and hind legs, which ended in claws, those of the former shaped somewhat like deformed human hands. But the fifth finger of each forehand was elongated to make the upper edge of the immense wing.

The brute's furry body tapered suddenly into a long serpent-like tail ending in a rudder-shaped flat tip. But its head! Its head was hideous, terrible. Half-bird's, half-reptile's, it had pointed, beak-like, long bony jaws studded with gapped teeth like a crocodile's, and dull goggle eyes, which the wretched woman could see, even at that distance, were fixed menacingly on her.

She was in despair, and for a moment the new danger paralysed her. But as the hideous monster—men name it nowadays a pterodactyl—neared her and poised on fluttering wings to stoop like a hawk, she scrambled back hurriedly

into a tangle of stout branches that guarded her like a fence. The bat-lizard checked in its swoop, for its beak and claws could not reach her through the screening boughs. Then with a discordant cry it swept up high into air again; and the woman breathed more freely as the danger passed.

But only to be succeeded by a worse peril. She had climbed down again almost to the half-submerged trunk, about which the sea-monsters still lingered, while the slayers of the tiger swam around farther out. To her horror she saw a crocodile lay its broad snout on the floating tree and, seeming to scent her, begin to climb out of the water onto the lurching stem and drag its unwieldy body towards her.

It was an immense brute, thirty feet in length at least; and its great jaws were garnished with long teeth set irregularly. But, unlike most of its fellows floating on the surface around, it was soft-skinned, while they had on head and back the horny armour-plating that all their modern descendants possess.

The woman gave herself up for lost. As the monster crawled slowly out of the sea she began to scramble up a thick bough that pointed to the sky, but stopped in despair when a glance upward showed the horrible bat-lizard hovering overhead and ready to swoop again. She dared not emerge from the protecting tangle of branches lest the pterodactyl's claws should seize her, yet if she remained low down the jaws of the sea-monster would grip her as surely and drag her into the water to be torn to shreds like the tiger. Death clutched at her above and below.

The crocodile, clasping the trunk with its short limbs tipped with blunt-nailed claws, pulled itself clear of the water and drew nearer to the woman, until its snout almost touched her feet. The horrible stench of its fetid breath reached her. An uncanny fascination seemed to drag her down towards the open jaws. All hope was gone.

But suddenly, dropping like a stone, a heavy mass fell from the sky, and the great bird-beast's beak was driven like a pick into the sea-creature's skull, piercing to the brain and killing the crocodile instantly. Notwithstanding the slayer's efforts to hold it on the tree, which sank lower under their combined weight, the huge carcass began to slip back into the water, where a score of hungry monsters awaited it. Their jaws gripped it as it slid and dragged it into the sea, despite the upward lift of the flapping wings of the pterodactyl, which strove to hold it back while it pecked savagely at the crocodiles. Even when the dead brute's body slipped off the trunk, the bat-lizard, clutching it with clenched claws, disputed the prey fiercely, until an immense shark, turning over as it rose like a trout to a fly, seized the fluttering tail-tip of the air-reptile, which was dragged down back-

wards into the sea. The wildly-flapping wings churned the water into foam, until they and the body to which they belonged were torn to fragments by the snapping jaws that closed on them.

IV.

A sudden squall drove the tree and its passenger away from the blood-dyed water where the cannibal crocodiles were feasting on their fellow and its slayer, while the sharks and porpoises hovered around for the scraps.

As she was borne towards the land the woman, with fresh hope kindling in her eyes, looked eagerly at it. The coast was varied. In places rocky cliffs bounded it; elsewhere the shore was flat—here a sandy beach, there a stretch of marshy ground clothed with long reeds and vivid green herbage. But bordering it, and occasionally thrusting down nearly to the water's edge, were dense forests which, as the ground rose up into steep hills, clothed them almost to their jagged peaks.

The floating tree was drifting towards a point where high rocks met a mangrove swamp. As the woman's eyes ranged anxiously over the swamp, the tangled bushes and noisome mud of which would prevent her getting to land should she be blown against them, a strange and gigantic animal heaved into view out of the vegetation. It looked like an enormous lizard; but it lifted erect into the air the weird skull that crowned its long neck until it was forty feet above the bushes, and it gazed nervously around as if, despite its great size, it had enemies to fear. Apparently reassured, it lowered its head and plodded heavily to the shore; and the staring woman gasped as it dragged itself out on to the rocks and was fully revealed.

For it was a hundred feet in length! Its skull was comparatively small, with large stupid eyes, diminutive ears, a big mouth filled with blunt teeth, and nostrils placed high up near the top of the head, so that the amphibious monster could breathe when almost completely submerged. The neck was long and slender; the body short, thick, and lower at the shoulders than behind, ending in an extremely elongated tapering tail. Four powerful legs, with small, five-toed clawed feet, supported the massive smooth-skinned frame, which stood twenty feet at the hindquarters. It was a Sauropod, one of the varied families of the Dinosaurs or Terrible Lizards, as they were named long after they had all vanished from the face of the earth. Many of its kindred well deserved the name; but, despite its dreadful appearance, it was a harmless vegetable-feeder.

To the woman it was a nightmare terror, a fitting comrade on the land of the horrors that she had seen in the sea. Dragging its huge bulk over the rocks, the monstrous creature crossed the beach to a broad marshy patch, where it began to feed on the rank vegetation,

much to the surprise of the watcher, who could not believe that so terrible a reptile would be content with a vegetarian diet.

When the tree eventually drifted against the rocks she scrambled on to them with the agility of a cat, raced over them and the shingle behind towards the edge of the forest, sprang up the nearest tall tree like a monkey, and never stopped until she reached the highest branch that would support her weight. And there she clung panting, her bosom heaving, her heart thumping, exhaustion, suffering forgotten in the joy of feeling, for the moment at least, safe.

And thus the first human being that had ever set foot on Scottish soil came to the land!

v.

As she hung outlined against the sky, it was difficult to believe that from her and such as she would, in the fullness of time, come beautiful women to inspire painters and handsome men whom sculptors would model. Easier far to lend credence to the scientists' theory that she had sprung—and not sprung far—from the monkeys and even the less human-like lemurs. Up in the tree she looked more like an ape than ever. With a low-browed skull abnormally thick, her sloping forehead, retreating chin, and flat nose with gaping nostrils emphasised the forward thrust of her thick-lipped mouth set with sharp yellow fangs, the upper and lower canine teeth interlocking and long enough to serve her as a weapon, like a wild beast's. The brutish jaws resembled an ape's. Over her small eyes were prominent bony ridges. Her yellow skin was covered with short fur, her only clothing; but the wet, matted locks of her scalp were true human hair. Her short legs were bowed, so that she walked on the outer edges of the soles of her feet, while her hairy hands reached to the level of her knees.

Such was Woman untold centuries ago—woman of a cycle anterior to the Stone Age.

Now, the fear of death past, this creature miraculously saved from the storm was suddenly tormented by hitherto-forgotten hunger and thirst, the latter the more urgent. Her lips, her parched mouth, were caked with salt; and her

first need was fresh water. So, moving agilely through the branches, she climbed along the leafy ways high above the ground, keeping near the edge of the forest, until she reached a spot where the trees drew back from the coast, to leave an open green space through which a stream flowed to the shore.

The sight of the clear water aggravated her burning thirst. She longed to drop to earth and rush to it; but to her horror she saw the goggle-eyed, foolish head of the great Sauropod rise up out of the marsh near the outlet of the rivulet into the sea. And on the open, grazing on the reeds and low vegetation, were the weirdly-shaped bulks of a dozen other monsters even stranger and more terrifying to look at. They all belonged to the race of Terrible Lizards, were all Dinosaurs, but differed in species and in appearance.

Some were great reptiles, long-necked, longer-tailed, four-legged and ostrich-footed, with large narrow heads and immense jaws ending in toothless beaks. To the watcher's astonishment, when something startled them they rose on hind legs and ran or hopped in long leaps like giant kangaroos. When they stopped she saw that their fore limbs were small, with five-fingered hands and slender shoulders. Standing erect they were fifteen feet high, while their length from beak to tip of tail was twenty-five or thirty. They were Iguanodons, or Bird-footed Lizards.

More terrific in appearance were huge armoured quadrupeds, having large ugly heads with horns on snout and forehead, the bone of the skulls running back in a wide, outspreading carapace or ruff to cover the neck; while a continuous bony shield studded with bosses protected the hip region, and long sharp spikes ran down the backbone and the elongated tail. Their jaws, filled with flat grinding teeth, ended in parrot-like beaks. Their bulky bodies were twelve or fourteen feet long. Frightful as they looked, these Stegosaur, or Plated Lizards, were, like the others, pacific vegetable-feeders, although their spiked armour and formidable pointed horns made them dangerous foes if attacked.

(Continued on page 650.)

RIO DE JANEIRO UP-TO-DATE.

By GRACE L. MORROW.

I.

BEFORE the present century has ended will the centres of civilisation have shifted to the newer world 'Down Under'? Visiting in the last few years the great cities of the southern hemisphere, I have often wondered. Melbourne, Sydney, Johannesburg, Buenos Aires, or Rio de Janeiro—will they ever become what New

York, London, and Paris are—or think they are!—the hub of the civilised world?

Modern Brazilians have shown an amazing energy in making their beautiful capital one of the wonder-cities of the world. Formerly noted only for the beauty of the harbour and for deadly yellow fever, Rio de Janeiro is now one of the healthiest cities in South America.

The credit for this is given to Dr Oswaldo

Cruz, who died in 1917 while still a young man. His work is carried on by the Oswaldo Cruz Institute, and 'Yellow Jack' in Rio is completely vanquished. But the authorities still take precautions. A house-to-house inspection is maintained—very annoying to housewives, as wash-tubs, saucepans, even flower-vases, are inspected for stagnant water, the possible breeding-place of the germ-carrying mosquito. Water-cisterns are papered over, sealed with the Government seal; if the paper gets broken the authorities must be notified. By law all sugar must be kept covered. Lump-sugar is sold with every lump wrapped in paper! And table-napkins in hoteis, restaurants, or tea-shops must be served in a sealed band to show that they are fresh from the laundry.

For gorgeous colouring and beauty of setting this metropolis of the South is unsurpassed. The city nestles in the folds of the Tijuca mountains, and like a gay kaleidoscope shimmers in the sun. Broad tree-lined boulevards have superseded the narrow hot streets of old Rio, and smooth macadamised roads lead out to mountain or ocean-side suburbs. The old Portuguese 'Carioca Aqueduct,' which formerly brought cool mountain water to the fever-ridden town, is now utilised as a bridge to carry electric cars across to the mountain suburb of Santa Thereza.

From those heights behind the city entrancing views of the harbour are obtained. Blue as a sapphire, and studded with emerald islands, the water stretches fifteen miles from where a conical rock, Pão de Assucar, 1300 feet high, guards the entrance. History does not agree as to the discoverer of this land-locked haven. On 1st January 1531, a Portuguese captain, Affonso de Souza, entered the bay, and, thinking it the mouth of a river, called it Rio de Janeiro, that is, January River. In 1565 Esatacio de Sá landed at the foot of the 'Sugar-Loaf,' and by him Rio de Janeiro was founded. His tomb was found on 'Castle Hill,' but as that hill with two others has been *completely removed by hydraulic power*, because they interfered with projected improvements to the city, the remains of Esatacio de Sá were transferred to the cathedral.

The soil and rocks from these hills were used to fill up the foreshore and further extend it five-mile-long boulevard, with its wall of white marble, broad tessellated side-walks, and palm-planted gardens, which now encircles the bay. Along this boulevard at night is seen an amazing stream of motor-cars. Tunnels through granite mountains lead out to Atlantic-shore suburbs, where a casino which opens at midnight is busy till dawn. Perhaps it is this traffic which makes Rio roosters crow all night! Every newcomer remarks on this strange peculiarity of Brazilian poultry. Or it may be the blazing lights.

For Rio is the most brilliantly illuminated city in the world, 'tis said. Her reflected halo can be seen for sixty miles at sea. To go to the Sugar-Loaf and cross to the summit on the fearsome cable-car, swinging across a deep abyss, is a favourite excursion at sunset. The sun sinks behind fantastic granite peaks, which emerge from dense green jungle. Then quickly comes the soft blackness of the tropic night. But suddenly, by the turning of a lever, the city blazes forth. Lights appear on higher roads, on the summits of the mountains, and, like a brilliant coronet, round Botofogo Bay.

When moonlight floods the harbour, gilding the waving palms, music of stately Argentine Tango or of rollicking Brazilian Maxiche floats from the marble terrace of some great hotel. Then, indeed, is this city of the south more like fairyland than solid earth.

II.

Rio, like all semi-tropical cities, seems slumbrous from noon until the heat of the day is waning. By five o'clock Avenida Rio Branca, the Piccadilly of the town, is crowded with promenaders. Etiquette in Brazilian society is still very strict. Even married women do not walk anywhere alone. This is not so difficult to understand when one has seen the sailor-hatted men, who stand three deep on the edge of those tessellated side-walks, making audible comments on the 'points' of the Brazilian belles as they pass with their chaperones.

Shopping in Rio is an amusing if expensive pastime. In the Rua do Ouvidor, a narrow street where wheeled traffic is forbidden, are the best shops for Brazilian jewels. Diamonds, sapphires, aquamarines are here in gorgeous profusion. Never except in the Rue de la Paix had we seen such enormous stones. Brazilians give their wives thousands of pounds worth of jewels, and regard it as an investment, or sort of 'Dot.' They are still very Turk-like with regard to womenkind. Nothing impresses them so much as the independence of English women, and the comradeship of our elderly married couples. An elderly woman in Brazil 'knows her place,' and that, in the opinion of her male relatives, is *always at home!*

Brazilian men are not seen to kiss each other, as do so many of the Latin races, but they always lay an affectionate arm round the shoulders in greeting a fellow man.

Parisian models are to be seen in the shop-windows, with all the latest styles, which come out in January to be tried for the coming summer in the northern world. A story is told in Rio, that these garments were once displayed on wax models, but that the too susceptible men of the south became so enamoured of their waxen charms that they had to be removed from the windows!

III.

In South America there is no 'colour-bar,' in sharp contrast to the United States. In Brazil many of the effete Portuguese nobles took wives from the native Indian tribes when Dom Pedro, Isabella, and Portuguese royalty were sent home again. Some authorities say it is to this new virile blood the modern Brazilians owe their energy.

No negroes have been imported since 1860, but the slave blood has left its mark on the population in a curiously livid blue-black complexion. We saw full-blooded negroes bathing among white women at the bathing beaches in Rio.

Lotteries play an important part in the daily life of the people; tickets for the drawings can be bought in many places in the city. But for some reason the 'Bicho,' in which the betting is on animals, not on colours or numbers, is illegal.

Horses seem obsolete in Rio, but on mountain paths we met mules laden with wicker panniers full of live chickens. The traffic is enormous, and is made up entirely of motor traction. Brand-new American cars can be hired for the modest sum of fifteen milreis per hour (about seven shillings and sixpence) for city or suburbs. For mountain excursions more is demanded.

Up those steep gradients you can soar in a powerful car, through forests where the taller trees are literally choked with lianas and parasitic growth. Orchids with sprays of bloom two feet long hang from the forked branches, and have seeded themselves even on the overhead cable of the electric cars. Scarlet-winged birds and gorgeous blue butterflies fly among the feathery paineiras trees and shadowy palms.

No description of Rio de Janeiro is complete without mention of the Royal Palms. When Portuguese royalty fled from Napoleonic despotism to set up a Court in Brazil, Dom João VI. imported many trees from Portugal's far-flung colonies—among them the Royal Palm. For many years the carefully guarded 'Mother Palm,' 112 feet high, was nursed and tended in the Botanic Gardens. Free seeds were given to the people. Now everywhere in suburbs and city are magnificent avenues of palms.

In the city 'plazas' are many fountains and bronze statues half-smothered in flowers, while, seventy-five feet overhead, the plumed heads of Royal Palms cast quivering shadows on gleaming marble pavement.

Splashing fountains, the heavy scent of tropic flowers, the aroma of roasting coffee, remain haunting memories of this rainbow-tinted city of the South.

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

(2) MARY'S WEDDING-DAY.

By ASHLEY L. BARNES-LAWRENCE, Author of *Jacob Bateman's Ladder*.

PART I.

I.

THE banns had been published three times upon the three previous Sundays, and Wednesday was to be the wedding-day. And the young lady who was to be wed on that day was Mary Massinder.

Just a few words about her before I describe what took place on that particular day.

I had always liked Mary from the time when she came home from domestic service to take charge of her widowed mother, who was in poor health and poor circumstances, and did her best to maintain the home by taking in sewing and doing a bit of dressmaking.

This went on for some two years, and then her mother died; and Mary continued to occupy the cottage and to maintain herself. She was at this time about twenty-six years old. She was always busy with her needle whenever I made time to look in upon her; and no girl in the parish seemed to me to lead a more hum-drum and uneventful life.

It was, therefore, rather a surprise to me when

she appeared at the rectory one evening and asked me to publish her banns of marriage on the following Sunday, and gave me the necessary particulars about herself and her young man. I instructed her that he must have his banns published simultaneously at the parish church in the parish where he lived, and be sure to bring a certificate to that effect when he presented himself on the wedding-day. I also expressed my regret that he had not himself come to see me, and to put in the banns; and, in Mary's own interests, I put to her some leading questions as to his character and position in life.

It appeared that John Williams—for that was his name—lived about forty miles away, in the town of M—, where Mary had been in service and had made his acquaintance. During the past twelve months he had come over to see her some three or four times, and as it was rather a long journey for him to take merely to put in the banns, she, as a matter of economy, had come to see me in his stead.

His business was that of a butcher on his

own account and on a small scale, and he was some five years older than herself. I elicited that he was careless about religious observances, and that although she had never known him to be the worse for drink, he was certainly rather fond of a glass of beer or spirits.

'But I don't fear for that,' said Mary, 'and I'm sure when we're married I shall be able to keep him straight, and he'll settle down all right.'

'Well, Mary, I don't wish to say a word against your friend, for I know nothing about him except what you tell me; but it is so often the case that girls think they can keep a sort of upper hand upon their husbands, that I venture to utter a word of warning. Judging from what I know about the marriage of young men and maidens, let me say that unless the love expressed before marriage is based upon mutual confidence and trust in one another, marriage is too much like a lottery. Husbands either become poor henpecked creatures, or else they ignore the wishes of their wives and go their own selfish way.'

She laughed; and then a tear stole down her cheek. 'I wish very much,' she said, 'that I had my mother to consult with.'

'Let me tell you,' I said presently, 'a curious little story, and a perfectly true one. It was in my first parish in Yorkshire, where we had some large factories. One night a factory girl about twenty years of age—and a very pretty girl she was—came to see me about putting in the banns. I took down the particulars, and she was about to depart, when she turned round and with a great deal of emphasis said: "And I shall be very much obliged to you if, when we comes to stand up afore you in church, you will give my young man a real good dressing down, for he's a ramshackling young man, he is."

"But, my dear girl," I said, "if he is such a ramshackling young man as all that, do you think it wise of you to shackle on to him at all?"

"Well," she said, "I thought perhaps he'd listen to you a bit, for he takes no heed of what I says to him."

"If that is so, don't you really think that you had better postpone this publication of banns for a while," I advised, "until you see whether you can exercise a good influence over him before you get wedded to him for life?"

"No," she said after a little pause; "I think I'll marry him, and it will be queer if I can't manage him when once we get married."

'And so they were wed; and three months afterwards he had left her, and she never heard of him again.'

I glanced at Mary Massinder. It was no part of my duty to set her against her man, but while I knew nothing of him personally, I came to the conclusion that she did not know him so

thoroughly as to be quite sure of his character and habits before uniting herself to him in the bonds of holy matrimony. But I had uttered my caution; and now it only remained to express my great interest in her well-being, and my best wishes for her happiness.

II.

The wedding-day arrived, and the ceremony was to take place at half-past twelve.

Early in the day I sent a note to tell Miss Massinder that, to my great regret, I was ill in bed, and that the doctor would not allow me to come out, but that my assistant curate would take the service.

My curate was a very nice young fellow, but not at that time a man of much experience or perspicuity. However, as with many other things in life, we will let that pass. He was to come up to see me after the service and tell me how all went off.

At half-past twelve I pictured the arrival of the wedding-party, and prayed for a blessing on the happy pair. At one o'clock the curate failed to appear at the rectory. At half-past one, still no curate. A few minutes later he was announced and came up to my bedroom, and I saw at once that he was very perturbed.

What had happened was that the prospective bridegroom had failed to turn up at the appointed time, and they all had waited an hour at the church for him, and still he had not put in an appearance. And at the present moment poor Miss Massinder was sitting in the vestry, in tears, and in a state of nerves approaching collapse. She could not face again the party of friends who had assembled in the church, nor the driving in solitary state back to her own cottage. What was to be done?

'Scuttle down to the church as fast as you can,' I said, 'and bring the poor girl with you to the rectory, and I'll see her. And she must stay and have some luncheon here, and so must you. Perhaps the wretched man may turn up after all; and then we can still proceed with the marriage up to the legal limit of three o'clock. I wonder if he missed his train, or what has happened?'

A quarter of an hour later my curate returned to tell me that Miss Massinder much preferred to be alone and to remain in the vestry, and had asked him to beg those who still remained in church to go home.

Another half-hour was gone when a message was brought to the rectory asking the curate to come at once to the church to proceed with the service. As it was now half-past two, I felt much relieved by the thought that there was still ample time left in which to tie the knot; and that 'all's well that ends well.'

My colleague promised to come back after the wedding and tell me all about it, and to explain the delay.

In due course he came, but obviously he was in a very excited state. 'Yes,' he said; 'the wedding has taken place, but look here!' and he handed to me the marriage register.

And, to my amazement, there, surely enough, were the signatures of the two persons just married, and there was the signature of the old parish clerk as witness, but the name of the bridegroom was not John Williams at all, but quite plainly John Hillyers. 'What on earth is the meaning of this?' I asked. 'And I see that you have not filled in the names of the parties, nor their places of residence, and so forth.'

'No,' he said. 'They were in a great hurry to get away by motor-car, as it was so late in the day; and so I simply got them to sign their own names, and said I would fill in the particulars afterwards. And it was only when they had gone, and I was about to complete the entry, that I found that the name in the register did not tally with the name on the certificate issued by the vicar of the parish where the young man comes from.'

'That certificate,' I interrupted, 'was sent to me by post on Monday by John Williams, and I handed it to you this morning.'

'Yes! here it is,' he said. We both gazed intently at what was written thereon, and indubitably the name written was John Williams. I also recalled the fact that Mary Massinder in speaking of him had called him by that name. To suppose that a woman like Mary had been imposed upon, and didn't know what she was doing, and had married the wrong man, was too preposterous.

I turned rather angrily upon my curate. 'You really must give me some explanation of this. You had the name John Williams on the certificate, and in the course of the marriage service you have to address the man by name. Can't you remember exactly what took place? For instance, you had to tell the man to say these words after you: "I, John, take thee, Mary, to be my wedded wife," and so on.'

'Yes,' my colleague replied; 'but you see this man John Hillyers is also a John, and he repeated the words after me all right.'

'That's true,' I said; 'but what about the sentence which comes afterwards? I suppose you said "forasmuch as John Williams and Mary Massinder have consented together in holy wedlock——"?''

'Well, you see, rector, the man and the woman are not called upon there to say anything, and in any case the name Hillyers has a sound something like Williams. But I'm not certain that I mentioned their surnames at all. It is quite possible I may merely have said "John" and "Mary."'

A thought occurred to me. 'You had the clerk there as witness. Were there any other persons present?'

'No! I had told them previously it was Miss Massinder's wish they should all go away.'

'Well! Who gave the woman away when you asked, "Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?"'?

'Oh, the old clerk stepped forward, and made us a bow.'

'But when you discovered the change of name afterwards, I suppose you said something to the clerk about the matter, didn't you?'

'Of course I did, but I must say he seemed to me to be half-daft, as if he were stupid with drink, and I could get very little out of him. But he did say that he knew this John Hillyers, and knew nothing at all about John Williams.'

'The mystery deepens,' I exclaimed; 'but you must get hold of old Ben at once, and I'll question him. If he knows this John Hillyers, perhaps he will be able to explain how these two Johns can possibly be one and the same person.'

III.

Before another five minutes had elapsed we were to be further enlightened; or, perhaps more accurately I might say, plunged into a deeper mystery than ever. There was a violent ringing at the front-door bell, and we then heard some one speaking in loud tones to the servant who had admitted him.

'Do go down, my dear man,' I said, 'and see who has come, and what it's all about. I feel sure it has to do with this wedding.'

And so it had. In a few moments up rushed the curate again. 'This is truly awful,' he ejaculated. 'It is Mr John Williams himself from M——. He says he missed his train. He says he has been to the church, but there was no one there; and then he rushed off to Miss Massinder's house, but there was no one there either. And now he is here; and as it is barely three o'clock he wants me to hurry up and get through the marriage service as soon as I can. He expected to find his young lady here, or at a neighbour's house.'

'Have you told him the state of the case?'

No, he hadn't. He evidently had funk'd the fearful disclosure.

'Here,' I cried; 'help me into this dressing-gown. I must go down and see this man myself, and you can come with me.'

I did not like the look of Mr John Williams when I set eyes on him; but of course one had to make allowance for the position in which he was placed. He was in an angry and peremptory mood.

I piloted him into my study, and decided as I did so that if I showed too soft a side to him he probably would trample upon me, and more particularly upon my unfortunate curate for any share he had had in depriving him of his bride-elect. I really felt very sorry for him, but was

not altogether sorry that Mary Massinder was not at that very moment Mrs Williams.

'I don't know how it was,' said Mr Williams, 'but I expect I fell asleep in the train, and so got carried on past the station; and I've made tremendous efforts to get here, I can assure you. Now, if you'd be so good, sir, as to turn a blind eye to the clock——'

I pulled out my watch. 'It's quite impossible for your marriage to take place to-day; it's already past the legal time.'

'Surely,' he said, 'you could stretch a point or two in my favour if you wished?'

'Quite impossible,' I replied; 'you must dismiss all idea of it.'

'Then what about to-morrow?' he asked.

'Sit down on that chair, Mr Williams. Now I've got a very painful communication to make to you. Miss Massinder came to the church this morning at the appointed hour, and this gentleman was there to take the service, and there was quite a nice little assembly of Miss Massinder's friends and neighbours; and you may imagine how very much crushed and humiliated she felt before them all when you never appeared, although she waited more than an hour for you.'

'Oh, well, I'll soon put all that right with her,' he cried; 'she's a good sensible girl——'

'Stop!' I said; 'it's my duty to inform you that she then and there made up her mind that she would never have anything more to do with you.'

This was a blow that evidently staggered him. 'If only I could get a word with her,' he stammered. 'May I ask,' he added suspiciously, 'if you happen to have got her stowed away in this house?'

'I think I had better tell you all I know,' was my answer, 'because you are sure to hear of it in the parish; and it is a hard thing for you to bear. Miss Massinder is not only not here in this house, but she has gone right away out of the parish. And, more than that, she has gone away as a bride; my curate here took the service, and she is married to a Mr Hillyers. Our parish clerk will be able to tell you more about it than I can, as I wasn't there. I have been confined to the house by illness.'

Poor Williams glared at each of us in speechless amazement. 'Married!' he exclaimed at last; 'and who was this Hillyers you say who married her? Do you know him?' he asked, turning furiously towards the curate.

'No, I don't,' he faltered; 'I thought all along it was yourself.'

'And where have they gone to?' he shouted. 'By G—— I'll tear the liver out of him—and out of anyone who plays hocus-pocus with my young lady in this kind of way.'

'You had better go and see the clerk,' I repeated.

'Ay! trust me,' he cried. 'I'll go and see

him fast enough. I'll raise hell over this business; and if I catch this Hillyers I'll slit his gizzard for him to a nicety. Here, let me get away.'

He rushed out of the room, and out of the house, and in another minute we heard the sound of a motor-bike being put into action. My curate seemed to have his suspicions as to what was taking place, for he hurried to the front door, where he had left his own motor-bike, and was only just in time to see Mr Williams mounted upon it and careering down the long drive at a terrific pace. 'Oh, my poor bike!' he lamented.

'Yes,' I said; 'but there's worse than that in it; this man is a butcher by trade, and he has rushed off bent on slaughtering somebody. I do earnestly hope he won't catch them.'

IV.

We speedily learned that Williams, without loss of time had questioned two or three of the parishioners, and had ascertained that the motor-car conveying Hillyers and his bride after they had left the church had been seen proceeding at a rapid pace on the great high-road leading to York; and at once he had started in hot pursuit.

'I'm afraid,' I said to my companion, 'you've dragged me as well as other people into a veritable slough of despond by this carelessness. It is evident you did not sufficiently identify the man you married this morning with the man specified in the certificate.'

'Is that quite fair to me, rector, to put it in that way? Was it likely that I should feel the least suspicion, when the young lady herself treated the man Hillyers as her accepted lover?'

'Anyhow,' I replied, 'it looks as if it may become a case of murder, or of law proceedings, and it is bound to create great scandal, and necessitate a report to the bishop. You see, you have been guilty of an illegal act.'

'How is that, rector?'

'Because you are forbidden to marry without due publication of banns.'

'I don't think,' he remarked, 'the married couple are likely to prosecute me for that.'

'Perhaps not; but this other man Williams is not likely to spare you.'

'He can't invalidate the marriage in any case,' he urged, 'so it's not likely he will try to do anything to upset it. There was nothing omitted; a ring was produced, and there was the joining of hands, and I solemnly declared them to be man and wife in the name of God.'

'All of it, my friend, utterly illegal, and therefore invalid.'

'Do you mean to say, then, that these two, who have gone off together in the belief they were married, are not married——?'

'That is so.'

My good curate looked very much scandalised,

as well he might. 'You mean to say,' he urged, 'that all that I said and did was no good?'

'No good at all,' I said, 'except as giving good ground for a prosecution for committing a very serious offence against the laws of this country. But we mustn't stay here talking—we must do what we can. Do you remember the certificated number on your motor-bike?'

'Yes; it is JX 9035.'

'Well, I will write out a telegram to the Chief Inspector of Police at York, and you must get it sent off instantly, and then find old

Ben Toovey, the clerk, and bring him here to me.'

The telegram was as follows: 'Watch all roads approaching York from here, and take in charge and lock up a man named John Williams for stealing motor-bike No. JX 9035 and riding off on it just now from my house. Also intercept Mr and Mrs John Hillyers proceeding now by motor-car from here to York, and warn them that their form of marriage was illegal, and that they are not yet married.'

B——, Rector of A——.'

(Continued on page 643.)

REED-BEDS.

BEDS of reeds fringe the lower reaches of several of our east coast rivers, and occupy large areas in various creeks, inlets, and meres. Not only have they a distinct kind of beauty in themselves, but they are the home of several birds not often seen far from these and similar places. They are also frequented at times by a few interesting mammals; and other more or less special forms of animal life, appealing to entomologists and others, are to be found there.

What goes on in the hidden depths of the big reed-beds is to a great extent shrouded in mystery. The possibilities which present themselves to the imagination of a naturalist invest these forests of reeds and bulrushes¹ with a peculiar charm and attraction. Their various inhabitants are effectually hidden from the sight of most of their enemies, and are not to be approached without some amount of difficulty. It is the concealment they afford more than anything else which makes these places such valuable retreats or asylums for bird and beast. A dog can, indeed, force his way through the close array of stiff stems without much trouble, and to the flexible snake-like body of a stoat they present but a trifling obstacle; but in spite of this liability to occasional perils, the value and importance of these sanctuaries to animal life is unquestionable. With what an air of relief and satisfaction does a frightened coot or waterhen take advantage of the sheltering reed-bed, and promptly disappear into its obscure interior!

These places no doubt had formerly a more abundant and varied population. Otters were more numerous; polecats often paid them a visit; and the solitary bittern sat silently among the reeds awaiting the evening twilight—his 'opening day'—before going out to search for food. Shy retiring birds like the water-rail and the less abundant spotted crane could here dispense with their extreme watchfulness, and search in comparative security the wet mud and

small pools left by the ebbing tide for leeches, water-snails, and other dainties.

Those who spend much time by the river-side fishing, sketching, &c., soon become familiar with the ordinary sounds which come from the thick beds of reeds—from the faint whispering of the feathery tops, as a gentle breeze springs up after a sultry summer's day, to the loud rustling noise caused by countless waving stems and blades swayed by a strong wind. But now and then other mysterious sounds are heard, which are not always easily accounted for, and therefore raise many a conjecture as to their origin. Sometimes there is a loud crashing noise (intensified probably by the prevailing silence) as of some creature of considerable size stirring about; or perhaps the sharp and unfamiliar cry of some bird reaches the ear. Occasionally, too, one is startled by a squeal or a scream, betokening some such tragedy as the capture of a rat or a water-vole by a stoat. The tremulous rumbling voice of this usually silent animal is another noise heard now and then coming from these sequestered, little-frequented places. There is, however, one sound which above all others belongs to the reed-beds, and this is the quaint little song of the sedge-warbler and of its near relative the reed-warbler—both regular summer visitors to these places. These restless nimble little birds seldom show themselves for many seconds together, and have a provoking habit of diving into their sheltering covert just as one is on the point of determining satisfactorily to which species they belong. But, though hidden from sight, their movements can be followed by closely watching the reeds, and noting the slight tremor imparted to those stems on which the birds alight for a moment as they pass from place to place.

Compared with the notes of the blackbird, robin, or linnet, those of the sedge-warbler have a somewhat harsh quality. However, like the loud 'crank' or 'frank' of the heron, the cawing of rooks, and many other natural sounds,

¹ Great Reed-mace, *Typha latifolia*.

they accord well with the character of the scenes among which they are heard. In the present instance, indeed, they seem to have some actual affinity with the grating rustling sound made by the reeds themselves when set in motion by a breeze.

The more uniform colour of the upper parts, and the absence of the light mark above the eye (so conspicuous in the sedge-warbler) make it fairly easy to distinguish the reed-warbler when the bird keeps still long enough to allow of a clear view.

The nest of the reed-warbler is deeper than that of most birds, and is, as a rule, firmly fixed to a few stems of reed or some other tall aquatic plant, its extra depth serving, as Yarrell points out, to prevent the eggs or young birds from falling out when the supporting stems are swayed about by the wind.

In late autumn and winter one sometimes meets with a solitary blue tit or a wren hunting for food among the reeds.

The beautiful reed-tit or bearded tit was formerly, in all probability, a fairly common bird about the reedy margins of many east coast rivers, as well as the larger reed-beds, though now, alas! seldom seen far from its main stronghold—the Norfolk Broads. As recently, however, as the early seventies of last century, this little bird was often to be seen in a large reed-bed covering several acres near the Suffolk coast, and here the writer, in November 1873, had the pleasure of falling in with three separate flocks or families at the same time, each of which consisted of about eight or nine individuals. A bird-lover could hardly imagine a more pleasing sight than a troop of these pretty little creatures, so unlike any other British bird, flying low over the reeds, and alighting from time to time to feed on their seeds or on those semi-aquatic snails (*Succinea*) which often ascend the stems and blades. While thus occupied the tits keep uttering from time to time their musical note, which has been well compared to the sound of a tiny bell.

The bearded tit or 'reed-pheasant' is one of those birds which, like the kite, chough, and some others, have been brought perilously near extermination by the greed and selfishness of certain collectors. Posing as *naturalists*, they are in reality enemies and *destroyers of nature*, setting apparently no value whatever on the *life* of a bird. So far from rejoicing in the knowledge of its being alive and enjoying itself in its natural haunts, or from feeling any anxiety for its safety and protection, they are intent only on compassing its *death*; or (to make use of the orthodox formula), 'on "obtaining," "securing," or "acquiring" the specimen for *preservation*.' To this end tempting bribes are, as is well known, offered in defiance of the Wild Bird Protection Act

to those best able to obtain what is wanted, whether it be the bird itself or its eggs.

The Norfolk Broads are believed to be almost the only remaining breeding-place of the bearded tit in England; yet, up to only a few years ago, the reed-cutters there were receiving a high price for the eggs of these birds, in consequence of which nests were eagerly sought for and robbed; but whether anything of the kind still goes on I am not aware. It must be very difficult to suppress or even to detect this pernicious practice. During the last few years, however, both this little bird and the bittern appear to have been better looked after, and the booming of the latter may now be heard, it is said, almost every spring in some of the Broads.

A familiar bird among the reed-beds is the prettily marked reed-bunting or reed-sparrow, the latter name originating no doubt in a fancied resemblance of the male, as regards the arrangement of its colours, to an ordinary cock sparrow. The plumage of the bunting is, however, much the handsomer of the two. His black, white, and tawny brown colouring has a very pleasing appearance as he flits along just above the reeds. It is impossible not to admire the perfect ease and unconcern with which he keeps his balance as he drops down upon some yielding pliant young stem of reed or tall reed-like grass that bends with his weight (insignificant as it is) almost to the ground. His mate, though without the black head and throat and white neck-patch, is nevertheless a pretty little bird, with plumage showing a pleasing arrangement of warm browns of different degrees of depth. This is the smallest of our resident British buntings, as well as the gayest and most sprightly. Its cheery manner and attractive appearance make it a favourite with most visitors to its haunts. Like the chaffinch this bird sometimes gives chase to insects on the wing.

In October a sudden increase in the number of moorhens is generally observable, and the reed-beds seem suddenly to become full of them; but whether the fresh arrivals have crossed the North Sea, or are British-bred birds journeying southward to escape the rigour of a more northern climate, it is impossible to say. Considering the number of moorhens' eggs taken every year by boys, or devoured by stoats, rats, &c., and the many dangers to which the newly hatched young are exposed, it is difficult to see how, without re-inforcement of some kind, this bird could manage to keep up its numbers. It is interesting to see the mother bird warily leading out her little black chicks from the protecting reeds and bulrushes into open water, but ready at the least suspicion of danger to call them back to cover. Besides her loud sharp alarm note, there is a low clucking sound with which she talks to her young ones.

The reed-beds are made great use of by certain small birds as roosting-places. Immense flocks of starlings pass the night among the large tracts of reeds in some of the creeks, meres, &c., near the coast. The graceful evolutions which these enormous flocks go through before settling down for the night, though often described, cannot fail to excite wonder and admiration when seen for the first time. But it is the precision with which these various movements are performed that strikes one more than anything else. A company of birds numbering perhaps several thousands seems to be controlled and directed by a single dominant will. Every bird appears to know exactly what to do, and there is neither hesitation nor confusion.

Towards nightfall companies of starlings begin to arrive from different directions, till, in a short time, an immense number of birds are gathered together. So dense does the flock become that it almost darkens the sky, and the sound of the myriad wings passing overhead is like the roar of a waterfall.

Suddenly, but in perfect order, and without the slightest hesitation, the flock divides into

two or more detachments, which go off to perform for a while separately, afterwards perhaps reforming into one body. After wheeling about and executing various manoeuvres and changes of form, the vast cloud of starlings sweeps down into the reed-bed; the deafening chatter of their voices gradually dies away, and silence at last reigns.

The smaller patches bordering the rivers are in certain places made use of for the same purpose by large gatherings of swallows, house-martins, and sand-martins; the last-mentioned bird, flying almost incessantly backwards and forwards over the water and the reed-beds in search of insects, occasionally takes a short rest on the broken-down stems during the day.

Flocks of pied wagtails, sometimes joined by a few of the yellow species, *Motacilla ragi*, also sometimes roost in these places. Towards dusk they begin to assemble near their accustomed rendezvous. Before finally settling down, however, they flit restlessly over the reeds from place to place, making many a feint of alighting and again rising into the air—perhaps to make sure that all is safe and no enemy lurking near.

THE AUCTION SALE.

By CATHERINE MACLAURIN.

I.

AT the auctioneer's door the Misses Isabella and Josephine Fanshawe descended shakily from the cab. They were very much bewildered, and would have gone away without paying the driver, only he reminded them—not at all nicely, they thought; but then the lower classes are so bold nowadays! The crowd round the entrance to the auction rooms was not at all nice, either, and they had difficulty in pushing their way through. Were all these people going to the sale of father's furniture? The two old ladies felt flattered, and yet vaguely alarmed. Father was such a gentleman, while these people. . . .

It was dark inside the auction rooms after the glaring August sun outside. One stumbled over chairs and couches, piled in mournful heaps. Marble statues loomed up in corners, marble-topped wash-stands stood neglected by walls. Tables there were, piled with the spoils of many a household; and massive wardrobes, built to conceal a legion of robbers, seemed to overhang and dominate the entire room.

The two sisters gazed round the dusty room for their own furniture, familiar to them since childhood, and now alas! to be sacrificed. The precious things were not even placed together. Far over in one corner was the desk at which mother used to write her prim early Victorian epistles; at the opposite end of the room

Alexander and Bucephalus pranced in bronze as in the days of their youth. Then there was father's old arm-chair, from which he would thunder forth his opinions on Mr Gladstone's disastrous policy. They had all sat in awed silence when father spoke from the depths of that chair, forty years ago—all except William, who, even at the age of fifteen, had had no proper respect for these august pronouncements.

The chair seemed melancholy in that crowded room. It was an ugly thing, with its stiff leather back, all shiny where father's head used to rest on it. The sisters had always thought it a fine piece of furniture, but now it suddenly looked old and shabby. It didn't seem so very long since father had sat in that chair and William had contradicted him; yet father had been dead for thirty-five years, and it was forty years since they had seen their perverse brother.

'I wonder where William is now,' said Miss Isabella suddenly, as they looked at the chair, standing there so deserted.

'I was just thinking the very same thing,' replied Miss Josephine. 'Poor William! If he had not contradicted father so he might have come to something.' Then, as she felt the tears welling up into her eyes, 'I seem to have caught a cold.'

'So have I, Josephine. These cabs are so draughty.'

II.

Prospective buyers strolled around the room, examining the goods with critical eyes. They weighed the silver in their hands, whispering. They stroked the surfaces of the tables, and looked at the bottoms of cups. There was a little Jew among them, who peered with short-sighted eyes, like a scared hen. Beside him a huge creature, with multitudinous chins, padded ponderously from table to table, and after each would snort, 'Early Victorian!' like the refrain of a song. But his keen eyes noted every detail, and his alleged contempt was belied by his careful notes.

Opposite father's chair he paused. His pudgy hand, heavy with cheap rings, wandered over its back, while with little eyes sunk deep in flabby cheeks, he scanned its features.

'Just fancy him buying father's chair,' whispered Miss Isabella. 'Oh Josephine, just think of it!'

'I could bear most things,' said her sister emphatically, 'but *not* a publican. And I'm sure he's one.'

'Early Victorian,' muttered the fat man, as he passed on. The Misses Fanshawe oscillated between anger that father's chair should have been so despised, and relief that the monster had not been tempted.

'Horrid wretch,' said Miss Isabella, glaring at his massive back. It was the strongest expression she knew.

'But I don't think he wants *it*,' Miss Josephine said earnestly. 'Just think, if he were to come in, all beery, and sit in it.'

'Oh, Josephine,' said Isabella, obviously shocked at such coarseness; but her sister said wisely, 'Well, you never know, nowadays.'

The crowd in the room was growing larger, and, to the sisters' critical eyes, more and more hopelessly plebeian and undesirable. 'And not a relation among them,' said Miss Josephine bitterly. 'One would have thought that with all those brothers and sisters, *one* would have come to buy father's things, even if they have got some of their own.'

'If only Henry had lived, he would have come. But that widow of his doesn't care.'

The flight of time had never been wont to distress the sisters, but now they felt on a sudden very old and out of date. No one cared. The children of their brothers and sisters didn't care about a grandfather dead thirty-five years ago, and *their* children hardly knew that such a great-grandfather had ever existed. In vain they scanned the crowd for a familiar face. Nobody they knew was there—not Robert, from London; not nephew Richard, from Manchester ('So like poor father, Josephine'); not Helen, the deceased Henry's daughter; certainly not any of that irresponsible crowd of great-nieces and nephews that had

grown up around them while they believed themselves still young. And yet everybody had been told about the sale. People were so hard and unsentimental nowadays.

III.

Outside in the street it had begun to drizzle, and the patch of sunlight from the solitary high window no longer illumined the dancing clouds of dust in the air. A settled gloom hung over all that abandoned furniture round which the crowd surged, rustled, incessantly moved. One could hardly see into the corners where the massive chiffoniers loomed up. Only a marble Venus stood out, naked, against a gilt-edged mirror.

At the other end of the room the auctioneer was mounting his box, and the two old ladies realised sadly that he was not going to begin with their poor little collection, though it had seemed to them much the most imposing feature of the sale. The crowd swayed towards the place where superannuated alarm-clocks and electroplate butter-dishes were offered to tempt them. But the Misses Fanshawe remained where they were, on a mahogany sofa, upholstered in green velvet, which stood quite close to father's chair. They did not themselves know why that chair seemed to them more important than their other furniture. Was it perhaps because it symbolised for them the dignity, the comfort, of their childhood's home, broken up long since, and never reproduced by another? So they sat beside father's chair, and waited, sniffing. There was no doubt that one caught cold in cabs.

IV.

The auctioneer had just finished his melancholy table of sundries, when some one pushed by the two old ladies on the green velvet sofa. It was one of those modern young women, and she shoved her way to the very front of the crowd, as though used all her life to auction sales. She was a young person of bizarre appearance, heavily rouged; her frizzled hair was pulled over her ears and eyes, a jaunty hat adorned her pert head. From beneath the satin skirt protruded solid calves, encased in thin silk stockings. 'Common little thing!' thought the two sisters simultaneously. How little reserve these modern girls have!

Their attention was diverted from this young person by the movements of the auctioneer, who was walking towards them, with the crowd at his heels. He was really coming to father's chair at last, and in a flutter of excitement the Misses Isabella and Josephine wondered who among that plebeian gathering was destined to be its owner. They felt a sick tremor as they noticed the fat man prominently placed among the buyers. He and his Hebrew friend had affected boredom during the first part of the

sale; not for them such small fry as alarm-clocks. But now they came forward and stood at the auctioneer's right hand, horribly close.

'But it may be another piece of furniture he wants,' whispered Miss Isabella. 'He did say it was Early Victorian, you know.'

'I'm sure he keeps a hotel,' said the other in a trembling voice.

v.

'Lot sixty-one!' shouted the auctioneer, as though they were all on a distant hilltop. 'Fine old mahogany arm-chair, leather seat and back, in an excellent state of preservation.'

'Thirty shillings,' came an oily, muffled voice from the front. The fat man indeed had spoken, and the two sisters exchanged despairing glances. And what an offer! Thirty shillings for father's chair! Fortunately the auctioneer also seemed sensible of the affront.

'Thirty shillings, gentlemen? For a fine old mahogany arm-chair, leather seat and back, in an excellent state of preservation? Not a penny under five pounds, gentlemen. Any advance on five pounds?'

There was a moment's silence; then a shrill cockney voice exclaimed, 'Five guineas!' It was the common girl; and the crowd scuffled and peered at her, standing there so self-assured: The Misses Fanshawe, too, craned their necks as far as was ladylike, to look at the bold young creature.

'But I hope she gets it, and not that odious publican,' murmured Miss Josephine, when their necks were restored to a normal position.

'Publicans are so rich, Josephine,' replied the other in a despondent tone.

'Five pounds ten,' came from the fat man, in an accent even oilier and more muffled than before. In marked contrast was the 'Five pounds fifteen' of the determined young woman in the front row. At the next bid the man did not speak at all, but merely raised his repulsive hand.

'Six pounds offered,' roared the auctioneer, and the two old ladies shivered.

'Oh dear, Isabella, I'm afraid I shall have to go out. I feel certain the monster will win.'

But before her sister could reply, the girl had spoken again. Seven, eight, nine, ten, the pounds mounted up. The Fanshawes clutched one another as the duel went on; she was an ordinary little thing, no doubt, but oh! so much better than that odious man, falling asleep in a drunken slumber after supper—in father's chair, when father never would allow so much as a glass of wine at his table.

The rivals were up to twelve pounds now. The offensive person was merely indicating his bids with a wave of the hand, but the girl's voice seemed to grow shriller as her excitement grew. At last, when she had squeaked 'Fifteen pounds,' there was no reply. A moment's

hesitation, and the fat man, with a little shrug, moved heavily away. Father's chair was saved.

vi.

The sudden relief made even such elderly maidens as the Fanshawes giggle weakly to each other. Isabella grew quite gay.

'Come, Josephine! Let's go and speak to her, and tell her how glad we are she bought it.'

'Yes, and let's make her promise to take care of it properly,' fluttered the other.

Together they marched to the auctioneer's desk, where the girl stood giving her address to the fresh-faced young assistant—and prolonging the transaction as much as possible.

'My dear,' said Miss Isabella gently, 'we feel we must tell you how glad we are that you, and not that man, bought the chair.'

'You see,' went on Josephine, 'it belonged to our father when we were little girls, and it is very precious to us.'

A queer look came over the girl's face as she heard these words; then, to the surprise of the timid old ladies before her, she burst into a flood of eloquence, in her curious, half-Cockney voice.

'So you're the aunts dad told me to look out for! Well I'm blessed. I'd imagined somebody fat, like dad. "Wilhelmina," he says to me this morning, "I can't go to the sale, 'count of business, but just you go and see if you can't buy back your granddad's arm-chair, and don't spare any expense. And if you see your Aunt Isabella or Josephine, tell them that their long-lost brother William from Australia is coming to see them, soon as he's had time to look round." I'm *that* glad to see you!' she continued, seizing Miss Josephine's hand, oblivious of the look of distress and dismay that had come over the good lady's face.

Fully half a minute passed before Miss Isabella found a faint voice.

'You're William Fanshawe's daughter?' she faltered. 'That hat! A niece of theirs! A Fanshawe!'

'You bet I am,' said the young person genially. 'Why, everyone at home says dad and me's as like as two peas. Don't you see the resemblance?' And she turned so that the light fell full on her face, making the rouged cheeks, the carmined lips, more painfully apparent than ever.

It was hard for the Fanshawe pride. 'People are always imagining resemblances,' said Miss Josephine, with a nervous laugh. 'You may really be like your mother, you know.'

But the sting in the tail of this remark passed unheeded.

'Why, ma's just lovely,' said the girl modestly. 'You'll see her some day soon. Dad's just longing to see you after all these years.'

'We were wondering only this morning what had become of our brother William,' said Isabella, trying hard to control the tremor in her voice. 'And so he went to Australia when he ran away from home—and never so much as wrote us a line in forty years?'

'No, not even when father died,' put in Josephine.

For a few moments the girl looked at them with a half-quizzical, half-pitying expression. Then she leaned forward and said confidentially, 'Dad told me not to tell you why he never wrote home. But I believe I just will. It was because he thought you wouldn't like the idea of his keeping a hotel. That's all.'

SOME QUEER MADAGASCAR SPIDERS.

By JAMES SIBREE, D.D., F.R.G.S.

WE don't admire spiders much here in England, at least in our houses, and we usually dispose of them and their webs with a brush or a broom. And yet in our fields and woods there are some pretty little spiders, and they have curious habits and ways. But in tropical countries like Madagascar spiders are much more in evidence. Some of them are beautifully coloured, others are most curiously shaped, and many of their doings are well worthy of study.

Take a walk in a garden, or in a mango-tree orchard in the interior of the great island, and you will immediately see scores of large spiders (*Nephila* sp.) nearly two inches long, and with their legs spreading over six to eight inches. They are very conspicuous in the centre of their great geometric nets, which stretch from tree to tree. Spaces of twenty feet across are often spanned by the main lines or 'guys' of the net, so that the Malagasy call this spider *Mampitahady*, or 'fosse crosser.' The lines are of strong yellow silk, so that it requires quite an effort to break them.

These spiders are beautifully marked with silvery and golden tints, as well as red and black. The male insect is only about a quarter of the size of the female; and, sad to say, unless he is uncommonly active he runs great risk, after mating, of being killed and eaten by his amiable spouse! Mr E. F. Knight, correspondent of the *Times*, in travelling from the south-east coast, wrote that in a Tanosy village, 'the mazes of cobwebs that link house to house, and hang across the paths, were full of large spiders.'

Because of the strength of the lines spun by these spiders the French have made silken fabrics with them, excellent in appearance; but it is not at all probable that such material will become any rival to that made from the produce of the silk-worm moth, since cocoons are much more reliable than living spiders, which are of uncertain temper and difficult to handle.

But other spiders besides this great *Nephila* are also very numerous; and on many bushes we shall notice three or four different kinds. Here is one with a bright green coat spotted with red, probably a case of 'protective resem-

blance,' to resemble the foliage all around. Certainly it is the same with another species, which is pure white, and lives in the corolla of a large white flower. You can hardly detect him or her, unless you look quite closely, or the creature happens to move. Here are some spiders (*Gasteracantha*) which are broader than long, each side being prolonged into a large and sharp spike, which would be a most unpleasant morsel for any bird to swallow. Another allied kind has several small spikes around its body, also a very awkward mouthful for any enemy.

Still another kind of spider (*Thomisus fôka*) is provided with crab-like claws, and this is one of three or four species whose bite is very poisonous, and, unless remedies are quickly applied, is said to be fatal in its effects. This result is also said to be caused by the bite of another spider, which resembles a large shining black marble, with a small red spot on its abdomen. I remember that when one of my bearers brought a specimen for me to examine, he carefully got it on the end of a long stick, and kept as far from it as possible. The bite from the *fôka* spider is followed by swelling, which spreads from the wounded part throughout the whole body.

In our houses in Antananarivo we often see a rather large kind of spider, light brown in colour, but its peculiarity is that it is extremely thin and flat—a case almost of extension without thickness. It is hardly thicker than a piece of stout paper, and so is enabled to wait for its prey hidden in narrow and almost imperceptible cracks. It is a hunting spider, and apparently makes no net or web, and it is amusing to see the adroit way in which it will cautiously approach the edge of a crack in the floor-boarding and sweep off an unwary fly.

There is another curious species, which has a very small body, hardly larger than a big pin's head, but it has extraordinarily long thread-like legs, covering a very wide area when compared with its minute body.

Mason-wasps have been known for a long time past to all naturalists, but it is only of recent years that I have become acquainted with the fact that we have in Madagascar a *Mason-spider*. This spider's nest is very like

in shape to some sea-shells that I have seen many a time on the eastern shores of the island; its builder is a mason, and constructs an elegantly-shaped home for itself in the form of a cornucopia, or 'horn of plenty.' This is made of small fragments of quartz rock, cemented together with clay, all of which material must have been brought by its builder in minute pellets or parcels one by one; and so she gradually builds up her house. But the most curious fact about it is, that this nest is not built on the ground, or in the corner of a wall, or on a tree trunk, but hanging in the air, for it is suspended by a stout and strong cord from the stalks of a rice-plant or a tall grass. It is not easy to imagine how this is accomplished.

The nest, which is about an inch and a half long, is suspended with the open end of the horn downwards; and the place for the little spiders, when hatched, is in the curved upper part, the mother occupying the lower and wider part of the nest; thus she guards her dwelling. The whole interior is lined with silken cloth, so that it is water-tight and safe for the family.

Some species of spider have the habit of drawing in their legs together, and consequently appear more like a little lump of earth in the middle of the net than a living creature. Others, I have observed, often put their net into a violent state of vibration, so that one can hardly see the spider in the centre. Both these habits must certainly be resorted to for protection; for spiders are the frequent victims of the solitary wasps, which dart down upon them and carry them to their nests, where they are stung into insensibility, while an egg is deposited in the captive spider as food for the pupæ of the wasp when the eggs are hatched.

But Madagascar spiders have still other means of protection. I was standing one day examining the curious nest of a species of ant, which lives under the bark of large trees, and happened to take hold of a piece, as I supposed, of the bark. This I let drop to the ground. But I was startled to see that this bit of bark presently developed four pair of legs, and scuttled away as fast as possible to a place of safety!

'Trap-door spiders' have been observed in many tropical countries, and we have one or more kinds of these in Madagascar. These clever little creatures line their burrows with a silky web, and the round door, about as large as a sixpence, has a hinge of silk like a strong spring, so that it shuts of itself when its owner goes in or out. The outside of the door is covered with roughish clay, and it is impossible to see it when closed, so exactly does it resemble the ground around it.

A very peculiar looking spider (*Epeira coque-relli*) consists of three cones impaled one over the other, the largest nearest the thorax, and the three ending below in a sharp point. Its colours

are almost entirely black and white, so that it is very conspicuous.

But the most extraordinary looking of all the Madagascar spiders is one which, at first sight, would be taken for some curious shell, or an equally abnormal and small crustacean, for it is as unlike our ideas of a spider as anything can be. It is difficult to convey any clear idea of its appearance without three or four drawings. As it crouches, fixed to a branch or twig, whether it is viewed from above, or its back, or front, or side is examined, it is equally 'uncanny' in its looks. (It is called *Epeira mitralis*.)

On a cool morning, in the dry season in the interior, one sees thousands of little webs scattered over the bare moory downs. Some of these are beautiful geometric nets, but the larger number are a fine gauzy web, from six inches to a foot in diameter, spread horizontally over the blades of grass. In the centre of each is a funnel-shaped tube, and if you look down this tube you will see a little brown spider waiting for any insect that may come her way. But the curious thing is this, that when you return home in the middle of the day not a net or web is to be seen! They are still all there, for it was only the dew resting on them that made them visible, and as soon as the sun's rays got warmer the dew dried off, and they were perfectly unseen.

In the first paragraph of this paper mention was made of the distances which are passed over by spiders' webs and cords. How are these distances reached? I remember one afternoon seeing a deep valley, about a quarter of a mile broad, in which the air seemed filled with floating spiders' lines or gossamer—only made visible by the sun shining on them at a particular angle. This appeared to give the key to the problem.

I have not said all that might be said about the Arachnidæ of Madagascar. Many other species no doubt will still be discovered by naturalists, either travellers or residents in different provinces. Much has yet to be done before all the wonders of animal life have been described as existing in 'the great African island.'

A MYSTIC REVERIE.

By a lone shore, in mystic reverie,
I soared beyond my reason's finite reach;
Methought, as pools that gather on the beach
Are still a portion of their native sea,
So is my ego, everlastingly,
A part of God; and fain would I beseech
Th' Eternal Wisdom graciously to teach
The nature of my soul's immensity.

And, even as the tides that ebb and flow
Merge, in their motion, every shallow pool
Into the ocean's bosom, so I know
That there are laws, inscrutable, that rule
The Spirit's tides—that one day I shall be
At home in God's illimitable sea.

GEORGE STEPHEN.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

SOME STUART RELICS IN ROME.

I.

EACH nation has its own sights in Rome.

It is the boast of the Roman Church that in Rome there is a church for every nation—St Thomas for the English, St Andrew for the Scots, St Louis for the French, and so on. And as there are sights for every other nation, so there are sights of special interest for Scotsmen. There are—to take a handful—Bramante's house in the Via della Mercede, where Sir Walter Scott stayed in 1831, and where he penned the last entry in his *Journal*; the relics of St Margaret of Scotland, and the tombs of many Jacobites in the church of St Andrew of the Scots; the grave of R. M. Ballantyne, which should not be missed in a visit to the Protestant cemetery; the huge font of Aberdeen granite in the Vatican library; the roof fresco by Gavin Hamilton in the Borghese Galleries; and the statue of St Cecilia by Mr Macbride in the largest catacombs of Rome—the catacombs of St Calixtus.

All these are on the beaten track. But in the by-paths of Rome no Scottish name is so familiar as that of the exiled House of Stuart. The Old Pretender lived for fifty years in Rome as a reigning monarch; Prince Charlie was born and died there; and Henry Benedict was for sixty years a cardinal, and was a Roman all his life. Living with much display, the Stuarts have left many traces; in Frascati alone there are said to be twenty-seven mural tablets in memory of the Cardinal.

II.

The first step in a Stuart pilgrimage should be to visit the Palazzo Savorelli, or Muti, as it is called. It stands in a small oblong square at the foot of the Quirinal hill, and within a stone's throw of the hub of modern Rome—the Corso, Mussolini's headquarters in the Palazzo Chigi, Trajan's Forum, and the grave of the Italian Unknown Warrior. The square is flanked by a palace of the great Roman family—the Colonna—and a church, the Church of the Holy Apostles. But had you visited that square in 1740, your attention would at once have been riveted, not on those buildings, but on a rather shabby entrance alongside them, for through this doorway it was then treason for any Englishman to pass. A royal British coat-of-arms surmounted the doorway, and it led to the

Savorelli Palace, for fifty years the centre of the Stuart Court in Rome. You may still read from an inscription on the wall, that 'this palace was the residence of the Cardinal Duke Henry of York, son of James III. of England. He took the title Henry IX., and with him, in 1807, the line of Stuart ended.' The Romans, in commemorating the Stuarts' residence in the palace, have characteristically made no reference to any other member of the family than the Cardinal, who was their favourite. But for fifty years before it became the Cardinal's, the palace was the residence of the Pretender. Here in 1720, the glad news was proclaimed of the birth of a son to Queen Clementina of England. 'The cannon of St Angelo thundered in his honour. A new star was said to appear in the heavens that night to hail him. The Pope provided the baby-linen to the value of six thousand scudi.'¹ The Hanoverian ministers must have heard with dismay the news that came that day from the Palazzo Savorelli, for the baby was Prince Charlie.

Here Charles and Henry were brought up, and they were a source of much curiosity to Englishmen in Rome. It was treason to be received in audience by the Old Pretender, but travellers were sometimes furtively presented to the young princes. The Pincian hill, the pleasure-ground of modern Rome, was where the princes played as boys. The poet Gray wrote home in 1740 that he had 'seen the two boys in the gardens of the Villa Borghese, where they go a-shooting almost every day.'²

The Palazzo Savorelli, besides being the centre of the Stuart family-life, was, in 1744, the starting-point of a most romantic expedition. On a cold January night of that year you might have seen two horsemen mounting their steeds in the square in front of the palace. An attendant awaits orders. We may imagine the words that passed. 'Tell the Prince Henry when he wakes,' says the one rider, whose face is so muffled up as to be scarcely distinguishable, 'that we have set out early for the boar-hunt at Albano, and that we shall await him there to-morrow.' Then they ride off into the night, and, skirting the Coliseum, emerge from Rome by the Gate of St John Lateran, and make

¹ *Dublin Review*: quoted by Hare, *Walks in Rome*, i. 67.

² *Letters of Thomas Gray*, 2nd April 1740.

southwards for Albano. But once clear of the town, the rider who has spoken, Prince Charlie, leaves his henchman—Lord Dunbar—to go on alone to Albano, and he turns northwards across the Campagna. Next morning Prince Henry rides out to meet his brother at Albano, to be met by Dunbar instead, with the story that Charles has sprained his ankle, and is delayed. The real fact is, Prince Charlie is far on the way to Genoa, to raise the Forty-Five.¹

III.

Charles's secret departure alarmed the Pope, who could not allow his Stuart protégés to incur the opposition of Britain, and tried to make sure that the Old Pretender would remain inactive. In 1747, after his brother's tragic failure, Henry was offered a cardinal's hat. From this time the youthful Cardinal began such an accumulation of papal offices as is almost unrivalled, at least in modern days; the result being that most of the Stuart remains are ecclesiastical in nature. At twenty-two, Henry was Cardinal; at twenty-six, Archpriest or Dean of St Peter's; at thirty-three, Chamberlain; at thirty-six, Cardinal-Bishop of Frascati; at thirty-eight, Vice-Chancellor of the Papal States; finally Bishop of Ostia and Velletri and Dean of the Sacred College. Associations with him cling round many buildings in Rome. Behind St Peter's you may see the house, now occupied by Cardinal Merry del Val, which was Henry's as archpriest. His bust stands in the sacristy of St Peter's, and there you may also see a chalice adorned with his mother's, the Sobieski, jewels. The Stuart arms are also to be seen in the Church of Sta. Maria in Trastevere, perhaps the third most beautiful church in Rome, and built on the site where, according to legend, a fountain of oil sprang up on the night of the Nativity. But most interesting of all is the Church of Sta. Maria in Campitelli, in a squalid corner of the ghetto; this was Henry's titular church, and here he spent his time rehearsing his favourite masses, for he was fond of music. Henry was the patron of Baldassaro Galuppi, whose toccata is the subject of Browning's poem:²

Oh Galuppi, Baldassaro, this is very sad to find.
I can hardly misconceive you: it would prove me
deaf and blind:
And although I take your meaning, 'tis with such a
heavy mind.

In a fit of piety, the Old Pretender founded masses in this church for the conversion of Britain, and to this day, if you enter Sta. Maria at eleven o'clock on any Saturday forenoon, you will hear these masses founded by the Old Pretender. Another building associated with Henry is the Palazzo Cancellaria, the most perfect Renaissance palace in Rome, and now the only piece of papal territory outside the

Vatican precincts. This is the papal chancery, and was the palace of Henry in his capacity as Vice-Chancellor. From here, during a vacancy in the papal chair, Henry issued the papal money stamped with his own head.

IV.

Round the Scots College hang memories of Prince Charlie. For the ten years following the Forty-Five, Charles was in hiding. He never saw his father again during the twenty years that elapsed before James's death. But during that time a figure might have been seen flitting about the shadowy streets of Rome. It was Prince Charlie in disguise, now dressed as a monk, now as a peasant. The British Government set its ambassador at Florence to dog his movements. And at last he gets a clue: 'One of my intelligencers,' writes Sir Horace Mann, 'went so far as to say that he saw him in the streets the 4th instant (January 1753), but so disguised as to make it extremely difficult to know him, having painted his face with red and coloured his eyebrows with the deepest black . . . that he followed him and saw him go into the Scots College.'¹

Charles did not return to Rome till his father's death, and then it was in the vain hope of getting the Pope to recognise him as king; but the Pope refused to Charles the recognition he had given to James. James died in 1766, in the sixty-fifth year of his reign. Had you been in Rome that year you might have seen the unfamiliar sight of a British monarch lying in state for five days in the Church of the Holy Apostles. Then James was buried with royal dignity in St Peter's, and that was the last time the popes conceded to the Stuarts the privileges of royalty. Charles continued to live in the Palazzo Savorelli as Count of Albany; and, when he married Louise of Stolberg, she was given by the Romans the picturesque name of 'Regina Apostolorum' on account of the position of the palace on the Piazza S.S. Apostoli. Part of Charles's time was spent also at Albano, where he fished and hunted, and made fatuous attempts to cure the king's evil.

V.

Henry's last years, on the other hand, were spent at Frascati. Frascati is the loveliest of the Alban towns. It lies on the slopes beneath ancient Tusculum, now a summer resort for Rome, then a mere cluster of villas and a pretentious cathedral. In modern Frascati there are many traces of Henry's work, and, till a generation ago, personal recollections of him lingered. Here he took up the work of a provincial bishop, and threw himself into the life of the place with such a zest that at his death there was universal mourning among the

¹ A. Shield, *Henry Stuart, Cardinal of York*, pp. 57-58.

² R. Browning, 'A Toccata of Galuppi's.'

¹ Roxburghe Club, 1843, *Dispatches Relating to the Last Stuarts*, p. 14.

peasants of the Alban hills. Here Henry gave his brother the royal burial that the Pope denied him in Rome. You may see a tablet placed to Prince Charlie's memory in the cathedral, and the Royal British coat-of-arms at the foot of the bronze candlesticks before the high altar and on the magnificent vestments in the sacristy. You may also see a room in the episcopal palace with a window opening out on a magnificent view of the Eternal City—the room where in 1807 the last of the Stuarts died.

In the Frascati Seminary, which was Henry's chief interest, and from which he produced men like Consalvi, the papal representative at the Congress of Vienna, Henry established a library, into which he put the last books treasured up by the Stuart family. The most valuable of the collection is a Book of Hours of the sixteenth century, written for Catherine of Medici, and given by her to Mary, Queen of Scots. Henry prepared a manuscript catalogue of the library subscribed with his autograph: 'Henricus Cardinalis Episcopus Tusculanensis Dono Dei.' Below this autograph you will now find other signatures: 'George R.I. May 11th 1923' and 'Mary R.' These signatures were placed there

by King George and Queen Mary on their visit to Rome two years ago.

Within a few miles of Frascati is to be found a last trace of the Stuarts and one remarkable for its situation. On the top of Monte Cavo—the Alban Mount—there stood a temple of Jupiter, which Cardinal Henry pulled down, to put a Passionist monastery in its place. It was an act of desecration, but one can understand his desire for the site. The monastery has been superseded by an inn, and the ruins are without interest. But from the site there unfolds a glorious view. Beneath are the Lakes of Albano and Nemi—the very cradle of Rome; beyond is the Campagna, with St Peter's dome rising through the haze, and beyond all the sea at Ostia. The site dominates one of the most historic panoramas in the world.

In St Peter's the bodies of the last Stuarts rest. The monument by Canova is the one vestige of the Stuarts which no one fails to see. But Canova's monument is a cenotaph, and it is in the Crypt, in simple urns bearing the names 'James III.,' 'Charles III.,' and 'Henry IX.,' that the last of the Stuarts are buried.

J. R. P.

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

PART II.

v.

MEANTIME, while waiting for developments, I closely questioned Ben Toovey, and by putting together what I learned from him, with further details which I subsequently elicited from Mary Massinder herself, what really happened at the church may very well be told at this point in the narrative.

It appeared that John Hillyers was an old flame of Mary's before she took up with John Williams, and matters had advanced so far between them that they would have married but for the necessity of maintaining Mary's mother in the old home. Hillyers was a builder's mason, lived in a neighbouring village about three miles away, and was a man of respectable character and a good workman; and when old Mrs Massinder died, he promptly bought a wedding-ring, showed it to Mary, and pressed his suit.

But she by this time had become involved with John Williams, with whom she had walked out a good deal when she was in service at M—— where he lived. Williams, as I have stated previously, was a butcher and small shopkeeper on his own account, and probably appeared to Mary to offer better prospects in life than her more humble admirer.

Be that as it may, the faithful Hillyers pocketed the gold wedding-ring which he had

designed should embrace Mary's finger, and told her he would keep it always in the pocket of his best coat against the day that she might change her mind. 'For I sha'n't change,' he said to her. 'You be the young lady, and the only one I shall ever want to be my wife, and I sha'n't believe my chance is gone till with my own eyes I see you wed in church to another man.'

And so that was how it came to pass that on the day appointed John Hillyers, dressed in his Sunday best, came and sat down in a far corner of the church to hug his misery, and to see the last that he ever expected to see of the girl whom he had loved for the past five years or more.

And now ensued all that dreary waiting for the bridegroom who never came; and then Mary's retreat to the vestry; and finally the dispersal of the congregation when Mary had commissioned the officiating clergyman to tell them there would be no wedding that day.

The clergyman proceeded, as we know, to the rectory, and the clerk went outside, still dimly expecting the arrival of Mr John Williams; and then—I will let Mary tell her own tale.

'I was waiting in the vestry,' she said, 'and felt too weak and low to go home, with all the neighbours to watch me go by along the street. I thought I would wait till dark, and wished I were dead. I determined that nothing John

Williams might say now would ever make me like him again. And then I thought of John Hillyers, and how he would never have treated me in that way. And I wondered what he would think about it all. Perhaps he would say, "Serve her right." But I didn't think he would, for he was always the same to me—so kind and forbearing. I was a fool to say "No" to him.

'And just then the vestry door creaked a bit, and who should I see peeping in but just him I was thinking of! I cried out, "Oh, John!" and then started crying. And he said, "Oh, Mary, my poor love!" and in another moment there he was kneeling at my side, and holding my hands in his; and the tears were running down his cheeks, and we both cried together.

"I be still true to thee, Mary," he kept on saying; "only say the word, and we'll be wed. I won't desert thee like this other chap have done. This was bound to be, else it would never have happened so. Now do 'ee say yes?"

'And then we kissed each other. And so then he pulls the gold wedding-ring out of his pocket, he did indeed; and he tried it on my finger. And then, all of a sudden, he starts up and he says, "This is your wedding-day, Mary, and wed you shall be. Here be you and here be I; and here's the ring, and all we now want is the parson. He must be got back again, and there'll be no one in the church but the old clerk."

"Oh! but," I said, "he knows you, John."

"Ay," he said; "but I'll show him this golden sovereign, and tell him all he's got to do is to keep his mouth shut, except to say 'Amen' at the right times in the service."

"But what will the clergyman think?"

"Why!" said John, "he'll think nothing at all about it. He's the new curate and don't know me, and the rector be ill in bed; and one John I reckon be as good as another."

"Yes," I said to him, "and some Johns be a deal better than other Johns to my way of thinking."

'And I had no sooner said so than he rushes out of church like I don't know what; and when he comes back he could hardly get his breath for speaking. But he told me he had squared the clerk, who had gone back to fetch the parson. And he had been to the "Red Lion" nigh the church and ordered a motor-car to be got ready at once, and we were to pick up my box at the cottage and to go straight away to York, and next day to Scarborough. And he had bare time to tell me this, when the clerk and the curate came in, very hurried like, and the service began at once. I was real glad to have a veil over my face.'

Such was Mary's simple recital; and readers of this story already know how in the hurry of the proceedings and to enable the happy pair to get away quickly, the register, at the clerk's

instigation, was signed by the bridegroom and bride, and himself as witness, leaving the curate to enter further particulars at his leisure.

VI.

It only remains to tell what became of the pursued and their pursuer, as the result of my telegram to the Chief Superintendent of Police at York. As a matter of fact the sending of this telegram was precautionary, and in my opinion justified by the circumstances, but it did not effect all that I intended.

Mr Williams, as I learned by a communication from the police next day, never arrived at York, but they had taken prompt steps to find him.

The motor-bicycle was discovered at a wayside inn some miles from York, and was uninjured. And the innkeeper's statement was to the effect that the gentleman, Mr Williams, had dismounted there, because his petrol had run short, and he was in a somewhat exhausted condition himself. He had refreshed himself, however, by copious libations of whisky, and had talked very volubly about his grievances and about what he was going to do with the runaways.

In these circumstances the landlord of the 'Cat and Fiddle' Inn took great credit to himself that he had failed to find any more petrol for JX 9035, and had allowed his guest to slumber peacefully in his private parlour, and two hours later had persuaded him to return to his native town at M——, and forget all about a young lady who seemed to be not worth thinking about, still less pursuing.

I need hardly add that the charge of stealing was withdrawn.

As for John Hillyers and Mary Massinder, the York police could only report that they had neither seen nor heard anything of them.

As a matter of fact they were very happy together at Scarborough for one whole week, but the following week they were very unhappy when I got into communication with them, and wrote and told them what their position was.

They took immediate steps to set themselves right in the eye of the law, and were married as soon as they could be at a registry office. I suggested another service in church, but they said they were quite satisfied with what had already been said and done in my church. And they hoped my curate's earnest prayers at that time for their happiness and welfare would be heard, and that anything wrong might be forgiven. And for everybody's sake I hope so too.

I dealt faithfully, or at any rate tried to, with my old friend, Ben Toovey. But he was prompt to carry the war into my camp and to turn the tables on me.

'It warn't me as married 'em,' he said, with some show of indignation in voice and attitude; 'it were the curate. And it warn't for me to

be telling other folks their business; I had my own duties to attend to. And as for that other chap as what calls hisself Williams, I never sot eyes on him till he comes to me and says, "Be you the Parish clerk?"

'And I says, "Yes, I is."

'And he comes at me very fierce like and he says, "If I be not to do you a injury, just tell me what you've done with my young lady, Miss Mary Massinder."

'And I sticks up to 'im, and I says, "You 'm better keep a civil tongue, young man. I'se never sot eyes on you, so far as I know, all my born days, and I doant want to do so now. And I doant know nothing about no young lady as belongs to you, and if I does I pities 'er."

Old Ben must have seen a twinkle in my eye, for his old eyes sparkled as he said, "I'll tell you what it is, rector—you ought to have been in the church, instead of in bed, and then nought of all this would have happened."

'You never said a truer word, Ben. But let

me say to you in all seriousness that you are too much given to saying "Amen" to anything, whether it be good or bad.'

'Well, sir,' said the old man, 'they say in the parish as I earns my living by saying "Amen," so there's some good seemingly in it anyway.'

We looked at each other.

'Ben, do you know the meaning of "Amen"?'

'Sir,' he replied, 'I'se over seventy year of age this very month two year ago, and I'se been clerk of this parish for nigh forty year, and I learned the meaning of "Amen" out of church catechism in the church school when I were but seven year old. And it tells us that "Amen" means "So be it."'

'My good friend,' I said, 'you are perfectly right.'

'So you see, rector,' he concluded, 'there be worse words very often spoke than "Amen." And if this be my last word, I says "Amen, so be it." Let the matter bide as it be.'

THE END.

LEAVES FROM A CENTRAL ASIAN NOTEBOOK.

By Lieut.-Colonel P. T. ETHERTON, late H.M. Consul-General and Political Resident in Turkestan.

I.

TO most people the interior of Asia is a sealed book. To a certain extent the Far East and Siberia, Afghanistan, Persia, and Trans-Caucasia are known to the world at large, and now Tibet has grown somewhat more familiar in recent years since the British expedition to Lhasa revealed a few of the secrets of that country, which for so long baffled many intrepid explorers. But Chinese Turkestan, the land of ancient Tartary, and the Roof of the World, to the north of the Himalayas, wedged in between the frontiers of Russian Central Asia and our Indian empire, are a shadowy sort of territory of vast extent, into which but few men have penetrated.

The Roof of the World comprises the Pamir steppes, a lofty plateau region with an average elevation of 13,000 feet, forming the nucleus of the Central Asian highland system, uniting the Himalayas and the Thian Shan mountains with the Hindu Kush and the Karakoram ranges. This region has been fitly termed the Roof of the World, and from a political and sporting standpoint has attracted considerable attention, more especially some years ago when Russian movements in the direction of India gave rise to anxiety there. The Taghdumbash Pamir lying within the boundaries of the Chinese republic is the only one now open to travellers and sportsmen, since the Russian Pamirs were closed some years ago, a rule that has been rigorously enforced. Moreover, with the rise of Bolshevism, and the spread of

anarchy and disaffection throughout Russian Central Asia, the areas there have since become still more of a *terra incognita*.

The people inhabiting this desolate region are the nomad Kirghiz, a tribe distributed over Central Asia, whose origin rests somewhat in obscurity. These hardy nomads gain a scanty subsistence by herding their flocks on the bleak uplands, and during the winter, when the snow and intense cold render life on the higher ground of the Pamirs impossible, they retire to the valleys, though some of them migrate to the Afghan Pamirs, where the high wind sweeps the pasturages bare of snow, affording a meagre grazing. Their habitations are called *khirga*, constructed of felt on a wooden framework, with an opening at the top to let out the smoke from the fire lighted in the centre of the *khirga*.

The people live mostly on milk and mutton, and their chief beast of burden is the yak, that denizen of high Asia which can live only at great altitudes and endure intense cold, but dies in the heat.

In so far as the sportsman is concerned the chief object attaching to the Pamirs is the *Ovis Poli*, the largest of the wild sheep, named after the celebrated traveller Marco Polo, who traversed the Pamirs more than six hundred years ago on his journey to the court of Kublai Khan at Peking, then the most luxurious and famous of the Mongol kings, whose conquests in Asia have filled so many pages of history.

II.

It will be asked how one reaches the Roof of the World, since, as the name implies, it is

not easy of access. The route most generally followed is that from Kashmir through Gilgit and Hunza, northwards from the Himalayas. Hunza is a mountain state which was added to the British Empire in 1892, and we must traverse it to reach the Pamirs, a by no means easy task when one considers the precipices, the ravines, and the many rushing torrents to be negotiated. From Hunza we pass on to the Pamirs by the Mintaka, or 'Pass of a Thousand Ibex,' an appropriate name, but perhaps not so well deserved as formerly, since the Kirghiz have caused havoc amongst the poli and the ibex from their hunting expeditions, which are carried out with the help of dogs that round up the quarry and endeavour to force them into deep snow drifts, where they fall an easy prey to the guns.

Wolves are the chief enemy of the wild sheep, and in their hunting tactics they display remarkable cunning, working on a plan of campaign which is almost human in its detail and the craft and circumspection with which it is carried out. A herd of wild sheep is marked down by the wolves, which then proceed to encircle it. When a cordon is drawn round the sheep the wolves set up a prolonged howling, with the object of getting the herd to bunch together and so force it more or less to concentrate. The ring is gradually tightened, and all possible avenues of escape are closed, the herd being then shouldered off to where the snow lies in drifts. It is difficult for the poli to get through these drifts, and they are easily pulled down.

Amongst these jovial nomads one meets with many forms of sport, but none is more popular than hawking and the game of 'baiga,' in which the carcass of a sheep or a goat is the object of contention, the players being mounted on strong and agile ponies, and striving for possession of the carcass in what is nothing less than a whirlwind mêlée. It is a great game, and frequently as many as fifty players will take part. They form up into line, and one of their number, taking the carcass, dashes out into the open with a yell that sounds like the crack of doom, careers madly along, and when he hurls the sheep to the ground all the other players move off at a mad gallop, and then the fun begins. It is a scene of the wildest confusion; a player will gain possession of the sheep, but it is only a temporary ownership, for others are after him, and he may have a dozen men hanging on to his coat, his saddle, the trappings of his horse, even the mane and tail of his mount. All is fair in the game of 'baiga'; there is no such thing as off-side, or fouls; and by fair means or otherwise any player may unhorse another. Yet, despite the dangers of this fast and furious game, the writer, although he has seen many of them, has never known an accident, nor seen any of the players thrown, which speaks well for the Kirghiz powers of horsemanship.

III.

Let us now leave the Pamirs and pass on to the plains of Chinese Turkestan, calling on the way at Tashkurgan, where in pre-war days the Russians had an outpost of Cossacks as the outward and visible sign of the might of the Great White Czar, albeit Tashkurgan is in Chinese territory. Well does the writer remember calling on the captain commanding the Cossack detachment, and how that officer courteously returned the civility, attired for the purpose in his best uniform. At the time the circumstance impressed the writer, but it may perhaps have been due to the fact that his visitor's sartorial stock was limited. When some years ago the members of a British boundary commission met the Czar's representatives, they were informed that a Russian officer's outfit usually embraced one presentable tunic at a time. With epaulettes attached it signified full dress; with those embellishments removed it served for undress; and when it had attained the shabby stage it came in useful as a night-dress.

In traversing Chinese Central Asia for the first time the writer went *via* Yarkand, a city full of ancient associations and once the capital of old Tartary. There the Chinese governor gave a banquet in his honour of a quality and quantity proportionate to the great man's dignity. The menu of that dinner was varied and extensive, including sharks' fins, bamboo shoots, pigeons' eggs preserved in chalk, stags' tendons, lotus seeds, sea slugs with as many legs as a centipede, and a host of other weird comestibles. Some strange tricks were played at this repast, one of them being to hand round a lighted match stuck in a match-box, and the unfortunate guest in whose hand the match went out had to quaff more brandy, the result in some cases being highly exciting.

Discriminating and jocund souls are not lacking in Turkestan amongst those celestial functionaries who regard service on the western confines of the republic as a form of exile, and a place where money should be made as rapidly as possible to enable them to get out and regain the fleshpots of China proper. Withal the officials are wide-awake to business, as is the manner of their gifted nation, and though the troops at their disposal are none too efficiently armed or organised, they keep a keen eye on expanding commercial and political opportunities. One trait they share in common with most alien commentators on British enterprise. They cannot for the life or them understand how anyone can travel and brave many dangers and many egregious discomforts merely for the sake of sport. That is a conundrum baffling many students of complex human nature, and it is refreshing to reflect that even a Chinaman cannot solve it.

The writer recalls a Chinese military officer

of high rank who once inspected his sporting guns, and held much diverting converse thereon. He had been in Peking during the Boxer troubles, and though officially deprecating indulgence in looting, so far convivially unbent as to show how it was done by rushing round the room and stuffing his pockets with everything portable he could lay hands on. It was an exciting reminiscence, and as he considerably restored the impounded articles, he explained that in his opinion the British, American, and Japanese were the best behaved contingents he had seen.

IV.

They are quaint people, the courtly but credulous officials in these primitive celestial parts, and they indulge in a good deal of extravagant language. Withal, Chinese rule is acceptable to the people since they are allowed to go very much their own way, and the Chinese do not interfere with them so long as they abstain from anything in the nature of a political move, or what might be construed into an attempt on the sovereign rights of China.

Most of the native inhabitants retain customs whose origin may be sought away back in the mists of antiquity. For instance, the Kalmuks, another of the nomad tribes of Chinese Turkestan, do not bury their dead in the orthodox fashion. On the contrary, the body is put out on a knoll or low hill in the vicinity of the camp, and there left to the tender mercies of dogs and birds of prey. A Kalmuk hunter with the writer told him that should the corpse not be disposed of within the course of a few days the departed is deemed to have led a wicked and wayward life, since even the dogs are shocked and refuse to taste him. The sequel to the discovery is the chastisement of the members of the deceased's family with the object of saving them from a similar fate; the sins of the father visited upon the children indeed! Thus do the Kalmuks expose their dead, as Parsees still do with more attention to refinement, and as their rough prehistoric ancestors did without any at all.

Weddings, all the world over, are occasions for hilarity and expense. But the Kalmuks treasure the romantic theory of the bride being forcibly abducted from her father's tent, and they cling to tradition in the unwritten code which permits of the young lady in question, when pressed by a superfluity of admirers, adroitly confiding herself to the care of the one she favours best.

The Kalmuks drink copiously and often of kumiss—fermented mare's milk—from leathern bottles, in exactly the same way as did the Jewish patriarchs or their nomadic forebears a thousand years before them. The Kalmuks never wash unless under the sternest compul-

sion of necessity, and their general demeanour, if mild, hardly compensates for more prevailing traits which render them at times interesting objects to avoid. The Kalmuks are great hunters, and poachers too, yet with all their faults they are a gallant race, and the writer always feels that it is something to have made and preserved their friendship.

V.

The Kazaks are another race of nomadic origin, and the writer remembers how a Kazak once rode up to him, when on tour, saluted by taking off his cap, and inquired if it was a Russian he was addressing. On being answered in the negative he pressed the question, apparently to make sure that it was really an Englishman he was talking to, and then manifested his unfeigned delight by shaking hands vigorously, saying that he had in wanderings through Central Asia heard of the might and power of the British, and had always felt a desire to meet one of them.

In much the same way a Mongol chief was divided between ignorance and admiration of our mighty empire and its island centre. He inquired as to how many days' journey it would be to England, if one went on horseback, a question which was somewhat of a poser, but which was answered by the reply that it would take at least one hundred, which astonished the chief considerably. The Chief put further questions as to the wealth and worldly position of his guest, and expressed great surprise on hearing that the visitor possessed no sheep or cattle, and failed to comprehend how one could possibly exist in this universe without a strong contingent of lambs and kine.

Life in Central Asia is full of incident and excitement, as it might well be in lands but little known, lands which are likely in the future to loom large when the awakening of China shall have become an accomplished fact. At the various trading outposts in Turkestan one comes in touch with a semblance of civilisation. Here and there are signs of the awakening that has commenced since certain great events in the Far East. But they are not general, and one sees much corruption—of troops armed with dusty, dirt-begrimed weapons which it would be dangerous to fire; of police who spend their time in gambling, or who try to frighten away criminals by sounding watchmen's rattles, rather than attempt to catch them.

Central Asia is a storehouse of strange experiences, and the life of the official beyond the frontier affords opportunities for the study of strange and fascinating tribes of nomads, and brings him into contact with countries which through ancient associations have been invested with a halo of romance, and have, more particularly in recent years, given rise to questions of deep political import.

THE RED HUNTER.

By W. GILHESPY.

I.

THE weasel came to the door of his lair and looked forth on a hard and bitter world—hard and cold and bitter in every sense. A profound silence hovered over the land, such a silence as comes at the close of a short day in mid-winter when the cold is intense—a brooding, despairing silence. Even the gentle whisper of the woods, which seldom ceases, was no longer heard; not a leaf stirred, not a living thing moved.

The little hunter turned his head slowly from side to side, while his sensitive nostrils winnowed the air for any message it might bring. The movement exposed his white throat and chest, which contrasted well with the rich deep chestnut of back and flanks. His low, lithe body gave little indication of the restless energy, the enormous reserve of power and endurance, that lay in that small frame, nor would the alert-looking triangular head have told the casual observer of the innate savagery, the cruel, crafty, indomitable tenacity of purpose that characterises the tribe.

A robin alighted on a branch near him, caught the gleam of the baleful red eyes, and, with a jerk of his tail, flew away. The weasel followed along the hedge—not with the slightest hope of making a capture, but because his bitter hunger spurred him to action. For three nights he had hunted fields and woods and hedgerows without finding a morsel to satisfy his savage craving for food—a craving that grew more intense as each hour passed, a craving that was agonising in its gripping intensity. He hunted along the hedgerow, crossed a footpath, and stopped. Sound travels far in the deep stillness of severe frost, and from a great distance he heard the patter of childish feet. Motionless behind a boulder he waited till a little maiden, carrying a can of milk, passed on her way to her cottage home. Swiftly, silently, he returned to the path, and, ravenous hunger urging him to attack, ran parallel with the child, only the bare leafless hedge between him and the tender limbs, the soft, plump, round, young throat. But, though he had never known fear in his wicked little life, fear held him back now—a new, instinctive fear that seemed to paralyse his will and fill him with insensate fury, just because it was new and strange.

Once, at a bend in the path, only a tuft of withered grass was between him and the dimpled bare knees, rosy with the flush of exercise. Mingled with the scent of warm living flesh was that of the new-drawn milk

she was carrying, and the hunger fire burned bright in the cruel little eyes. Then, as the little one turned a corner, a woman came to meet her and a big rollicking puppy greeted her with joyous bark. The weasel stopped, and suddenly it seemed to him that the cruel cold became even more intense.

II.

Dusk fell, deepened, and still he hunted. A rim of silver showed above the horizon, and the rising moon looked down on his vain search for food—for something—anything—that might satisfy his mad craving.

That bitter winter is still spoken of by a few very old men as 'The Year of the Great Frost.' Brilliant sunshine in summer and a genial autumn had allowed an early harvest, followed by early ploughing. The scattered grain, that helps to feed wild bird and beast, had been covered in. Then November was ushered in by storms, followed by such severe and long-continued frosts as few men could remember. The ponds, lakes, and marshes, with their insect life, had been held in an icy grip for nearly three months, so the birds had migrated—or perished. The short grass was as cold and tasteless as icicles, and when the rabbits began to bark trees and hedges they were ruthlessly destroyed. With their natural prey no longer available, the stoats, weasels, and foxes were unable to find food, and few survived that bitter time.

Hour after hour the red hunter searched the ditches and hedgerows. He found the discarded wing-case of a beetle. It was as dry and hard as a twig and about as nutritious, but he ate it greedily and looked for more. In a dry ditch he picked up the fresh trail of a field-mouse, and bounded along on the warm scent till he came to the burrow. There he scratched with savage energy, but the frost-bound earth was hard as iron, and he laboured in vain. He hunted through a huge rabbit-warren, one which he explored regularly every night, though he knew it had been tenantless for weeks. With hunger driving him to ceaseless endeavour he could not afford to let a single chance of finding food escape, and it was always possible that some wounded or starving creature had crawled in there to die.

A few nights previously he had fought a victorious fight with a strange weasel that had hunted over his territory—an unpardonable sin among the kindred of the wild, especially the carnivora. The red hunter had killed and eaten the intruder, but he carried the scars of the conflict still.

The intense cold bit into his raw wounds as acid eats into metal, but still he hunted. The full moon, riding high in a cloudless, star-studded sky, saw him questing the hedgerows with energy unabated—and unrewarded. As he hunted through some tall withered rushes a shadow flitted over him, and he glanced up as a small owl, that had also been vainly hunting, hovered above him. She saw her error just in time, and her broad, soft, but powerful pinions lifted her clear of the flashing death below as the weasel, with muscles like steel springs suddenly released, shot upwards. He was the merest fraction of a second too late, but he plucked a couple of tail feathers, and, furious with hunger and thwarted desire, he tore and chewed them into a pulp.

III.

The church clock chimed the midnight hour. It was far away, but on the still, frosty air the sound floated sweetly and clearly over hill and dale, and he glanced up with a soundless snarl. Then he sped forward on his ceaseless search, keen nose questing the calm air, bold little head held high. Suddenly he stopped and turned back, sniffed the ground once, then bounded eagerly forward, the blood coursing madly through his veins, for he had struck the warm, fresh trail of a hare.

With renewed vigour he sped forward. When a weasel strikes that track, death for the quarry is certain. He followed her apparently aimless wanderings across the field, from one clump of withered grass to another, where she had searched for a tender blade. Through the hedge and across the next field he trailed her with steady bounds, turning where she had turned, never halting for a second. Then his lips upcurled in a snarl as he learned that her stride had lengthened. She had sought fresh feeding-grounds, and the chase would be a long one.

Along the headlands, over frozen stubble, up a hard sheep track and across the barren uplands, with scarcely a turn, she had made her way, and the grim hunter followed. His long, lithe, little body, with its short slim legs, travelled at a speed which seemed marvellous for such a tiny creature. Over the rocky heights, down the shingly slope, he sped with grim, relentless patience. Then once more his fangs were bared in eager anticipation as he came to a sheltered hollow and the scent told him that the hare had stopped to feed. She had tarried there but a short while and gone further afield, and still he followed, steadily—implacable as death itself.

She was nibbling at the frozen herbage near the gate of a pasture when he saw her. With a startled bound she fled down the field and was soon out of sight. The red hunter neither paused nor quickened his pace. Steadily, ruthlessly, untiringly, he bounded along on the warm trail, as confidently as though his quarry's

speed was not many times greater than his own. At the end of a ploughed field he saw her again. She had paused to watch and listen till the pursuer came in sight again; then, across the headland, through the hedge, and across the frozen lea she went with long easy stride. Still the steady inexorable chase continued, slow, but fatally sure.

As she bounded out of one of her 'forms' he was within twenty yards of her. When he sighted her twice within the next ten minutes he ceased to follow the scent—the need for that had passed. He knew that the foolish quarry, her scanty wits paralysed by fear—the fear his fiendish tenacity of purpose had aroused—would run in erratic circles until her nerveless limbs would refuse to carry her further.

He saw her close to the hedge, and as he drew near she ran to and fro in aimless fashion. A few more foolish bounds, a few more frantic rushes, then, with a despairing cry that told of her agony of terror, she squatted motionless, helplessly waiting for the oncoming doom.

Swiftly it came. With eager bounds, his wicked little eyes glowing red with the blood lust, the hunter covered the remaining distance—just as the prize was snatched away. For other ears had heard the doomed hare voice her terror and despair. A poacher, stealing along beyond the hedge, had scarcely time to whisper a command ere his lurcher had jumped the low stone wall and seized the hapless victim. A moment later his master stuffed her into his capacious pocket as the red hunter, his wicked little eyes gleaming with rage, torturing hunger driving the last vestige of caution from his fiery little brain, scrambled in and out of the dry ditch and over the wall. Well it was for him that his climbing had given the despoilers time to get well on their way home.

IV.

Once more he settled down to his quest. Vain, incessant hunting had not improved his temper, but his tenacity and courage were unshaken. Weak with hunger, the merciless cold stabbing the raw wounds on neck and flank, he held to his purpose with grim, unfaltering resolution. Thousands of the wild kindred had crawled into their lairs to die during that awful winter. Death, if it came to him, should find him still hunting.

Dawn was not very far away when he struck a trail that promised a warm, satisfying meal. A wounded partridge had crossed a field to find a few seeds or grains the day before, and something in her erratic wanderings had raised the hunter's hopes. A bird that trails a broken wing is always worth following.

The scent was cold, but his bitter need sharpened the weasel's senses, and he followed fast. The partridge had returned to the headland, followed the hedge for a few yards, and

taken refuge in a hollow under the bank, as the wild folk will when wounded. His pace increased; he could smell the quarry now, and the scent roused him to a fury of anticipation. He plunged into the hollow and saw scattered feathers lying around, and a stoat nosing among them to see if there was a morsel he had overlooked.

Stoats and weasels seldom fight each other or among themselves—the issues are too grave. Each knows the grim battle power, the implacable spirit, and the deathless courage of the other too well to court combat. But, though the

stoat is twice the size of the weasel, the red hunter's temper was too high, his need too great, and his disappointment too keen to give him time to think of consequences. The stoat's head was turned away from the entrance and slightly to the right, giving the weasel the chance to dart in and get the grip he always sought when about to glut his thirst for blood—just where his sharp fangs would meet in the jugular vein. Even as he delivered the death-stroke the other turned, and his fangs gripped his assailant's flank. A lightning shift, and they had pierced the dauntless little heart.

THE FIRST SCOT.

PART II.

VI.

PARALYSED with terror and dismay, the woman in the tree-tops stared at the monsters. In her native land she had seen most of the terrible mammals that waged war on man—cave-lions and giant bears, rhinoceroses and straight-tusked elephants sixteen feet at the shoulder, sabre-toothed tigers and cowardly hyenas. But never, even in the delirium of the fever that sometimes attacked her, had she imagined such awful horrors. What could they be? What was this strange land which harboured them?

She did not know that the storm had blown her, not merely over a few hundred miles of ocean, but back into a past age of the universe. For Scotland, isolated from neighbouring Europe, had not shared in the progress that the world had made elsewhere. The Mesozoic period of creation, the cycle in which giant reptiles held the earth before humanity began, still flourished in these scattered islands lost in the Atlantic when it had passed away hundreds of thousands of years before in the great continents where primitive man and the mammals had taken the place of the reptiles. But this poor stray from Europe had been flung back into an age—a universe—of which she had no conception.

She clung mechanically to the swaying branches and stared stupidly at the monstrous forms on the ground below. Gradually her senses returned. She looked around her. Nothing was familiar but the sea. Even the plants, the trees, were strange. On a beetling cliff across a little bay she saw the hideous shapes of great bat-lizards like the one that had assailed her and killed the crocodile.

But suddenly her heart leaped; for through the heated air a flock of sea-fowl of a kind well-known to her flew over the water, and two flamingoes alighted on the banks of the stream. These birds at least were of her epoch; for Scotland was not inaccessible from Europe to the creatures that had wings.

The sight of them cheered her; they showed her that she had not been transported to another world. Again, forgotten for the moment, her thirst returned, more tormenting than ever; and, mocked by the tantalising vision of the water so near, yet so impossible to reach, she gazed helplessly at the dinosaurs, a dull anger burning in her against them as they showed no signs of moving away.

But all at once there was a commotion among them. Several of the iguanodons stood up on their hind legs and looked anxiously in every direction. The Plated Lizards nearest the forest threw back their ugly heads and sniffed the air; while the gigantic amphibian in the marsh reared up like a kangaroo. From its superior height it was apparently the first to see some danger approaching; and, lowering itself on all fours again, it waddled swiftly into the sea and disappeared under water.

As, alarmed by its departure, the land dinosaurs began to flee, some in terrified leaps, the others lumbering heavily but speedily across the open, there burst out of the forest a monster more horrible than all the rest. Bounding on its hind-legs, it sprang on an unwary young iguanodon which had unwisely lingered for one last mouthful, and, gripping the body with the sharp claws of its short fore limbs, it sank its fangs deep into the back of the neck, biting clean through the spine and bringing its prey with a crash lifeless to the ground. Then, standing over its victim with the blood dripping from its jaws, it looked after the others as if debating whether to pursue them or not.

The woman saw that it was in shape not unlike the dead iguanodon, but far bigger and more powerfully built, having a head four feet long armed with a pointed horn on the nose like a rhinoceros, but possessing more formidable weapons in the curved, knife-like teeth that studded its immense jaws. It measured forty-five feet from nose to the tip of the thick tail, which helped to prop the brute up when

it rose on its hind legs. Their great size, strength, powers of offence and fierceness made this reptile and its kind the most terrible beings in the age of horrors to which they belonged, an age happily past in most parts of the globe, and lingering only in a few isolated spots like the Scotland of the period. Well did these bloodthirsty monsters—unlike most other dinosaurs they were carnivorous—deserve the name that men gave them in later times, the King Tyrant-Lizards.

As, with its sharp claws sunk into its victim, it tore at the still quivering flesh, four or five far smaller carnivorous beasts hopped timidly out from various points of the fringe of the forest and sat up on their hind legs at a safe and respectful distance from the great killer. The sky above the clearing was suddenly darkened; and, looking up, the woman saw that the immense-winged pterodactyls from the cliffs were flapping heavily overhead in circles with harsh and discordant cries. First one, then another, swooped down towards the carcass, rocketing up again into the sky, as the great lizard snapped viciously at it or, standing up on its hind legs, struck with its fore-claws, jealously defending its prey.

VII.

The appearance of the pterodactyls on the scene terrified the woman more than the presence of the dinosaurs; for the latter could not reach her in the tree-tops as the great flying reptiles could. So she climbed stealthily away through the branches deeper and deeper into the forest, until the silence that encompassed her told her that she was safe. Coming to a stream flowing among the trees, she climbed down with infinite precaution and at last satisfied her thirst. A movement in the grasses fringing the stream caught her eye. Picking up a stone, she threw it with quick aim at something wriggling into the water and, flinging herself down at full length, grasped a salamander two feet long, its spine broken by her lucky shot. Killing it by knocking its head against a rock, she sprang rapidly up a tree with it, and at a safe height ate her first meal for days. Then, her hunger and thirst satisfied, she fixed herself in the fork of a big bough and slept the sleep of utter exhaustion.

In that early age of the world even more than to-day human nature readily accustomed itself to changed conditions of existence, and self-preservation was as ever the first law. This woman had been torn violently from her accustomed surroundings—one cannot call 'home' the platform of sticks on which she slept on a high branch in some forest of France. When the catastrophe occurred her mate and the elder of her two children had been absent hunting; and the younger was drowned when the tree was hurled into the sea. The parting

from her man she only regretted because she was deprived of her food-getter; but the loss of her children was a bitter blow. Maternal affection was the only love that human beings then knew.

However, she was aware of the fact that in a few months she would be a mother again. So she settled down to lead a new life in a new setting, but in the old way. High in a tree over a stream, near a spot where the forest reached the seashore, she built a dwelling for herself and her coming babe, just a platform of sticks, a form of habitation that humans probably learned from simian ancestors to make. She did not trouble to roof it with leafy boughs, for she was as indifferent to the weather as wild animals are.

As the days passed she wondered that she never saw apes or men when she wandered through the green lanes in the tree-tops. She did not know that she was the sole representative of the race of mammals in this isolated land of Scotland.

The need of hunting for food forced her to conquer her fears of the terrible beasts inhabiting the small island. She had armed herself with the only weapons then known to men—stones to throw and a club made of a broken-off branch, useless against the dinosaurs, she realised, but serving to kill the giant toads, newts, salamanders, and small reptiles on which she fed. She supplemented these by oysters and other shell-fish, and eggs taken from the nests of birds so unused to being molested that they let her approach them and catch them in her hands, and add them to her food-supply.

And thus she lived until the coming of her child—the first human being ever born on Scottish soil.

The First Scot!

VIII.

A true Highlander this queer, yellow, hairy little morsel of humanity could claim to be, since he was born on Scotland's highest mountain. From the outset he was as hardy, strong, and active as a Highlander should be; and at an age when children to-day are crawling on all fours he could climb through the branches like a monkey. He grew up fearless and daring. The great reptiles that cumbered the earth below his world—the breezy world of the tree-tops—had no terrors for him; but his mother could never overcome her dread of them, although she was not often in danger from them, as she passed most of her life high up out of their reach.

When sometimes the silence of the forest was broken by the sounds of a titanic combat between two or more of the great monsters, she clung trembling to her perch in the tree in uncalled-for terror. But the daring boy, despite her entreaties, would leap away through the

branches until he reached the scene of the battle, and there, high over the combatants, would watch with keen interest a desperate duel between two King Tyrant-Lizards, or a fight for life by a Stegosaur against one of the murderous beasts.

The existence led by mother and son was simple. They woke at dawn on their platform and, brushing the sleep from their eyes, set out through the tree-tops to look for nests or for birds confiding enough to let themselves be approached and seized or clubbed. But the feathered tribe were beginning to fear and to fly from these strange beings that invaded their special realm. So the two had often to descend to earth and, every sense on the alert against possible enemies, kill some reptiles, toads and frogs, and catch fresh-water turtles in the streams, all of which lower forms of life have come down almost unchanged through the ages. As the boy grew he became more daring and skilful as a hunter.

The language that the mother taught her son was rudimentary and extraordinarily simple, the first articulate tongue spoken by human beings. It sufficed for her, but not for him; for he was of an inquiring disposition, and his small head seemed to hold a bigger brain than she or their contemporaries in other lands possessed. There was much that puzzled the speculative child—light, darkness, the sun, the moon, the stars, the tides; but his mother could not explain these mysteries. Many of his questions remained unanswered; but among other things he gleaned some idea of the land from which she had come, and its difference from that in which he was born.

IX.

Before he was out of his teens, the lad—Vo, the woman called him; it meant 'New,' for he was the new thing to her—showed mental powers in advance of the age in which he lived. Since the days of the first man that had learned to use a weapon other than his natural ones of hands and teeth, human beings had been content with the weapons that he had employed, stones and sticks, the latter wielded as clubs. But no one had ever thought of making tools.

It happened that Vo one day had hurt the palm of his hand by a splinter in the mace that he was holding. It occurred to him to use a sharp-edged stone to scrape the wood until it was smooth to his grip. As he swung the club over his head it was caught by the branches of a tree; and this annoyed him and made him wonder if he could not devise a better weapon. It seemed to him that a pointed stick would give him a longer reach if he thrust at a prey with it, instead of striking a downward blow which might be arrested by some obstacle, as the club had been. It resulted in his sharpening one end of a long straight pole with his

stone and making the first spear ever used by man.

He learned to look for large pebbles that by chance fracture had acquired a sharp edge, in order to employ them as scrapers for trimming sticks as lance-shafts. Once, when idly hammering two unbroken flints together, he knocked flakes off one and found that by doing this he could get the required edge. Thus he discovered the art of chipping flints that for so many centuries was to be the limit of human progress in the making of implements and weapons.

He soon realised the value of his discovery, and made good use of it. From these useful stones thus treated he fashioned knives to skin and cut up the small animals and reptiles that he killed, scrape and trim wood, and open oysters and other bivalves that he and his mother gathered on the seashore. By notching a long and slender flint he contrived a rude saw, and with a pointed flint he made a tool to bore holes with. Crude and clumsy these implements were, rude his contrivances, yet they were marvellous and epoch-making; for they were the first proofs of man's awaking intelligence and reasoning power, the first definite sign that marked his upward progress from the level of the unthinking brute. Hitherto he had achieved nothing more than the apes had.

But almost the greatest triumph of Vo was the improvement of his weapons. For by it mankind benefited almost down to the Age of Bronze, and was enabled to wage successful war against the beasts of prey that threatened to exterminate the human race—and might have done so had it not been for this invention. Vo was dissatisfied with his spear, the wooden point of which lacked penetrative power and was easily blunted. After long thinking he split one end of the shaft and inserted in it a long flaked flint, and fixed it firmly by tightly binding the split ends with strips of hide. He had now a sharp and deadly spear-head.

His club, too, was unsatisfactory, as its knobbed top was liable to break and did not always deal a sufficiently hard blow; so he fixed a pointed flint in it, like a spike, and made it much more formidable. This gave him a fresh idea. Cutting a longitudinal hole near one end of a stout baton, he wedged a sharp-edged triangular flint in it—and thus made the first axe. Hundreds of thousands of years have passed since he proudly brandished this new weapon and tool, but the model of the implement remains the same to-day, although the workmanship has improved and steel takes the place of flint in the axe-head.

The lad had undoubtedly something of the inventive powers, original ideas, and mechanical aptitude of the nation that in the course of time was to follow him in this land when it grew larger than he ever knew it, the nation that was

to send to the ends of the earth as pioneers, colonists, engineers, its sons, better favoured but not more ingenious than this ape-like youth. When he sat at work with his strange tools, his mother squatted near him on their platform up in the tree, watching him in wonder that became awed admiration when she saw the marvellous results of his toil.

X.

Their airy shelter, too, demanded his attention. As the only dangers against which they had to guard when in it were from flying reptiles or climbing snakes, he roofed it with stout timbers, and shut it in, around and below, by walls and flooring of woven branches through which no serpent could penetrate. And he contrived for this aerial abode the first door ever made, a door that could be securely fastened from inside.

These defensive precautions were not wasted. Not long after the building of this, the first hut for human habitation, a pterodactyl winging its way over the forest saw the strange mass in the tree-tops, and, slowly planing down, settled on the roof, which it probably took for a giant nest. Sensing the terrified pair within, it plucked at the timbers with its iron beak. It had torn away two or three, when with a harsh scream of pain, it shot up towards the sky on wildly-flapping wings, the blood spouting from a gaping wound in its breast where the sharp flint-headed spear, thrust up through the gap, had been plunged deep by Vo's muscular arm. The pterodactyl struggled back through the air towards its haunt on the cliffs, but was forced to come down in the open, where a score of its cannibal companions fell on it and devoured it.

Not long afterwards the breezy dwelling and its occupants were nearly involved in common ruin. A big iguanodon, feeding in the forest, came to their tree and, rising on hind legs, gripped the trunk with its forepaws, and began to browse on the leaves of the lower branches. Suddenly two Tyrant-Lizards leaped towards it from opposite directions; and, before the startled reptile could make up its mind which way to bolt, they sprang on it simultaneously, and, clutching its body with extended claws, buried their sharp teeth in its flesh. The three huge bodies fell against the tree, their combined weight all but uprooting it; and the thick trunk bent almost to breaking. The mother and son were hurled across the dwelling by the shock of the impact, and clung to the rough flooring as the hut heeled over. But, just as they expected to crash to the earth, the stricken iguanodon relaxed its hold on the stem and sank on the ground, where its slayers fell on the quivering carcass before life had left and began to devour it. When they had satisfied their hunger they departed, much to the relief of the scared watchers above, who, as soon as it was safe, climbed down to search for any scraps that might have been overlooked.

Latterly the island seemed to swarm with these carnivorous dinosaurs, and the herbivorous ones were being exterminated by them. One surprised and chased Vo in the open one day; and only his fleetness of foot and the nearness of the forest saved him. He climbed swiftly up into a tree, which the King Lizard in blind rage tried to uproot. But the youth leapt from it into the branches of another and still another, until the bloodthirsty great reptile lost sight of him and went off in dudgeon.

(Continued on page 666.)

FILLING THE FLESHPOTS.

I.

WHAT the merits or demerits of a vegetable diet may be, the writer has no intention of discussing: but our advocates of a meatless race seem to forget or ignore the fact that, in all ages and in all climes, an inexpugnable craving for some form of flesh-food has been one of the most potent attributes of the human race. It is admitted that we have here and there a few sects and castes who regard with well-simulated horror the eating of flesh. Such abstinence, however, is seldom based on natural inclination, but is rather the outcome of religious creeds or doctrines, and is no more normal than the gyrations of the Dervish devotee, or the celibacy of a priesthood.

In the frozen North, those hardy tribes who brave the inclement winter on floe and ice-field

have no choice in the matter, but are forced—willy-nilly—to accept an animal diet or perish. On the other hand, along the tropic belts, where nature with lavish prodigality has spread her stores of fruits and foods, cereal and vegetal, in infinite variety, the craving for flesh is practically universal; and in the great million-peopled plains of India, Africa, China, and South America, it is no exaggeration to say that the meat menu of these races comprises everything from ants to elephants.

I think that, so far as size is concerned, we touch the bottom of the scale in Nyassaland. There, at times—during the rainy season—great clouds of tiny gnat-like flies are blown across Lake Nyassa and are caught and eaten with great relish by the Wa'Nkondi. As soon as they appear on the horizon—rolling low across the surface of the water like dun-coloured

smoke-clouds—the cry rings from village to village ‘Kungu! Kungu!’ and the natives prepare for their arrival. As the insects in millions roll landward, men, women, and children, provided with baskets of all kinds and sizes, plunge into the humming cloud and, dexterously waving their utensils to and fro, collect masses of flies in a few minutes; pausing only at intervals to pat them down into a heterogeneous pulp, which, pressed into cakes and fried in oil, is said to make quite a toothsome dish. What it tastes like I do not know, as I never had the pluck to sample it.

In the Shiré highlands caterpillars are collected in the early morning, dried in the sun, and after being toasted on skewers before a fire are considered rather a delicacy. Ants are eaten in nearly all tropical countries. At certain seasons nature sets about ‘thinning out’ the ant community, and for this purpose adopts an emigration scheme with ‘assisted passages,’ older than man’s. Each newly-hatched ant is the recipient—for a brief hour only—of a set of transient wings, and, issuing from the ant-hill in thousands in a hissing, humming stream, they are captured by simply inverting a basket over the opening until sufficient are collected. They are then mixed with flour, kneaded into a sort of meat biscuit, and roasted.

Locusts, although not exactly popular, are nevertheless much eaten in some localities, especially Central Africa, Northern Rhodesia, India, and Mongolia, where the usual method is to gather them in the early morning as they cluster in thousands on the tree-trunks in a sort of comatose condition. After being deprived of their long ‘jumping’ legs they are mixed up in a heap of dead leaves and grasses and set alight. The swift passage of the flame just serves to scorch without incinerating them, and they are then eaten out of hand, like shrimps. In these same latitudes slug snails, butterflies, fresh-water crabs, lizards, rats, and snakes add variety to an otherwise monotonous diet of maize, manioc, and yams.

II.

The feathered kingdom contributes largely to the domestic fleshpots, and in most tropical countries nothing is too small or insignificant for augmentation of the family menu. On the upper Amazon humming-birds are netted in hundreds, as are also a diminutive species of sparrow in China. In both cases, being too tiny for much dissecting or cleaning, they are simply stripped of their feathers and boiled whole, arriving on the table, head, beak, and claws complete! In Africa, India, Borneo, and many of the South Sea islands, the larger birds are brought down by light arrows which, being tipped with a button-like foil, kill or stun, but do not lacerate, the victims.

The catapult and the boomerang contribute

no inconsiderable quota to the universal larder, but by far the most common agent in use in this connection is the snare. Not only birds, but the smaller animals of almost every species are trapped in millions annually, by devices so manifold in ingenuity and variety that their merest summary would require more time and space than is at our present disposal. But it is not only with the snare that the Equatorian takes toll of the smaller creatures. Through the long centuries he—like his civilised contemporaries—has called to his aid and trained to his service innumerable auxiliaries, of which dogs, ferrets, cheetas, the mongoose, the cormorant, and the falcon are but a few.

But if the snare is universal, I think we can confidently aver that the ‘pit’ is far and away the most ancient method of trapping practised by man. All the evidence from the dim æons of unwritten history goes to show that primitive man was a hunter of no mean prowess. With his rudely-shaped clubs, flint-headed axes, and a few other weapons as crude and barbarous as the age in which he lived, he faced, fought, and slew the fierce up-towering cave-bear and sabretoothed tiger; and even the monstrous mammoth went down before his cunning and courage, leaving only its calcined bones to tell the tale in grass-grown barrow or stalactited caves. It is very probable that the frequent embogging in swamp and quagmire, or the occasional falling into pits or waterholes of some of his contemporary monsters, first suggested to palæolithic man the idea of the pit-trap, since the killing in fair fight of any of those gigantic creatures—so fearfully equipped for slaughter—must have meant a casualty list from which even our semi-animal ancestors might well shrink. Be that as it may, the pit has always been—and is to-day—the most common device for the capture of big game among the almost weaponless tribes in equatorial countries.

In Central Africa it is usually dug in the form of an acute V from six to eight feet deep, and about twenty feet in length, and is excavated in some spot where there are signs of a much-trodden ‘run,’ and artfully concealed by branches, grass-tufts, and sand. Though the wild things of the jungle are not easily deceived, it seldom happens that a pit is long empty. The denizens of the forest love not beaten paths—only using them, indeed, when emergency demands speed, or when no other avenue is available; and thus, as often happens, a herd of buck, fleeing from the ‘wind’ of a lion or a leopard, come thundering along in the line of the trap, and before the startled leader—suddenly sensing danger—can stay or turn, he is hurled, by the sheer weight and impact of his followers, headlong into the pit. The struggles of the terrified animal serve only to wedge him tighter in the cleft, until at last he becomes totally incapable of movement, and his doom is sealed.

The news of the 'catch' soon spreads, and if the pit is in the vicinity of a village, the whole population turns out to witness the 'kill.' A well-aimed blow with a heavy club, a single skilful spear-thrust, and the carcass is carried off in triumph amid delirious rejoicings.

I have on occasion seen two wart-hogs and a hyena in one of these holes: the hogs were dead and badly mauled, and the hyena had incautiously worked himself down into the sharp angle of the 'V' until only his head was capable of movement. A 'stabbing' spear through the spine put an end to his troubles, and what was left of the hogs was soon on its way to the pot. On rare occasions—especially in the great plains between the Zambesi Valley and Lake Chad—an elephant or a rhinoceros crashes into one of these game-pits, and amid hysterical rejoicing is done to death, making possible one of those flesh-eating orgies that haunt the day-dreams of the African bushman.

III.

In 1903, while camped in the Luapula Valley, my boys informed me that a local chief had 'pitted' an elephant and was about to kill it. I went to view the affair, and for about five minutes watched the bludgeoning and stabbing of the creature as it trumpeted and screamed in pain and terror, until, sick and disgusted, I sent for my rifle and put the animal out of its misery.

A common form of trap widely used in Africa, India, and Amazonia, is the noose. From between two pliant young trees a wide noose is suspended in the centre of a 'run' or the well-beaten approach to some water-hole. The trees are bent down with considerable force and held by an ingenious arrangement of pegs and pins; the wide loop is so adjusted that anything entering its circle liberates the restraining trigger, and in the fraction of a second the victim is caught and held, the recoil of the trees jerking it clear off the ground, or holding it so 'tip-toed' in suspension that escape is impossible.

Passing through Midima en route for 'Mlange in 1900, I had the unique experience of seeing a lion—a real full-grown king of the forest—which had been noosed by the hind legs in this type of trap, and hoisted off the ground until he almost stood on his head. A jeering crowd of natives surrounded the fallen—or shall we say 'up-ended'?—monarch, and with uproarious enjoyment told the creature what they thought of it, and described its ancestors in lurid detail, for nearly an hour before despatching it.

In this same district I saw, for the first time, snake poison used as a medium for filling the village pot. A pole about the size and weight of a tent-prop, pointed with a poisoned arrow-head, is hung from a branch in such a manner as to fall on any animal passing beneath; the descending barb entering, or even scratching,

the body of the unlucky creature, is sufficient to ensure its speedy end. Among these tribes it has long been common knowledge that the fluids secreted in the stomach render snake poisons innocuous, and in consequence they merely take the precaution of cutting away the flesh round the actual wound, eating the rest of the carcass.

IV.

One of the most interesting incidents of my stay in Zambesia was my participation in the capture and killing of a hippo north of Chiloma. About a mile below the village the river forms a deep and sluggish backwater between some small islands and the shore—an ideal feeding-ground for hippopotami. Word was brought to me that the local chief was going hippo-hunting on the morrow, and if I cared to join in he would take it as an honour.

At dawn, accompanied by my 'capitao,' I reached the river-bank and found everything in readiness for the expedition. The canoe allotted to me was in charge of the chief's son, Kampetè, a brown-skinned Apollo, who, his father informed me, feared not death. While this quality might be very commendable in his son, it was, to my mind, rather embarrassing as an attribute of the commander of our canoe. We had a fleet of seven craft all told. A heap of native rope specially made for such occasions lay coiled in the bow of each canoe, and attached thereto was a wicked-looking short-shafted harpoon, which could be fixed temporarily into a twelve-foot length of bamboo to give the necessary leverage when driving home the barb into the body of the hippo. Our crew numbered four: Kampetè in the bow, his harpoon socketed ready for action, my capitao and a tribesman roping, while I nursed my rifle astern.

About a quarter of a mile above the pool we ceased to paddle, and the canoes dropped downstream about twenty yards apart, floating slowly across the feeding-ground. Here and there a huge head broke the surface and with a great wheezing gasp sank out of sight again in a swirling eddy of muddy brown water, but none near enough to justify attacking, although our leading canoe was now well across the pool.

The first bit of luck came to the craft immediately ahead of us. In a surging upheaval of muddy water the great head of an old bull hippo—looking monstrous at such close quarters—rose within six feet of the dug-out, but their harpooner, in thrusting, slipped his barb prematurely, and the hippo slonged slowly forward in our direction, submerging. And now we, too, were in action! A vigorous sweep or two of the paddles brought us almost over the great beast as he sank slowly beneath the surface, and Kampetè—with the whole weight of his lithe, sinewy body behind it—launched his barb: a great thrust that sent the razor-edged harpoon

deep into the body of our quarry. Then, rapidly paying out our line, we swept well clear of the spot, and lay-to discreetly near the shore.

Our hippo had dived, but was soon up again—the centre of a foaming vortex of blood-flecked water, and it was plainly evident that the harpoon had unsettled his temper. The first object of his wrath was another member of his company three or four yards away, who met his onslaught open-mouthed. Then, turning suddenly in our direction, he gave us—or myself at least—one hair-raising moment as he came at us, his little eyes blazing with fury, and his great jaws snapping and clashing. Again changing his tactics, he did what all hippos do when sorely wounded or badly scared—dived, and headed up-stream.

We were after him directly, our rowers sending the light canoe flying parallel with his course, and paying out plenty of slack as we went. At the first bend of the river our quarry halted, as though for a 'breather,' and I soon found that everything was working out according to plan, and the action of our hippo must have followed the lines of many of his predecessors in the past. A canoe, which had evidently been in waiting, ranged alongside of us, towing a fair-sized tree trunk. This was made fast to our harpoon rope and cast clear, and once again we were paddling frantically out of the danger zone.

The log drifted slowly down-stream until the tautened line tugged tensely on the harpoon—then things began to look lively. The hippo rose, and with a bellow of anger turned, charging right and left—wheeling and spinning with an agility that seemed marvellous in so huge a creature—then, making straight for the floating log, he attacked it furiously. Evidently finding this an unsatisfactory performance, he headed up-stream once more, only to wheel time and again and vent his wrath on the relentless float that dragged with agonising insistence on the gaping wound that was slowly bleeding him to death.

In the shallows—about a mile above the village—the end came! Advancing knee-deep on the exhausted hippo—now halted, blown and gasping—our hunters prepared to hamstring and butcher their quarry, but my request to be allowed to shoot it being agreed to, I brought the hunt to a finish with my '450 at close range.

V.

In this treatise I have no intention of dealing with the universal use of fish as a food, but while on the subject of amphibians, it may be of interest to note that the crocodile—a difficult and dangerous 'kill,' and, therefore, seldom molested by the almost weaponless tribes in those regions which are the natural habitat of the saurian—is none the less an acceptable article of diet when the fates are

kind enough to deliver one into their hands. Though the young 'croclings' are regarded as quite a passable dish in the Zambesi Valley, the average 'bush' hunter invariably considers a charge of powder and ball as much too precious to be thrown away on an almost invulnerable target, not to mention the probability of losing a mortally wounded croc by its promptly sinking into the muddy depths beyond recovery.

Near Matope on the upper Shiré river, I came one morning on a group of Ngoni digging close to the edge of the bank, and on inquiring, was informed that they were raiding the 'larder' of an old crocodile that haunted the locality. Further questioning elicited the information that all crocodiles, on making a big 'kill,' eat to repletion and then 'cache' the remains of the carcass in a shelving hole scooped out of the river-bank below the water level, presumably for future consumption. Whether the assertion is based on fact, or whether the diggers were rewarded for their toil, I cannot say.

Like the lion and the leopard, the crocodile, when proved guilty of man-eating, is often assiduously hunted, killed, and eaten by the relatives of the unfortunate deceased as a sort of conscientious duty, in some hazy belief that by this action the body of the victim is rescued from being totally incorporated into the lower animal kingdom.

Mention of this—what one might call 'cannibalism by proxy'—brings to the mind of the writer an experience related by a well-known missionary while exploring the region west of Bangweolo Land. He had been struck by the fact that many of the huts boasted two well-holes, one of which invariably had a circle of small pegs driven into the ground near the margin. From these pegs pieces of cord led down into the bottom of the well. Curious to know their purpose, he pulled one up, and received the shock of his life on finding that his haul consisted of a human hand and arm in a state of pickle!

The practice of eating human flesh, however, is seldom the outcome of an inordinate craving for meat, but, as investigation has shown, has more often a ceremonial basis, even among tribes where cannibalism is common.

It must be understood, of course, that the foregoing form only a very small proportion of the items that go to swell the menu of those races who—though existing in an environment which suggests that a vegetable diet would be not only the ideal, but their practical rule of life—nevertheless show by their desire for flesh-food, in one form or another, how deep-seated and ineradicable is the omnivorous instinct in man, and that, so far as humanity in general is concerned, the day of universal vegetarianism is not yet.

J. G.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE SENIOR PARTNER'S WRATH.

By E. R. PUNSHON, Author of *Promise of Dawn*, *Old Fighting Days*, &c.

PART I.

I.

IN the prosperous and important firm of Maynard & Co. there were three partners. The senior was Mr Maynard himself, tall, portly, imposing, of so striking and authoritative a demeanour, indeed, that it was said he could overawe an office-boy with a single glance. Probably this was an exaggeration, but undoubtedly he possessed an imposing presence. The second partner was Mr Manners, who was middle-aged, of middle size, and mild of manner, and who was reputed to be the keenest man at a bargain in the whole city of London. The third partner was Mr Price, who was thin and elderly and absolutely bald, so that the subtle saying ran in city circles that when Mr Price of Maynard & Co. gave anything away he gave a lock of his hair with it.

With three such partners as these, it is not to be wondered at that the firm prospered mightily.

But on this particular morning it seemed that something had gone wrong, for Mr Maynard had just entered—or burst or exploded into—the private room of Mr Manners, and his face was crimson and his eyes were aflame, and one thought that his gesticulating hands strove, though but vainly, to express what tongue and lips could only utter in a stammering ‘Never—never—in all my life—never—’

Much alarmed, Mr Manners rose to his feet. ‘What is the matter?’ he gasped, as visions of war, murder, revolution, a panic on ‘Change, swept horribly through his mind.

And still Mr Maynard seemed unable to utter the swelling thoughts that apparently possessed him. It was a dreadful thing to watch the efforts that he made.

Awestruck, Mr Manners murmured, ‘My dear fellow, calm yourself.’

‘Ass,’ snapped Mr Maynard with unexpected force and lucidity. ‘I am calm,’ he asserted, with a glare that seemed to hurl Mr Manners back into his chair almost as effectively as a straight left from Carpentier could have done. ‘But I confess,’ he added, ‘that I am—annoyed.’

‘Indeed?’ murmured Mr Manners, remembering the maxim ‘safety first,’ and thinking this remark involved little danger.

Mr Maynard began to gesticulate again. His hand went up and down like a hammer, as it was wont to do when he crushed into the dust the unfortunate shareholder who at a general meeting should presume to ask a question. From the incoherent and disconnected remarks that accompanied this gesture, Mr Manners disentangled the two names of Price and of Ellison.

His bewilderment increased. What had the junior partner done? Committed suicide? Absconded? Joined the Labour Party? What? As for Ellison, that he recognised as the name of a firm owing them about twelve hundred pounds, and, if current rumours were correct, not too likely to pay. Possibly they had defaulted, but if so, that, though annoying, was nothing to make the heavens fall—as apparently, from the senior partner’s behaviour, must have recently happened. ‘I am afraid I don’t quite understand,’ Mr Manners murmured, putting all the emphasis on the ‘quite.’

‘You wouldn’t,’ retorted Mr Maynard, with an injustice the other felt acutely; ‘but perhaps you know that Ellison’s owe us twelve hundred, and that Price said he would call round and see them about it?’

‘Hasn’t he been?’ asked Mr Manners, still at a loss, since he could not for the life of him see that it mattered much whether Price had been or not.

‘He has,’ said Mr Maynard terribly, and paused still more terribly. ‘Apparently he told Ellison,’ he continued, striving to be calm, ‘that it did not matter.’

‘What?’ almost shouted Mr Manners.

This cry, so heart-felt, so full of amazement, incredulity, and indignation, was to Mr Maynard’s wounded feelings as balm in Gilead. ‘Told them it didn’t matter,’ he repeated, his tone almost genial now.

‘Preposterous!’ declared Mr Manners heatedly.

‘The only thing I can suppose,’ said Mr Maynard, ‘is that Price is suffering from softening of the brain.’

This was a malady symptoms of which Mr Maynard often thought he perceived among his fellow-creatures.

'Where is Price?' demanded Mr Manners, no longer mild; fierce indeed, as only your mild man can be when thoroughly roused.

'Gone home,' said Mr Maynard, with a lingering regret. 'Apparently he came straight back from Ellison's, left this—this—he searched for *le mot juste*, and, finding it not, continued inadequately—'this message for me, and then told them in the office that he was feeling queer and was going home for the day.'

'Well, I don't understand it,' murmured Mr Manners helplessly. 'It's not so much the actual money—'

'It's the principle of the thing,' proclaimed Mr Maynard.

'Our reputation, too,' exclaimed Mr Manners, almost tearful.

'No one will pay anybody anything,' declared Mr Maynard comprehensively, 'if they're to be told it—doesn't—matter.'

'In all my experience of the city,' said Mr Manners solemnly, 'I never heard of such a thing.'

'If it becomes common,' asserted Mr Maynard, 'business will be made impossible.'

Motionless and horror-stricken, they gazed at each other in silence, dreadfully contemplating a world in which business had been made impossible.

But the very terror of the prospect stirred Mr Manners to action, and he reached firmly for his hat. 'I,' he said simply, 'will go and see Ellison's myself.'

Mr Maynard wrung his hand. 'Thank you,' he said, not without emotion

II.

It was in a happier mood that Mr Maynard returned to his own room. The conduct of Price had shaken his faith in human nature to the depths, but Manners had re-established it. He almost began to feel sorry for Ellison's. Manners was clearly roused, and when Manners was roused—well, all the city knew what that meant. Of course, Maynard & Co. were never hard on their debtors—strictly business-like, no doubt, which means getting every penny due, and more if possible, but always within the rules of the game, and certainly never vindictive about it, or reluctant to accept any proper business-like scheme that might be put forward. But Manners, Mr Maynard felt instinctively, would be severe to-day. There would be no 'it doesn't matter' foolery about him. No. Ellison's would have to come to time. Yes, or—the necessary steps would be taken. Oh, Manners was mild, no doubt, but this time that unlucky phrase 'it doesn't matter' had roused him as it had roused the senior partner himself.

Yes, on the whole he was almost sorry for Ellison's with the mild but roused Manners on their track, and he began to feel unusually sympathetic towards all the rest of the world.

'We mustn't be hard on them; I daresay they are doing their best,' he remarked concerning another firm to his son Johnny, who had come to ask how their request for more time was to be answered.

Johnny was a little surprised, but quite agreed.

'One doesn't mind so much when chaps are really trying,' he remarked; 'it's the "don't care, doesn't matter" brigade I can't stick.'

'Quite right, Johnny,' agreed his parent, approvingly, surveying with a certain pride this stalwart soldier son of his who, on leaving the army, had entered the office, and was already showing considerable business aptitude; 'you remember that, my boy.'

'I'll try to, sir,' said Johnny, and withdrew.

Mr Maynard, looking at his watch, was wondering how Manners had got on, and thinking of lunch, when the chief clerk made his appearance.

'Mr Manners on the 'phone, sir,' he explained. 'He says he feels very seedy and is going home for the day.'

'Seedy! Manners?' repeated Mr Maynard, very much surprised. 'Why, he seemed perfectly well . . .'

'Yes, sir,' agreed the chief clerk; 'must have been very sudden. I hope it isn't the influenza,' he added, shaking his head; 'it's just the way that comes on sometimes.'

Mr Maynard felt very much bewildered, and a thought came to him that Price also . . . but that, of course, was a mere coincidence. He heard the chief clerk adding that Mr Manners had asked him to inform Mr Maynard that he had arranged for Ellison's to have a further credit for a thousand pounds.

'What?' said Mr Maynard; 'what was that? I don't think I can have heard . . .'

'Mr Manners said I was to tell you,' repeated the chief clerk, himself a little surprised but supposing that it was all right, 'that he had arranged with Ellison's for them to have a further credit to the amount of one thousand pounds.'

Mr Maynard said nothing at all. There are some situations which are beyond all words. This was one of them. He heard a voice he knew was his own murmur, 'Thank you; that's all, I think.' He heard the chief clerk retire. He perceived that he was alone.

Feebly he looked around the room. 'Could this thing be true?' he asked himself. And he had to answer to himself that apparently it was. At any rate, it was certain he was awake, so it could not merely be a nightmare of a peculiarly revolting description. Neither was he drunk. That also was certain. And

it was certain also that his head was aching badly. This was unusual, for indeed he despised headache, which he felt to be a feeble and feminine ailment; but he supposed that after two such blows as first Price and then Manners, any one's head would ache.

'It's . . . it's . . . it's . . .' he began aloud, and then paused, because after all he simply had not the least idea what it was.

But he remembered with gratitude that there was some brandy in the bookcase cupboard, and he went with an unsteady step and helped himself liberally, and felt on the whole a little better, but even more bewildered than before.

Could Manners have gone suddenly mad? That seemed much the most probable explanation. . . . Only, then there was Price. . . . Surely the two of them together could not simultaneously . . . ? Or was he mad himself? . . . He hoped not, but almost feared it. . . . With sudden decision he grabbed his hat, that wondrous topper, of almost supernatural glossiness, of which the gleam as it shimmered down Cheapside seemed to radiate confidence and prosperity all around.

'I,' he said terribly—'I will see Ellison's myself.'

Striding into the outer office, he informed them there of his decision, as one of the old gods of Olympus might have announced his intention of visiting a city that had of late much neglected his worship.

'He doesn't approve of this new credit to Ellison's,' thought the chief clerk, 'and I don't call it business-like myself.'

Mr Maynard put his head in again.

'I will call at Rushworth's, too,' he said; 'we promised to let them know by to-day, didn't we?'

'We did, sir,' agreed the chief clerk; and Mr Maynard passed on his way to Ellison's.

III.

It was nearly lunch-time by now, though Mr Maynard's indignation had not permitted him to remember the fact, and Ellison's appeared deserted. His first authoritative knock produced no reply, and thereupon he flung wide the door and entered in.

'Any one there?' called a voice from behind. 'Please come through, if there is.'

Mr Maynard frowned. He was not accustomed to be called 'any one'—he was emphatically 'some one.' Neither was he accustomed to 'come through.' However, no better was to be expected from an Ellison's, and he was too anxious to get to grips to waste time. He proceeded therefore, as they say in the navy, across the outer office, and, finding presently a door marked 'private,' flung it wide and once more entered in.

His first impression was that the place was

empty. It was a big room, and there was a big book-case and a big card-index cabinet and a big safe and a big arm-chair and an exceedingly big roll-top desk, so that there's no wonder that amidst so much bigness the very small person seated at the very big roll-top desk almost escaped observation.

Indeed, little more was visible than a mass of fair curls, so fair as to be almost golden, and a pair of very bright large blue eyes, of a blue so intense as to be almost violet, gazing over the top of the very big roll-top desk.

Mr Maynard felt his wrath increase. Blue eyes like these were quite uncalled for in business, and fair curls, so fair as to be almost golden, appeared to him unnecessary in a city office. Like an offended Jove he spoke and said, 'Where is Mr Ellison?'

There was no answer. More wrathful even than before, Mr Maynard was about once again to thunder forth his question, when a strange thing happened, if quotation be permissible for once. Into those bright blue eyes, just visible over the top of the very big roll-top desk, there came a change, a disconcerting change. Their brightness grew dim and soft. Something appeared in them, a tear, and then another. They overflowed, and in the extraordinary silence of the room Mr Maynard was certain that he distinctly heard a splash on the polished surface of the roll-top desk.

'Upon my soul,' said Mr Maynard, feeling that this was indeed the climax of all that he had suffered upon this eventful day.

But then he had always known what would come of this modern craze for bringing women into the city.

Though, after all, what were tears to him or he to tears? Tears are things quite irrelevant to business, and he continued as though they had not been shed or he had not seen them: 'I wish to see Mr Ellison—at once. Where is he?'

'He was my father, and he died two months ago,' she answered.

To say that Mr Maynard was annoyed is to put it mildly. He was, in fact, exasperated. He felt that an unfair advantage had been taken of him. How was he to know the man was dead? Most likely it had been done on purpose. He had merely asked a most ordinary question, and there was she weeping behind her big roll-top desk. Hysterics next, he supposed. He perceived gloomily that the situation was one from which it would be difficult to withdraw with dignity. He told himself passionately that Manners might have told him—warned him—of the trap.

A small voice from behind the roll-top desk said, 'Please excuse me—I'm not generally so silly. Only, you asked so suddenly—and then people have been very kind to me to-day, and that's upset me, I suppose.'

Mr Maynard did not answer. The utter futility and the extraordinary lack of logic shown in weeping because people had been kind were only too apparent, but he supposed it would be useless to point this out.

The small voice continued: 'Please sit down.' A tiny hand appeared and waved towards the big arm-chair, and the small voice became business-like, with an effect as incongruous as if a nightingale were suddenly to give up its song to pretend to be a hawk. 'What can I do for you?' it inquired.

Mechanically Mr Maynard sank into the big arm-chair and tried bravely to rally. Extraneous circumstances, such as blue eyes and tears and a recently dead father, had absolutely nothing, he reminded himself, to do with Business—nothing. He perceived now that the blue eyes in question were fixed upon him with a somewhat odd expression—or at least not on him but on his head, over his head, on his hat, that resplendent topper which he had quite forgotten to remove.

With a somewhat hurried gesture he took it off. What followed was incredible—appalling. She made him a little stiff bow of acknowledgment—exactly as though he offered an apology and she accepted it. To think of the senior partner in Maynard & Co. being apparently placed in the position of offering an apology to this wretched child!

It was too much, and his voice boomed out impressively as it was wont to boom when at some company meeting or at a directors' consultation he found it necessary to silence foolish opposition to his suggestions.

'I regret to hear what you tell me,' he said, 'though I had not the pleasure of the late Mr Ellison's acquaintance. May I ask who is now in charge of the business?'

'It's me,' she said.

Deplorable grammar. A deplorable affair altogether. Nevertheless he continued with the same dignity and impressiveness: 'Indeed. Somewhat young, apparently, for so responsible a position. I am Mr Maynard of Maynard & Co., and—'

He paused as he made this announcement, rather expecting the miserable girl to faint or something of the sort, but instead she leaped from her chair and rushed towards him. For one awful moment he almost feared she was about to kiss him. Fortunately, the worst did not happen. Bad enough, though—she had his hand clasped in both hers and was shaking it warmly.

'I am so glad,' she said. 'Of course, I might have known. It is good of you—awfully good.' Her blue eyes were raised to his with an expression almost adoring in their gratitude. 'Mr Manners said you might—I never dared hope you would. . . .'

And the indignant Mr Maynard perceived

only too clearly that the unspeakable Manners had not only deliberately not warned him of the—er—trap, but had even left it invitingly open for him to enter.

IV.

To Mr Maynard's relief she left off shaking his hand at last, and, standing before him, began to talk quickly and eagerly. Undoubtedly her appearance with her flushed face and eager eyes was distinctly—well, not unattractive. Neat, too. But for the unfortunate eyes and the regrettable curls—and for these she was no doubt hardly responsible—she might, indeed, have looked almost business-like, with her neat, trim attire, and her subtle air of efficiency.

Apparently she was telling him all about the business and her position and her struggles. This seemed to him most unnecessary, and he decided to stop her at once—instantly—but her voice was not unpleasant, and her statement of her affairs seemed peculiarly clear and brief and to the point—admirably lucid, in fact.

'Mr Manners said you would wish to understand,' she concluded.

So it was Manners he had to thank for this also. 'Very well,' he thought grimly; 'very well.'

'You put it very clearly,' he said aloud.

'It's such a comfort to tell some one like you all about it,' she answered. 'You see, your help will make all the difference. I didn't feel as if I could possibly pull through—but your allowing me this extra credit will make just the difference. I daresay I ought to have managed better, but when poor father died I had to do the best I could, or else it would all have gone to pieces. The last thing he asked me was to try . . . for mother and the boys.'

'You have brothers, then?' Mr Maynard found himself inquiring.

'Two,' she confided to him with the air of imparting some specially delightful secret—'such darlings. They are both at school now.'

'While you try to carry on the business?' said Mr Maynard; 'very creditable, too. You find yourself able to manage?'

'I shall now,' she asserted, 'thanks to your help.'

Unblushingly he accepted her gratitude, just as though he deserved it.

'And how do you like being in business?' he inquired.

'Oh, I hate it,' she answered promptly and emphatically.

'Hate it?' he repeated, astonished, shocked indeed.

The fair curls nodded with greater emphasis even than before.

'All this money-making,' she said—'it all seems so—so paltry.'

Mr Maynard gasped. Was there to be no end then to the blows rained down upon his

head this day? Money-making paltry . . . paltry. . . . What a word. . . . What an idea. . . . What a girl!

His smile was a ghastly thing as he murmured, 'Indeed! Most people think it sufficiently important. What would you prefer to money-making, then, I wonder?'

The blue eyes grew thoughtful.

'I should like to live in the country, I think,' she answered slowly, 'and have a garden . . . a great big lovely garden . . . with roses . . . and ask people with babies to come and stay with me. . . . I do adore babies; don't you?'

Mr Maynard rose feebly to his feet. He felt he could endure no more. Had it come to this, then, that he, senior partner in Maynard & Co., respected and known all through the city, was being asked in the very heart of the sacred square mile itself if he did not adore babies . . . babies . . . brats . . . squalls. . . . It was too much; he felt all broken up.

'I must be going,' he said hurriedly. He had a positive yearning to be again in dear Cheapside or thronged Threadneedle Street, where babies are not . . . adored—and money is not . . . paltry. 'I must be going,' he

repeated; 'but if at any time you require any help, my firm will be very pleased. Our Mr Manners,' he added viciously, 'shall come in to see you whenever you like.'

She thanked him very prettily and very gratefully, and at last he found himself again in the street, shaken indeed, pulverised in fact, but safe once more, though he really hardly felt it till he had reached and entered his favourite restaurant, one that only city magnates such as himself patronised—a fact duly noted on the bill.

'Mr John Maynard looked in a moment or two ago to inquire for you, sir,' the head waiter informed him.

'Did he?' murmured Mr Maynard, who still felt weak. 'No matter—a whisky and soda, please. The weather's very trying to-day, isn't it?'

'Very trying indeed, sir,' agreed the head waiter, and wondered in secret if things were going wrong in the city with 'the old geeser,' or if he were beginning to break up; and outside, Johnny Maynard, who had missed his father by only a minute or two, wondered what to do next.

(Continued on page 684.)

THE DIVINING-ROD.

By F. McDERMOTT.

THE divining-rod of modern days is a simple forked twig of hazel wood. With this twig in their hands, certain individuals are able to locate the presence of underground water. Persons with this power are to be met with in almost every country of the world, without distinction of age, sex, or race. They are alike only in the possession of this faculty, and their ability to use it depends in every case on the presence of the twig. It is the twig, in fact, that by fierce twitchings and contortions indicates the presence of the hidden water. And in consequence for many centuries the power was supposed to reside in the twig. But the twig is useless in the hands of the majority of people. To-day, therefore, the view generally held is that the person using the divining-rod is the real source of power, and that the movements of the twig are merely the indication of some action taking place within the living mechanism of the holder.

Nothing could be simpler than the outward appearance of an experiment with the twig. The water-finder—or 'dowser' as he is usually called in these islands—walks slowly over the ground where the presence of underground water is suspected. He holds an end of the fork in each hand, and his arms are tightly pressed to his sides. Suddenly the twig will start to jerk and twitch in a convulsive manner. 'I can

only,' runs a typical account, 'describe the antics of that twig as a pitched battle between itself and the dowser. It twisted, it knocked about, it contracted and contorted the muscles of his hands and arms, it wriggled and fought and kicked until it snapped in two. . . .' While the rod is behaving in this erratic manner the holder of the rod is not immune from peculiar sensations. Since the power of locating the water lies in him rather than in the rod, it is not surprising to learn that the 'dowser' likens his experience to the passage of a current of electricity through his whole body. There is a tingling of the fingers usually present, and very often a sensation in the pit of the stomach like that experienced on the downward movement of a swing.

Science, unable to explain these manifestations, has labelled them quackery. Belief in the rod has declined in consequence, and is to-day confined to the more unsophisticated parts. In these islands the regular employment of the rod will be met with only in rural neighbourhoods. Occasionally, as in the experiments last century in connection with the Richmond water supply, the unbelieving town-dweller will call in a dowser. But only in the country are men able to earn a living by the employment of this peculiar faculty. The West Country of England is particularly faithful to the

old belief. Dowisers are regularly employed by private individuals and even by public companies, while a modern Western university—that of Bristol—employs a dowser in connection with its researches in the Mendip Hills.

It is fitting that this part of the British Isles should be so tenacious of its faith in the rod, for it was here that it was first implanted. Miners from Germany introduced the use of the rod into the mines of Cornwall in the sixteenth century. They probably came from the Hartz Mountains, where, a century before, the divining rod was employed for the first time to our modern knowledge. Attempts have been made to put a very much greater antiquity on the rod. Rods with magical powers are, in fact, associated with the earliest religions; but their use seems to have been confined to the telling of auguries and to the protection of their holders from evil. It cannot be traced that they were ever employed for the discovery of hidden water, and there are no grounds for establishing any connection between the ancient rods and wands and the modern water-finding twig. To this view Andrew Lang lends the weight of his authority in an essay on the divining-rod published in his book, *Custom and Myth*. He points out particularly that Pliny, an author ever ready to record marvels of any sort, makes no mention of the use of the divining-rod, even when dealing with the subject of the finding of wells of water.

To the use of the divining-rod as we know it the obscure writings of a Benedictine monk, Basil Valentin, furnish the earliest reference. For this we have the authority of M. Chevreuil of Paris, who published an important work on the subject in 1854. Valentin flourished in the fifteenth century. In the next century the rod was in general use. Not only were water and minerals sought with its aid, but it was even used to track down criminals! Andrew Lang, in the essay already mentioned, describes how a well-known French diviner, Jacques Aymar, was employed to discover the murderers of a married couple of Lyons in the year 1692. This practice was wholly fraudulent, and soon disappeared under the pressure of ecclesiastical law. The more legitimate use of the rod, however, grew in popularity. It excited great interest, particularly in France, where its merits became the playing-ground for philosophers and scientists of all shades of opinion.

The scientist Boyle put the matter of the rod before the Royal Society of this country in 1666, but without obtaining any definite expression of opinion. Learned societies of various kinds toyed with the question in the succeeding years. Scientists generally regarded it as beneath notice, and it was not, in fact, until the close of the nineteenth century that an attempt was made to pronounce definitely on the merits of the divining-rod from a scientific point of view.

At the request of the Society of Physical Research a most thorough investigation of the whole problem was carried out by Professor W. F. Barret, holder of the chair of Experimental Physics in the Royal College of Science of Ireland. His conclusions are contained in Vols. 13 and 15 of the Proceedings of that society. Professor Barret accumulated a very large number of reports from all over the world. Each one he investigated carefully, allowing for every factor that might have influenced the success of the diviner. His conclusions therefore bear authoritative weight. He acquits the diviner of the charge of trickery. 'Certainly no voluntary effort,' he says of the twitchings of the rod, 'without long and laborious practice at legerdemain could produce an effect corresponding in kind or degree to that which actually takes place. . . . The movement of the rod is not due to trickery nor any conscious voluntary effort, but is a more or less violent automatic action that occurs under certain conditions in certain individuals.' He fully supports the conclusion of a smaller and earlier report to the society on the same subject: 'The evidence for the success of "dowsing" as a practical art is very strong, and there seems to be an unexplained residuum when all possible deductions have been made.' To this he adds his personal testimony: 'Had I,' he says, 'to sink a well, I should prefer to have a precise spot selected by a good dowser rather than general advice given by a geologist, *provided* that the depth of the well did not exceed, say 50 ft., and the quantity of water required was for a private and not for a public supply.' Finally, in the *Times* of January 1908, he proved that ten years had not altered the nature of his convictions. 'Making a liberal allowance for failures of which I have not heard, I have no hesitation in saying that where fissure water exists and the discovery of underground water sufficient for a domestic supply is a matter of utmost difficulty, the chances of success with a good dowser far exceed mere lucky hits or the success obtained by the most skilful observer even with full knowledge of local geology.'

The reports of Professor Barret are practically the last word on the subject. They do little more than give an authoritative sanction to the faith in the rod. We are still without an explanation of its success. There is little doubt, however, that it is one of those manifestations of the hidden chamber of the brain into which science has only just started to probe. The subconscious mind is the unknown factor of human personality. The conquest of its secret is the great task that confronts Science. When that task is completed it is more than likely that along with other puzzling appearances of the subconscious world there will be laid bare the secret of the diviner and his divining-rod.

AFRICAN SILHOUETTES.

I.—KOSKI THE HERD.

By C. M. M. PATERSON.

I.

IF one possesses a keen sense of humour, and an interest in the mentality of savage races now in the birth throes of our so-called civilisation, life on an isolated Central African farm is not the dreary existence it might prove to be were these attributes lacking.

The daily round, the common task, becomes less arduous when the employees chat to you, as they would to their own father, and often by expression of their crude, extraordinary ideas give one an enjoyment in life which is lacking when one's environment is the conventional and sophisticated hordes of humanity.

The African natives' outlook on life is so fresh and simple, such an essentially contented and happy one—I speak, of course, of the real savage, not of the spoilt product of European enterprise—that one begins to wonder whether the whole of what is termed progress and enlightenment is not a ghastly mistake. There is more squalor, more human misery in ten acres of London or Glasgow than in ten million acres of pagan Africa. Yet, before one jumps to a conclusion which will be condemned by many who have not had the advantage of personally comparing the happiness of these primitive men with the dreary, sordid lives of those of our own lower class, it is wise to remember that the struggle for existence has never been such a potent force in the tropics as it is in our cold northern clime. The sun and the primeval forests provide all that is necessary for warmth; clothing, except for a few hides soaked in castor-oil, as a protection in the rainy season, is superfluous; and the kindly earth has only to be scratched, a few handfuls of grain thrown thereon, to make it bring forth a hundredfold. Nevertheless, it is a phenomenon which gives food for much thought—the content and extraordinary happiness of these people compared with that of the average human among civilised nations.

II.

If anyone believes that the ordinary African native appreciates the tranquillity, the cessation of tribal strife and constant raids, which the advent of the British Sarkali¹ has brought, let him at once shed this illusion.

Koski—or, to give him his full name, Kip Koski Arap Kerich—the head cattle herd dispelled mine for me. He is elderly, and can remember the good old times before the British

government put an embargo on the whole pleasures of man—those halcyon days when a man could prove himself a man, in bloody fights, and swift moonlight raids, and the acquisition of much loot in the shape of women and cattle.

Koski is a great character, content in the evening of his life to sit from year's end to year's end, in sunshine and in rain, watching, while they graze on the luscious grass, his master's cattle—which he loves. His quick eye can pick out the ailing calf, or the mother about to add her progeny to the herd, with a dexterity which no white man could achieve. For five years he has served thus faithfully, in daily intercourse with me, yet he remains still the same savage he was when first engaged as herd.

Seated on a gigantic patch of lobelia, as blue as heaven itself, with the evening sun disappearing in a blaze of glory behind the distant mountains, the cattle peacefully chewing the cud all around, and Koski squatting on his haunches by one's side, one envisages another aspect of life. It is as if a thousand years or more had rolled back, and Koski and I can view the problems of life in the same perspective.

Save for a string of beads round his neck, and the quaint little cap, which is worn by all the men of the Lumbwa tribe, tied under his chin, Koski is as nude as the day that his mother brought him into the world, and his black soft satiny skin shines in the light of the dying sun with a healthy lustre which our white skin never seems able to attain. 'Yes, Bwana,' he says, with a sorrowful shake of the head, 'the good old days have gone! The Sarkali is everywhere! Now, when one wants another woman, one has to go and work for the Wasungu¹ till enough rupees are amassed to pay for her. It is a bad business—bad!' He spat lustily. 'Before your breed usurped our land we were a perfectly happy people. Bloodshed! Of course there was bloodshed. If you want to prove yourself a man you must spill blood. But now the men become even as women—the Sarkali forbids us all our pleasures. Pah!

'We are poorer, too. Cattle do not multiply rapidly when you cannot add to your herd, except by Nature's ways, and as for our women, we can keep fewer of them also—the tax on them is a wicked one.² You, Bwana, must know how impossible it is to keep two women in one hut—as well put two male leopards in

¹ White man.

² Kenya natives are taxed on the number of huts they possess.

¹ Government.

the same bed together. Yet we pay heavily for the peace which many huts insure.'

'Would it not be better and cheaper, Koski,' I asked, 'to keep only one wife?'

'With much ignorance do you speak,' he answered patiently. 'Your women! God alone knows why you even keep so many as one. They are not worth their food! But with us it is different. How otherwise would the maize get cultivated, and the cattle bomas be kept clean?'

'You might do it yourself,' I suggested.

'Such work is not for men,' he answered; 'it is fit only for women.' He spat again, and sighed heavily. 'Besides, if you have only one wife, how can you breed enough children? Many children mean wealth—the small boys can help their mothers harvest the maize, and the girls I sell in marriage for many head of cattle.'

'How many offspring do you possess, Koski?' I asked curiously.

He waved an ebony arm towards the sky. 'God,' he answered solemnly, 'has taken seven. There are only fifteen left. But most of them,' he went on, his face lighting up with a satisfied smile, 'are girls. Five have already brought me a hundred goats and thirty head of cattle, and there remain still six to be given in marriage!'

There was a pause, as Koski, taking some snuff from an old horn by his side, stuffed his nose full of it.

'You talk, Koski,' I remarked, 'of the good old days, but surely there were times when a tribe stronger than the Lumbwas raided you, and carried off *your* women and cattle. Did not an accident like that make you wonder if your system was really a wise one?'

'Certainly not!' he replied. 'The Lumbwas are brave men. It rarely happened, and, anyhow, when it did—it was the will of God!'

III.

Koski's belief in the efficacy of charms is an ineradicable one, but on the only occasion when this art was called to my aid it failed—lamentably. Perhaps the presence of an unbeliever at the rite angered the spirit world, or perchance Koski's own explanation of its non-success was the correct one.

A valuable bull was very sick. The stock inspector, calling, had been unable to diagnose the case, and blood slides sent to the laboratory for investigation had produced negative results. Truly, veterinary as well as medical science is only as yet on the fringe of things.

Koski assured me, however, that he had a charm which would completely cure the beast, and for two or three days he insistently demanded to be allowed to exercise it. Finally, one evening, as the poor brute was obviously going to die, leave was given him to 'go ahead.' Disappearing into his hut, he remained there

for nearly half-an-hour. What he did in his secluded abode during that time I have no means of knowing. A solemn shake of the head was the only answer received to my curious inquiry as to why he had been so long. When at length he did emerge, he carried in his right hand a piece of black root, round, and about the size of a golf-ball. Planting himself immediately in front of the sick bull, he proceeded to nibble a piece off the black lump. It was extremely hard, and some few minutes elapsed before even his perfect ivories had broken off a piece and chewed it into pulp. Then he jumped up, began to dance wildly all round the animal, arms flung high in the air, singing with deep voice in an unknown tongue some weird incantation. When physical endurance was wellnigh exhausted he sank on his knees, and, forcing open the beast's jaw, spat a large amount of accumulated saliva into its mouth, nostrils, and eyes. Finally, holding the bull's lower jaw in both hands, he squatted down beside it, with bent head, still as marble, as if in holy meditation!

It was a strange scene, for night had fallen; a full silvery moon was just rising, casting fitful beams among the feathery bamboos which surround the cattle boma, a shaft of its uncanny light catching now and again Koski's lithe, naked body as he whirled round and round. Any veneer of civilisation which contact with the white man may have temporarily laid over this elderly Lumbwa had completely disappeared. He was, once more, the simple, unadulterated savage. His dusky skin was bathed in perspiration, bare breast heaving with excitement, every limb twitching with nervous fervour, black eyes gleaming like live coals; and round us all, enveloping us, part and parcel of such a rite, the mystical, brilliant moonlight of an African night!

Unfortunately Koski's manifold exertions were in vain. A visit to the boma early next morning revealed the bull lying dead. The charmer stood by its still warm body, looking sadly and thoughtfully down on it.

'The magic spell did not do much good, eh, Koski?' I remarked.

But Koski's faith is of that kind which can remove mountains. 'Many moons,' he answered mournfully, 'have waxed and waned since last I worked that charm. Cursed fool to forget two words of the incantation! Hence death has come!'

THE SMILE.

As sudden sunlight fills the glooming depths
Of pinewoods with a sweet surprise, her smile
Poured from the upper light into my mind.
I glimpsed one instant part of that fair land
Wherein her spirit dwelt, serene and sure . . .
And, as the sunlight fades and leaves the wood
Dark and more desolate still, her smile was gone,
And all my mind was shadowed depth again.

R. W. POVEY.

THE FIRST SCOT.

PART III.

XI.

VO never forgot the awful feeling of utter helplessness when the monster seemed to tower over him as he ran for his life, his famous weapons flung away to lighten him. The narrow escape made him think of the country from which his mother had come, in which these terrible brutes were unknown. She had tried to describe the beasts of prey that did exist in it; but in her recollection of a past so long gone they seemed harmless enough compared with these nightmare horrors.

And to Vo this mysterious land held a stronger attraction—in it there were other human beings like themselves, with whom to associate, to hunt, and among whom to find companions, ay, even a mate perhaps. For young blood called, and Vo was lonely. By the time that he was twenty his mother was old and feeble, for in that strenuous epoch men and women aged fast. She was crippled by disease; and her sufferings made her ill-tempered and hard to live with. Had she been in her own country, she would probably have been knocked on the head ere now by her relatives as a useless burden on them; but her son was unusually tender-hearted for that age and had affection for her, so he patiently endured her grumbling and complaining, hunted for her, and gave her the choicest tit-bits of the birds, fish, and reptiles with which he filled the larder.

Her favourite meal was dinosaurs' eggs, which he often found in the forest; and she liked them better if they contained young ones ready to be hatched out. For she so hated the giant reptiles that it gave an added zest to the dish to realise that she was eating one of them before it could grow into a monster big enough to devour her.

She seldom left the shelter now, as her son had forbidden her ever to do so unless he were with her to protect her, since she was too decrepit to escape if chased by any dangerous beast. So she sat at home, generally nursing her jaw, because she suffered much from toothache—a malady which plagued even the earliest humans. Thus Vo was free to wander and hunt where he wished.

He spent much of his time sitting on the rocks by the sea, brooding over an idea that had long filled his mind. It was how to escape from this island. For it seemed Scotland's unlucky fate, even then, that her children were driven to seek a living elsewhere.

Day after day he used to watch for and spear the big rays and skates in the water below him;

but all the time while he was waiting for them his brain was busy with his great idea. Once as he lay on a rock a fearsome marine creature, thirty feet in length, a plesiosaurus, came to the surface, and, raising its small head set on a long, snaky neck, snapped at his leg dangling carelessly. But the sharp spear took it in the throat, and it floundered back into the depths, to be attacked in its helplessness by a shoal of its own kind attracted by the blood.

Sometimes a sauropod dragged its enormous bulk out on to the rocks near him; but Vo paid little heed to it, knowing it to be harmless. But when an ichthyosaurus with its porpoise-like head and big jaws studded with sharp teeth crawled ashore to bask in the sun, pulling itself up with its flippers like a seal, and eyed him malevolently out of its enormous eyes, he moved to a safe distance; for he knew this fish-reptile to be a dangerous brute.

The stretch of rocks that he frequented was fairly free from the carnivorous land-monsters, since the herbivorous ones on which they preyed would naturally avoid it, and the trees of the forest stretched down to it, offering him a line of escape if he were attacked. Here, day after day, he puzzled over the problem of leaving the island. His mother had told him how she had crossed the sea, and at first he thought of employing the same means to transport them both to her native land.

For in that early age men knew nothing of boats. But Vo decided that to wait for a gale blowing towards the rising sun—this he judged to be the direction of his goal—and then venture out into the storm on a drifting tree was not feasible. He would need something that would travel faster and could be controlled. But what that should be he did not know.

XII.

As Vo had long ago found that stones sank and wood floated, the latter must be his friend. One day he saw a tree with many branches and a bare log swept along by the tide, helped by a strong breeze, and observed how much more quickly the second moved, being unencumbered by boughs. When it finally bumped against the rocks near where he was standing he ran to meet it and placed one foot on it. It promptly rolled over, nearly throwing him into the sea. Clearly he had not found the answer to the riddle.

But he towed it into a large pool among the rocks, which at low tide was cut off from the sea but still contained several feet of water. Then he looked for a fallen tree in the forest, trimmed off the branches with his axe, and cut

it into two or three long logs, which he dragged into the pool. He found that they supported him in the water when placed side by side; but, unless he held them, they separated and rolled over. So he added a few more logs and tied them together, and was then able to stand on them.

He had conquered a new element—the water. He had made the first raft!

But, experimenting with it in his testing basin, he found that he could not propel it when, imitating the flippers of the great fish-lizards, he used his hands as paddles. They lacked power. After some thinking he cut down a sapling and fashioned it into a paddle, which with some practice he learned to use.

To his delight he was able to move his raft about the pool. But so slowly! And when a strong wind blew he could do nothing against it. He was in despair.

The next day two trees with branches interlaced drifted against the rocks. One was partly hollow, with an opening in the side out of the water. He pulled them into the pool, and found how steady each was from the support given by the other through the interlaced branches. He got into the hollow one and tried to paddle it, but the underneath boughs fouled the bottom of the pool. So at low tide he trimmed all the branches off, and substituted for the solid tree a long, light log, joining it to the other by two poles lashed with hide thongs.

Vo got into the hollow tree and found that now he could paddle it at a good rate around the pool, and that, even if he swayed his body from side to side, the tree was steady, could not turn over, indeed, no matter how he tried, owing to the weight of the parallel log.

Without knowing it, he had fashioned the first outrigger canoe.

Rough and ill-designed it was, of course; any boy nowadays could make a better one—for many, many centuries ignorant savages have done so. But no liner or battleship that Clydeside ever launched was as wonderful as this rude canoe. For it was the first boat, Man's first triumph over the sea!

XIII.

Proud of his achievement, Vo hauled it up on the rocks, where it would be safe at high tide, and, axe on shoulder, started off to tell his mother of his success. But before he reached the trees a heartrending shriek of direst agony rang through the forest—and was suddenly stifled. It was a human cry! With a dread foreboding he ran forward; but before he had gone a hundred yards he stopped and dodged behind a tree. On the ground was a writhing, heaving mass, coiling, uncoiling, flashing in many colours; and high out of it rose a flat, pointed head with beady eyes and a red

mouth, out of which a forked tongue flickered incessantly.

It was an enormous python, sixty feet long; and Vo, to his horror, saw that a human body was enfolded in the shining coils, which were slowly crushing it to a shapeless pulp. For a moment they relaxed and he saw the victim's head—his mother's! The old woman for some reason must have disobeyed him and come in search of him, only to be caught by the terrible reptile.

She was dead; of that there was no doubt. Her son was too late to save her. Indeed, had she been alive he could have done nothing. His axe would have been useless. One blow from the great serpent's head, driven like a gigantic battering-ram, would have annihilated him. So he was forced to look on helplessly while the python made its preparations for its dread meal, licked the old woman's corpse all over with its forked tongue, covering it with slimy saliva, and slowly swallowed it whole. Then it dragged its awful length away to its lair among the rocks in a shady dell in the forest.

But through the branches overhead the young man followed; and when the serpent sank into the stupor of digestion Vo climbed down cautiously and crept to within striking distance. Then, with his sharp-edged axe, he smashed the comatose reptile's skull and avenged his mother.

Springing up a tree to be safe from the violent writhing of the twisting coils of the enormous body, he watched until the last muscular contortions had died away, and rejoiced at the knowledge that the problem of his food supply for the intended voyage was solved. The python had eaten the dead woman, and with poetic justice he meant to eat it; so he cut off huge slices of its flesh to take with him in the boat.

The question of water was more difficult; for in that age vessels in which to store or carry it had not been thought of, and, like the beasts, men were obliged to live always within reach of a stream or a lake. But Vo's inventive genius was not long at fault. He had often seen water lodged in the hollows of bamboo stems broken off short by the passing of some huge monster; and this gave him an idea. By cutting off lengths of this tubular plant below joints he made portable vessels which only needed wooden stoppers to enable him to carry all the water that he was likely to need.

His mother's death left him lonelier than ever; and he determined to start on his voyage as soon as he was satisfied with his ability to handle his canoe, the bows of which he had trimmed to a sharp point, taking a fish's head as model. The meat he dried in the sun; and it was still good when, placing it in his boat with his water-vessels, his weapons, and tools,

he pushed off daringly from the shore at day-break on a summer morning and began his great adventure into the unknown.

XIV.

Strange sea-monsters basking on the surface stared at the canoe as he paddled on, taking it to be some new kind of marine creature. Some dived hurriedly to escape it; others were half-inclined to attack it as a rival and a possible foe. But Vo went on undaunted, setting his course by the changing sun, and aided by a northerly breeze that sprang up.

None shall ever write the story of that daring voyage. Even its hero could not recall what happened after the setting of the sun on the second day. The wind freshened, the sea rose, the tides swung him here and there; in the dark he had no idea of direction, in his sleep he drifted aimlessly.

How long the adventure endured he never knew. But Fate stood his friend. One day, when his food and water had been long exhausted and his canoe was almost swamped, he was flung ashore on a sandy beach bordered by a dense forest. The tumbling waves rolled his boat over and over on the shelving sand, and finally sank it; but Vo clung to his precious weapons and tools, even while digging fingers and toes into the sand to save himself from being dragged back by the receding breaker.

The sea and the winds had brought him to the shores from which they had torn his mother! He was in the land that was to be France!

When he rose to his feet he saw a rivulet running down from the forest to the beach. Staggering to it, he flung himself down and drank deep of the brackish water. Then, holding his spear ready in his right hand, the other weapons and tools bunched under his left arm, he advanced cautiously towards the trees.

As he reached them he saw a face staring down at him from the higher branches. In the early ages of mankind human beings were not hostile to each other, even to strangers; because none possessed anything that others need envy, and all were allied in the constant fight against wild beasts. So Vo, fearing no danger, sprang up a tree and, despite the encumbrance of his weapons, climbed towards the unknown, his heart beating wildly at the thought of meeting another of his species at last.

And there, in a leafy bower high above the ground, he was brought face to face with the first woman, except his mother, that he had ever seen. She did not flee, but awaited him in awed wonder, for she had watched his coming over the sea.

She was young, and, judged by modern European standards, ugly as an ape, yet not unlike an Australian aborigine. But to Vo she was beautiful; and he gazed at her entranced, hardly believing that so lovely a creature was real.

In the tongue that his mother had taught him, but with a marked difference of accent, the girl said, 'Who are you?'

'I am Vo,' he replied simply.

'Vo? The New? Yes, you are new. You come from the water?'

He did not waste time in explaining. 'I am hungry,' he cried.

She looked pityingly at him. 'Come!' she said.

XV.

She led him through the branches. After they had gone some distance she pointed ahead. 'The Old Ones,' she said.

Through a screen of leaves Vo saw a gray-haired old man and woman squatting on a platform of sticks in the fork of a tree. They were the girl's parents.

They welcomed him eagerly when they learned that he was a stranger, and begged him not to go from them; for their children, who had hunted for them, had one by one perished by the fangs and claws of the great beasts of prey, all save this girl. And when they saw that their daughter found favour in his sight they rejoiced exceedingly.

And so, in a foreign land, Vo met his mate.

His wonderful flint weapons and tools aroused the admiring surprise of his new kin; and whenever other scattered dwellers in the forest came upon the Man of the Sea, as he was called, and saw them, they too marvelled, and copied them. And their use spread in time to all mankind.

And what was the later story of the island where Vo was born? In the ages that came afterwards Britain rose again from the waves, and the lonely islets became the mountain-tops of Scotland; while long-sunk England appeared above the ocean again, still joined to the continent of Europe, but by an ever-narrowing isthmus across which, as over a bridge, came an immigrant horde of animals and men to people the land. And the fate that had befallen their species elsewhere came to the giant reptiles, and they vanished for ever.

And be sure that among the flood of human beings that flowed north were many of Vo's descendants; for the legend of their wonderful ancestor lived long among the tribe that sprang from the loins of the First Scot!

THE END.

MODERN SMUGGLING.

By a CUSTOMS OFFICER.

I.

IN spite of stringent regulations, and the untiring supervision of vigilant Customs officials, smuggling still flourishes. It is, of course, manifestly impossible for the officers to examine minutely every item in a large ship's cargo. Enterprising modern smugglers are well aware of this, and they now resort to highly technical methods in order to baffle the revenue experts.

Imports are classified as 'free goods' and 'dutiable goods.' Free goods are delivered to the importers after a partial examination by the Customs. However, dutiable goods cannot be removed from bond until the account for duty has been raised and the money paid to the Collector of Customs. Most of the big frauds on the revenue have been found to be dutiable goods masquerading as free goods. But since it is not practicable to examine every article imported, the Customs officers must select a certain percentage for special examination. If, for example, a 'free entry' is passed at the Custom House for ten thousand bales of raw cotton, the officer, before giving delivery, selects a number of bales for inspection. These he 'spits'—that is, he inserts a special iron instrument, which is capable of penetrating to the interior of a large bale and extracting a small piece of the commodity. By means of the 'spit' very clever frauds have been detected.

A variety of 'spits' are used for this class of work. A barbed 'spit' is used for examining cotton, wool, and various coarse goods, so that a portion of the interior may be drawn out. A flat, wooden 'spit' is used in the examination of rolls of carpet, cloth, linoleum, and similar goods, which would be irretrievably damaged by using an iron or steel 'spit.' A short, fine 'spit' is used for probing the stuffing and packing in and around furniture. For seeds, a thin wire is used.

Numerous attempts have been made to secrete dutiable goods in free goods. Saccharin, for instance, has been found hidden in the stuffing of teddy-bears. The tax on this commodity is 8s. 3d. per ounce. Consequently, it is worth while attempting to get it through the Customs without paying the duty. But if the smuggler is caught the penalty imposed is very heavy. Some months back a ship's steward was detected attempting to smuggle 30 lb. of saccharin in Tilbury Docks. For this offence he was fined £441, 4s.

A particularly clever dodge was attempted some years ago. A consignment of champagne

was about to be removed, when an officer decided to open a bottle. To his amazement the 'fizz' proved to be 'Eau-de-Cologne.' The duty on perfumed spirits is, of course, considerably higher than the duty on sparkling wine.

Hollow castings, statuary castings, and drain pipes have often been used for smuggling dutiable commodities. Iron and tin drums, described as containing oil, have been discovered to be fitted with false bottoms and other compartments which contained strong spirits. This ingenious fraud caused considerable loss to the Customs revenue before it was discovered.

Tobacco and cigars have been found in the most extraordinary receptacles. For a long time large quantities were illicitly imported in false bottoms ingeniously made in poultry-coops and pigeon-boxes. Another good dodge consisted in importing empty casks which had double staves—separated by choice cigars! Cigars and tobacco were also found in bread, and in the interior of rich cakes. In fact, every device has been tried in order to evade paying the duty. On one occasion two officers, fencing with imported broom-handles, were amazed when one of the handles broke, and cigars flew about in all directions. The whole consignment was examined, and all the handles were found to be hollow, and filled with cigars. Tobacco has been found hidden in reels of paper, tubs of butter, and in bags of potatoes. Bales of cotton, packages of rags, and fur-waste have also been found to contain the 'fragrant weed.' Some years ago the Customs made a big seizure of smuggled tobacco in the East End, when they captured a huge boiler which had arrived from the Continent. The boiler was so big that it took six horses to draw it. It appeared that this boiler had frequently been sent to the Continent for repairs—and tobacco!

There is another aspect of smuggling which Customs officers must carefully guard against. This is the detection of 'free goods' in the manufacture of which dutiable goods have been used. For instance, all commodities containing spirits or sugar are liable to duty on the proportion of spirits or sugar present. Blacking, jam, sweets, cakes, and plum-puddings are dutiable, because they contain sugar. Moreover, cakes and plum-puddings contain raisins and currants, which are also dutiable goods. Then patent medicines, hair-washes, and a number of other products are liable to duty, which is assessed on the percentage of spirit present. Attempts are often made to deceive the Customs by concealing the percentage of sugar or spirits present in certain articles. However, the trained revenue

chemists soon detect these dodges. Saccharin is a high-duty commodity which smugglers frequently attempt to import free of duty. Attempts have been made to smuggle it in solution in water, glycerine, and other solvents, from which it can be easily recovered when it has left the custody of the Customs. This subtle form of synthetic smuggling is another example of the difficult and highly technical duties which the modern Customs officers are called upon to perform.

II.

When a ship arrives in port she is immediately 'rummaged' by Customs officials. The officers engaged in this work belong to the Waterguard or Preventive branch of H.M. Customs and Excise Department. Preventive officers are also entrusted with the examination of the baggage of passengers. The examination of a ship's cargo, and the computation of the taxes on the dutiable commodities, fall to the lot of the technical officers.

The rummaging of a ship is a colossal task. Rummaging crews are usually in charge of a preventive officer, whose long experience has taught him all the likely hiding-places which sailors use to secrete smuggled goods. In the olden days ships were often specially constructed for smuggling. They had false sides, false bottoms, false bows, false bulkheads, false ceilings, and numerous other clever contrivances for outwitting the Customs searchers. But the heavy penalties imposed on ships so fitted have effectively stopped this form of fraud.

Rummaging a modern liner is a dirty and a disagreeable job. The Customs officers carry electric torches or special oil-lamps. They must search the engine-rooms and inspect pipes, tubes, and every nook or cranny likely to harbour tobacco or spirits. The oil-tanks must be inspected, and the coals in the bunkers must be given more than a cursory inspection. The officers must also crawl through the ship's bilges and examine all the manholes. The beds and quarters of the crew must be inspected. The masts must not be neglected, and in the case of sailing-ships even the bowsprit, the yards, and the topmasts must be examined.

Officers have made the most surprising discoveries during the course of rummages. An apparently innocent-looking ship's 'fender' has on examination proved to be packed tight with tobacco. Coils of ropes left carelessly on deck have also concealed large quantities of tobacco. On one occasion an officer rummaging among the cinders in the engine-room discovered a considerable quantity of tobacco wrapped up in sacking. Tobacco has also been found in neatly scooped cavities made in logs of wood and in lifebuoys.

During the past few months Customs officers made some very interesting discoveries which

resulted in the appearance of the smugglers at the police courts. In one case the master of a British steamer was fined £29, 2s. 3d., being treble the duty and the value of tobacco, cigars, and cigarettes which he had attempted to smuggle. He assured the Customs officer that he had nothing to declare. The officer was not, however, quite satisfied. The cabin was searched, and the contraband found behind a chest of drawers. In another recent case a rum-mager found forty-two gallons of proof spirit in the water-ballast tanks in the forepeak of a ship lying in the Surrey Commercial Docks. A Finnish seaman was prosecuted for this offence, and fined £521, 13s. Not long ago a German cook was fined £18, 16s. at Liverpool for attempting to smuggle 3 lb. of cigars, which he had placed at the bottom of a drawer. A recent case at Grimsby shows how thorough the Customs officers must be in their examination of a ship. In this instance they found 74 oz. of cigarettes and 14 oz. of tobacco wrapped in oilcloth and hidden in the chain-locker of a steamer. Another clever detection was made some months ago at the Surrey Docks, when three Finnish seamen were caught bringing spirits ashore in specially constructed tin appliances, which were curved so as to fit the body. Three of these tins contained a gallon of strong spirits at a strength of 65 per cent. over proof. This spirit was sold ashore, and owing to its high strength—the strength of ordinary bottled whisky is 30 *under* proof—its bulk could be considerably increased by the addition of water. But perhaps the most ingenious smuggling dodge ever adopted was that successfully carried out by an amiable old salt for many years. After each voyage he always carried his accordion ashore along with his kit. He did it so openly that nobody suspected anything irregular. One unlucky day, however, an inquisitive officer stopped him and examined the accordion. It was filled with three hundred cigars!

III.

Nevertheless, it is in the examination of passengers' luggage that the Customs officers experience the greatest difficulty. In pre-war days, when the number of articles liable to taxation was not very extensive, the detection of smuggling was comparatively simple. But now that we have a protective tariff, with thousands of articles liable to high duties, the work of officers is of extraordinary difficulty. Many of these commodities are easily concealed about the person, and consequently the task of detection is no easy one. Moreover, there are several new taxes in force, such as the *Ad Valorem* duty, and the Key Industry duty. In connection with the Dumping duty, the famous dolls' eyes question, which caused no little amusement in the papers some time ago, gives an indication of the intricacy of the Customs officer's multi-

farious duties. Again, under the Safeguarding of Industries Act of 1921, an *ad valorem* tax of 33½ per cent. was imposed on about six thousand articles; and the Silk and Artificial Silk duties introduced this year have added notably to the commodities which must be 'declared' by those entering this country. Thus, when the Customs officer asks a passenger the stereotyped question, 'Have you anything liable to duty?' he has a very lengthy task in explaining the number of articles liable to taxation if the passenger seeks information on the subject. But, generally speaking, passengers are fairly honest. Most of their smuggling exploits consist of trying to get a few pounds of tobacco or a small quantity of spirits through free of duty. However, all dutiable goods must be 'declared' and produced to the officers for examination. The following goods may be passed by the officers free of duty, provided they are the *bona fide* unconsumed stores of the passenger who brings them into the country for personal consumption: Manufactured tobacco, including cigars and cigarettes, half-a-pound weight; spirits (other than cordials and perfumed spirits), half-a-pint; cordials and perfumed spirits, half-a-pint; other dutiables, if the duty does not exceed a shilling.

Clocks, watches, and musical instruments, which are now liable to an *ad valorem* tax of 33½ per cent., may be admitted free if they are *bona fide* personal effects, and duly declared. However, these articles must be few and dissimilar, and their individual value must not exceed three shillings. They are also exempt from tax if they bear clear and genuine indication of British manufacture. In the case of watches which are part of the ordinary wear or equipment of a passenger, an oral declaration of ownership is accepted. All dutiable articles not covered by these concessions are liable to the *ad valorem* tax.

When dutiable goods are not declared, but are subsequently discovered by the officers when examining baggage, duty free concessions are not allowed. Full duty is charged if the quantity concealed is within modest limits. But when there is evidence of a deliberate attempt to smuggle, treble the duty-paid value of the goods is demanded. In extreme cases the passenger is prosecuted, and brought before a magistrate.

Under the Customs Consolidation Act of 1876 Customs officers have the power to search the person of suspected smugglers. The passenger has, however, the option of being taken before a magistrate or a chief officer of Customs. In the case of women passengers it is enacted that a woman 'shall not be searched by any other than a female.' Female searchers are engaged by the Customs authorities for the search of suspected women. A person who denies that he has smuggled goods on his person, if such smuggled goods are subse-

quently found, is liable to a penalty of £100, or treble the value of such goods.

Although Customs officers have a great reputation for gallantry, they are frequently compelled to take the necessary action against women smugglers. These unscrupulous women take advantage of their sex in circumventing the Customs. When being interrogated by the officers they pretend to be suffering from the effects of sea-sickness. In fact, some of them are apparently so ill that the Customs officers have often conscientious scruples about worrying them. However, bitter experience has proved that such women are often expert smugglers. It is only a few months ago since a Belgian woman was caught at Dover with a pound of tobacco cleverly concealed among clothing in her luggage. The officers detained her on suspicion. A female searcher was requested to search her. The result of the personal examination was the interesting discovery that the woman was wearing a specially constructed belt which contained 2½ lb. of tobacco. For this offence she was fined £7, 10s. Customs officers of the old school often tell the tale of the famous Calais-Dover baby which frequently crossed the Channel in the arms of an adoring young mother. One day an officer asked to see the baby. The mother refused to let him raise the baby's veil. He persisted. In the end she yielded. The 'baby' turned out to be several pounds of tobacco! Women have often used their clothes and wraps for concealing rubber receptacles containing cognac and eau-de-Cologne. On one occasion a woman was caught smuggling cigars, which were neatly arranged in the lining of her skirt. Ladies' handbags, rugs, and parcels are not now exempted from examination, owing to the numerous cases of attempted smuggling recently detected.

IV.

Now, it is not possible to search every passenger arriving from abroad. To do so would necessitate a tremendous increase in the present Customs staff. Moreover, a personal search would also be a source of great inconvenience to travellers. Under the present system the Customs officers perform their trying duties in a very expeditious manner. A few months ago a newspaper reporter watched 370 passengers from Calais arrive at Dover and pass through the Customs formalities in less than half-an-hour. As a general rule, the officers never stop passengers unless they suspect them of smuggling. Expert smugglers have been frequently caught wearing waistcoats, corsets, thigh pieces, shin guards, hats, and caps which were specially made for secreting dutiable goods. Recently an officer noticed that an Italian carried an unusually large quantity of tomato soup in hermetically sealed tins and bottles. He opened one of the tins. It contained spirits. The

remaining tins and bottles were then examined. They all contained alcohol, the total quantity being $3\frac{3}{4}$ gallons. The Italian had to pay the Customs £60 for his 'soup.' Of late large numbers of Japanese travellers have been caught smuggling Swiss and German watches from the Continent. One wily Oriental had a valuable platinum and gold watch, studded with diamonds, secreted in a soap-box. Several Japanese smugglers have also been found wearing rubber belts for carrying watches. These smugglers are apparently well supplied with money. For instance, in 1921 a Jap smuggler, who was fined £134, 14s. for smuggling four watches, two cameras, and a magnifying glass, paid the fine at once. However, British subjects are also liable to succumb to the temptation to smuggle goods subject to the new *ad valorem* taxes. In 1922 a London jeweller was fined £560 for attempting to smuggle platinum and diamond watches. On the same day another man was fined £87 for illegally importing binoculars, cameras, opera-glasses, and carriage-clocks.

Smugglers adopt many clever tricks to get watches into the country free of duty. Recently a German steward on a Danish ship was fined for smuggling cheap watches, which he purchased at Hamburg for five shillings each. These watches were sold to Jews, who made considerable profits on the transactions. Men smugglers used to be caught wearing corsets which contained watches secreted in neatly-made pockets. One man had forty watches in a corset. Another clever dodge consisted in smuggling watches in books. Circular holes were made in a number of pages, into which the watches fitted. Gum did the rest, and the books were either packed in the luggage or openly carried in the hand.

v.

Under the Dangerous Drug Act of 1920 the import, export, manufacture, sale or possession of opium prepared for smoking, and the import or export of opium, medicinal opium, morphia, diamorphine (heroin), and cocaine are prohibited except under licence of the Secretary of State. Yet, in spite of the stringent precautions taken by the Customs officers, there is reason to believe that there is a widespread illicit traffic between Great Britain and the Continent in opium, cocaine, heroin, and other harmful drugs. Seamen and professional smugglers are engaged in this nefarious work, which, from a moral point of view, is far more abominable than smuggling tobacco and spirits. Recently in the House of Commons the Home Secretary stated that the authorities were aware that drugs were smuggled into the country, or sent through the post, from the Continent. He said that every effort was made to detect offenders, but short of opening all incoming passengers'

luggage, the minute search of every passenger, and the examination of every postal package, he was afraid it would not be possible to suppress the illicit introduction of drugs into the country so long as it was possible to obtain them without difficulty in other countries.

It has been asserted that there is an international gang engaged in the 'dope' traffic, and that colossal profits are made in supplying drugs to night-clubs and other unsavoury resorts in the underworld of London and other large British cities. Cocaine is the favourite drug of the 'dope' fiend. It is obtained from the coca plant, which is indigenous to South America. A crude extract is first made from the leaves of the plant. The extract is then sent to the Continent. It is believed that most of the cocaine smuggled into this country comes from France, Belgium, and Germany.

In spite of the difficulty of detecting 'dope' smugglers the Customs officers have succeeded in making a large number of clever captures. The devices used by these crafty smugglers are extremely ingenious. Recently two engineers on an Italian ship were fined £100 each, or six months' imprisonment with hard labour, for knowingly concealing 267 grammes of cocaine, valued at £410, with intent to avoid the prohibition against its importation into this country. The cocaine was in bottles, which were hidden in the ship's engine-room. Cocaine is known to the drug traffickers as 'snow,' 'coco,' 'happy dust,' 'the doings,' 'dream powder,' 'dope,' and 'white powder.' Large prices are paid for small quantities, and the chances of being caught are not so great as in the case of bulky articles. Yet the Customs and the police have caught 'dope' smugglers carrying 'snow' in fountain pens and in wristlet watches from which the works had been removed. The subtle 'dream powder' has also been concealed in the hollow handles of walking sticks and umbrellas, and in the handles of suit or attaché cases. A number of phials containing cocaine were found in cavities made in the high heels of a consignment of ladies' shoes. Men have also been caught with 'dope' in the permanent turn-up of their trousers, the lapels of their coats, and the lining of their hats. A smart capture was made some time ago, when the Customs seized a consignment of cigarettes which contained cocaine. Each cigarette held £5 worth of 'snow.' Women have also smuggled it in their hair, furs, and in powder-puff cases.

It is thus obvious that the officers are faced with a terrible task in their efforts to stamp out this insidious traffic. Only a percentage of the smugglers can be caught, and perhaps the least suspected people are often the most dangerous 'dope' traffickers. The officers, however, are more successful in dealing with seamen who have taken up 'dope' smuggling as a means of

increasing their income. Chinamen have, of course, an evil reputation for smuggling opium intended for home consumption, so to speak, in the Chinese quarters. They are frequently found concealing comparatively large quantities of narcotics. Some months ago at Liverpool a Chinaman was fined £10 for being in possession of opium. He was also sentenced to six months in prison for being in possession of sufficient morphine to poison ten thousand people.

Latterly, however, Chinamen have seen the commercial possibilities of smuggling drugs for the use of 'foreign devils.' But the result of recent prosecutions at the police courts should convince them that it is not a profitable trade, now that the authorities are determined to take drastic measures in order to suppress this diabolical drug traffic. Hard labour for six months, in addition to stiff fines of £200 or £300, is a great deterrent, even if 'snow' fetches £27, 10s. an ounce from unfortunate drug takers. Incidentally, a number of scoundrelly seamen are duping the 'dope' traffickers by secretly supplying them with a white powder which is as harmless in its effects as chalk or boric powder. In April 1922 a man pleaded guilty to being in unauthorised possession of, and offering for sale, cocaine. However, an analysis proved that the powder was counterfeit cocaine.

VI.

The parcel post from abroad is frequently utilised by smugglers in order to get dutiable goods through without payment of duty. But since the Customs officers are stationed at the Foreign and Colonial Parcels Depots in all large cities, very few of these attempts at smuggling succeed. Where dutiable goods are declared on the foreign Customs form, the duty is assessed by the British Customs, and the money collected by the Post Office authorities. But where dutiable goods are not declared and are obviously concealed with the object of evading the Customs duty, the goods are promptly seized and deposited in the King's Warehouse, where they are sold by public auction. These sales of seized dutiable goods include all sorts of wines, spirits, liqueurs, cigars, cigarettes, tobacco, clocks, watches, confectionery, cinema films, gramophones, records, and so on.

It is quite certain that smuggling will never be entirely suppressed so long as there are taxes levied on imported goods. Many people think it good sport to dodge the Customs; they do not consider that they are guilty of defrauding the revenue, otherwise they would probably not boast about it. I have frequently been told by respectable members of society how cleverly they fooled colleagues of mine. But Customs officers are human, and unless passengers are attempting smuggling on a big

scale, well, the officer does not see some things, officially.

Fears have been expressed that the rapid development of civil air navigation will result in a new form of wholesale smuggling. This may perhaps happen when aeroplanes are as common as motor-cars, but under the present rigorous system of registration, aeroplanes are completely controlled by the British and foreign Customs. Under the Air Navigation Regulations, 1919, machines must depart from and arrive at one of the approved aerodromes in Great Britain. Customs officers are stationed at these aerodromes. When a machine arrives from foreign parts it brings to at the Customs station. The machine is rummaged, and passengers and their luggage are searched in precisely the same way as if they had arrived by ship. Many of the machines on the Continental air routes carry dutiable goods such as wines and tobacco. Before these can be cleared the official account must be taken, and the duty paid to the Customs officer in charge of the aerodrome.

It is quite impossible for machines flying from Paris to Croydon to engage in smuggling. Their progress is checked as they pass various places on the air route. They are thus prevented from making illegal landings and disposing of dutiable goods. Some time ago one pilot did attempt smuggling. It appears that he was always ten or fifteen minutes later than he should have been in arriving after passing a coastal aerodrome. Then reports reached the Customs that he had been noticed landing at a certain place on a number of occasions. Investigations were made, and it transpired that he was in the habit of descending and handing over dutiable goods to his fiancée.

In America the authorities have now established an aerial police force for chasing air smugglers and air criminals. A number of cases have occurred where air smugglers have carried 'moonshine' and whisky from Canada and South American States to the United States. The new aerial police are, however, making this up-to-date form of smuggling a somewhat risky game. Incidentally, not long ago American Prohibition Enforcement officers used an aeroplane carrying machine guns to capture the British schooner *Annabelle*, which was hovering four miles off the coast of Florida. This ship had on board 11,500 cases of whisky, which was, no doubt, intended to be 'run.'

If Great Britain ever goes 'dry' we may have similar episodes to chronicle. In any case, the aeroplane will be a serious menace to the revenue if machines are allowed to reach this country without notifying the Customs. It is quite possible that in the near future the Customs authorities will be compelled to establish a Preventive Air Force to deal with air-smugglers.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

WHEN all of us were younger, the time of the goldening of the leaves and their fluttering and falling yielded one consoling reflection that warmed in our thoughts until it was desire. It became a complement and sequence to the summer touch with Nature in her sunny moods, for it was like a consideration of the spiritual works of man as accomplished sedately in his chamber. In such days, still remembered by those who urge they are yet young, the spent September was sorrowed for the less because of the new October that suggested to our northern kind the fireside, the easy-chair, the slippers, and especially the books, old favourites for further devoted attention, some calling for a new and special study, and a few perhaps that were being added to the collection and came sprucely covered, yet with a certain uncouth rawness of outside appearance. This frank and free delivery to books and cosiness was a habit of the people, but we produce Sir Edmund Gosse to witness that it was better practised in the north of our country than in the south. One may be soothingly alone with books in the heart of London, since solitude may be far better indulged in there than anywhere, and one who abides a small part of each year in the Temple was lately telling me that he came from the country and from far islands to read in these old rooms in an Inn of Court the books that in their spiritual and material selves were his dearest friends. Yet for a full sense of the true contentful cosiness for books we need winds without, and a dark and often dripping country, and not millions of dancing lights, millions of revolving wheels, millions of people turned to giddiness. To become entirely detached from all sense of the existence of these things is the hardest exercise in concentration. No place inspires this winter happiness and content with books so well as our northern homes, where the fireside holds for us something of that sacred charm that belonged to it in ancient times. In those old times we entered October gladly with plans for indoor work, the new activities of many societies; but most who were of good and serious mind were given to this book-hunger, yearning for the solace and tranquillity that were

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gathered from it. It was not merely the desire to acquire new information from the books, nor to delight again in the beautiful arrangement of words often read before. Mixed in the emotions was the desire to hold and fondle and to turn pages of the particular volumes we possessed as old companions with many associations, whose like of the same edition would not be the same. An illusion of living intimacy existed. To read a book was not enough to make it ours to love, nor to read it twice or thrice. It must have been well handled, marked, or dealt with in some personal way, and the better if it had been a journey with us. To select a book for important and lonely travels is a declaration of spirit and of choice that gives it sanctification. Three of my books, small things and as cloth and paper of the smallest value, have partnered me at times of travel for many years. No person has communed with me to such silent contentment and understanding as have these books, and ill as such a thought may be, I do confess that I should be less perturbed to hear that the home of my enemy had been destroyed, than that some thieving rascal had carried off these precious things. A dry philosopher might say, and in bygone days he did, that this was wrong, since we should love books only for the thoughts they hold, and that to fondle the material thing was intellectually an unnatural act, a sign of a weak and shallow mind, and that by this original sin others, like hypocrisy, were engendered, and true culture fell. But the honest lover of books thinks more, feels more, of the books that are truly and of long time his, and ponders on their thoughts, their minds, the more; and that is an answer.

* * *

But do not these hectic times thin out the numbers of such as love their books like this? Not only the young call for excitement instead of tranquillity, and the old race of book-lovers ages and passes away. Almost secreted in a corner of a journal I found the other day, in the form of a letter, impulsively written, a drastic statement by Sir Edmund Gosse, declaring that we are humbugs and do not love literature at all. In form and measure it was the most scathing utterance against us that I can remember. Perhaps it was because it was

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so bitter that the editor printed it in an inside corner. 'Sir,' said Sir Edmund Gosse, 'there is surely a strong element of humbug in the pretension that English people take any practical interest in literature. They are certainly not encouraged by the booksellers to do so. Anyone who suddenly asks for the text of any modern classic will find this out in a moment. If there is an author who might be expected to rouse perennial curiosity it is Jean Jacques Rousseau. I have just inquired at the shops of nine leading booksellers, and have failed in every case to discover an edition. The solitary copy these nine great bibliophiles could produce was one in very small type, very bad text, and an enormous price.' Then he wandered in fruitless search for a copy of Petrarch's sonnets in Italian, and he exclaimed bitterly, 'This experience could be repeated over and over again. The booksellers have no enterprise and no ambition in dealing with any books but those of the moment. Buyers have no pertinacity and no real interest. The whole pretence of a public love for literature is a delusion, and the sooner we recognise it the better.' This was harsh saying, perhaps to excess, following upon a disappointment. But a few days later this eminent critic was serene in the contemplation of a great personal occasion, and then he said that he was a little disappointed in the modern young man as a student and lover of books, for such an one who had been expensively educated seemed not to care to read anything but the newest sensation. One must go to the working people of the north country, he said, to find real students of literature, men and women who read books and not books about books. 'I admire more than I can say,' he added, 'the way in which these people spend their hard-earned money on serious books, expensively printed and produced. They are the true lovers of literature and the serious drama, and they have always been, in my experience, the supporters of the best literary movements, which in cultured London are only too often taken up as fads and speedily dropped.' Serious books, and such as are expensively printed and produced he is thinking of.

* * *

The most humble may feel, sighing, that what they hear of this passion for books is an emotion beyond them, that it requires a peculiar fineness of mind with scholarship. They imagine that the beloved volumes thus assimilated to their owner's souls are, at their lightest, sombre or subtle essays, or they may be philosophies of ancient seers or lovely lines of poets such as a properly qualified person might fittingly take to read on an excursion up the slopes of Parnassus, to muse upon as he sat by the Castalian spring. Such humble view is less than half correct. Admitted are

the charms of the studious and philosophical life, the allurements of the higher graces and refinement; but in this world, where as yet from continuous evidence we are still unthinkable ages from the perfection of our mind and spirit, red blood counts for more than ethereal vision, and the essence of a novel or tale is that it is human and made of blood. Spiritual ideals when joined to human hearts and bones are elusive things, for they grow, not in the ordinary way by means of carbon, nitrogen, and the various food-stuffs of Nature, but upon the airy products of the mind; so that, having by miraculous means increased most prodigiously, it is discovered later when they are examined in a human way, and an attempt is made to feel them, they do not really exist, and so are at an end. Let not an early ideal, established on a limited and youthful experience, be fostered in the mind for many years without some attempt at confirmation. Perhaps it was good for his happiness, and for the world by the inspired works it gained, that Dante had no opportunity to marry Beatrice, for idealisation was being pursued in the poet's mind at such intensity that, finding later that the lady had not been created in a lover's heaven, he would surely have been disappointed, and disaster would have followed. Doubtless he did best to wed the Donati, with whom he was happier than has often, without authority, been stated. For intimacy blood is still always best, and in the case of our friend-books it is better red than blue. Books that are very deep are beloved to some who own and treasure them, lingering upon great thoughts they hold until they could tell you on what page, and what part of it, a certain statement is made or sentiment expressed. They know the appearance of each page, where a scratch shows on the paper, or a stain is seen, which through some association becomes an almost sacred thing, like the mark of a wound received in battle. Certain marks remain on our pages that not for all the calf and gold of new editions would we have removed, for they are signs of life's great moments. Pleasant is the company on travellers' journeys of a small copy of a favourite poet's works, one which has aforetime been on many voyages. Such old travelling companionship is the most exquisite of all as between man and book; but the conditions are such that the favourites of a case like this could scarcely be the fireside lovers too. Discovered collecting things for his travelling cases, a friend who is a playwright of some note recently displayed to me, with the hesitation of a deep and secret affection, an old and much soiled little volume that would have been in tatters but for its worn black-leather covering—his favourite copy of Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*, than which he confessed he would rather leave his clothes behind; and do we not agree that a traveller of fine sense and thought who leaves behind this

anthology has somehow missed a point in the elementary instincts of the traveller? However, we do not settle by the glowing coals, calling up the sense of cosiness from the material things about us and our own helpful senses, in order to pick about among anthologies. Many there are who repeat and enhance some old delights of gentle philosophies attached to imaginary figures for a human effect, as, for a good example, in a volume which is now one of our dearest friends, the *Father Payne* of Arthur Christopher Benson, upon whose death lately this book indeed, published at first anonymously, was mentioned less than any and often omitted from the memorial lists. It is a tranquillising book for short and frequent diversion on winter nights, a preliminary or a supplement, and the better because many of its pages are of books and writing.

* * *

But the humble beings to whom just now we nodded, readers of novels as they mostly are, well know that, given taste for the superb classics of our language two or three generations back, no more better friendship between owners and books can be achieved than this; and here, if anywhere, we experience the intimacy of the individual copy, for none can say that life among the pages of a favourite novel first read, perhaps, thirty years or more ago, could be lived again with such delight and comfort, with illusion of reality, as in the old copy of the first reading. By this passing of twenty years or more it may seem that the material book has slipped back to the period to which its soul belongs, and is not just a novel but the living narrative of its comedy and tragedy. Such illusion, for whatever it may be worth, is lacking in a new copy, and I know men and women—numbering myself among them—who, having by great misfortune lost a favourite, the old and original copy of a story that had greatly pleased them, have preferred never to read it more rather than buy something printed newly now. But with a copy of the beloved among the old novels, drawn curtains and the fireside, even the tortures of governments that live only to tax may lose their sting. For this lover's business the old novels are the best; so many think. Some complaints arise that the new novels of the time are worked too subtly and thematically, with an excess of ugly digging in psychology. However that may be, much of the present writing fits the period, and its defenders will urge, and fairly, that in some points of literary technique it is, at best, superior to all that has preceded it. Certainly the art has been intensely studied by hundreds where once there were only isolated and often careless units. The artistic souls and subtle minds of our present times would be worse than pessimists consider them were there no advance or, let us say, change with an improve-

ment according to certain standards already fixed and sometimes varied, since there can be no final settlement as to better and best in this affair, tastes and standards varying and being altered with age and circumstance. Instinct itself varies with them. We cannot settle even upon what is beautiful and otherwise, or what is good and bad. People of the arts are deep in dissensions upon these matters. Therefore we cannot with supreme conviction declare that one phase of art is better than another, only at the present time that our inclination, due to time and circumstance, guides us to a preference which those who succeed us may deride. Action and reaction is the eternal process of exploration in art and all the great spiritual problems, to the end that a grain of truth is extracted from a million lives in many ages, and, in some distant time, when men have changed, a morsel of some dazzling thing of thought may at last be gained and labelled with final authority in the grandest human triumph, as Truth and Beauty. It is for that that all history is being so violently made. Even a part of this process is the fireside reading of novels old and new, causing the continual movement and exercise, with unceasing alternations, of the human mind and taste. Critics, in condemning our modern novels, write as if they were all of one style and theme, or nearly, when diversity and difference are immense. They can hardly be classified in schools. How much is there in common between Mr Wells, Mr Galsworthy, and Mr Bennett, who are often accepted as three leaders of the times? Perhaps they are all less diffuse, more direct, and more quickly penetrating than the Victorian novelists; their technique may be more subtle and elaborate—but still they are all very different. And the other writers are not like them, even in lower scale. Yet our modern novels have in a large measure a certain common characteristic running through them in that, harmoniously with the times, they are nervous, uneasy, excited, and exciting. They are often, as we might say, jumpy. They may have nought to do with wars and strikes, bad governments and crime, strikes and taxation, fox-trots or national decadence. Such themes may be shunned, and scenes be laid in some Arcady supposed to have survived the general shattering process of the last decade; but the influences exist and work, and tinge all that is written. For such reasons it is hard to regard the new novels in general as being such good fireside friends as some of the works of the great Victorian writers. The neglect into which these fell when Victorianism passed and reaction came was stupidly mistaken, and the qualities of their art are now being better perceived and appreciated by such as were led astray. These were accustomed to deride the careful building up by masses of detail of scenes and characters, yet now they

know what superb building it was and how it lives.

* * *

The old novelists, differing from writers under present influences, achieved with their splendid illusion of reality the sense of comfort with domesticity, in a Britain that was then mostly tranquil. Hence they are not only good fire-side books at any time, but are splendid for the present. We leave Piccadilly Circus with its jigs and glares, and all its vulgarities, and by these old pages we pass into the smooth and shaded lanes of the countryside and live among the people there, in the cottage and the hall. At times with them we come to London, but we do not stay for long, and it is the London of the old and mellow days. Surely the essence of perfect companionship in old novels is full understanding and intimacy with the characters, and the old novelists by their system were marvellously successful in achieving this. Recently I read a remarkable novel published early in the war time, and evidently written earlier by Mr Somerset Maugham, entitled *Of Human Bondage*, and it extended to no fewer than six hundred and forty-eight closely printed pages! Minuteness of characterisation went to limits in this work, and in some ways it was finely, grimly successful; but neither Mr Maugham nor any other of the present age seems able to accomplish in twice the space which the Victorians are considered to have wasted the essential miracle of producing flesh from paper and blood from ink. Thomas Hardy indeed belongs not to our age but to the Late Victorian, and he is the only living writer who in *Tess* accomplished that miracle in something like the old way. Then we may reflect upon Soames, and others of the tragic heroes and heroines created by Mr Galsworthy, but of hardly any others. For living friends in old beloved books, with whom to spend serenest evenings now, where shall we find more grateful companionship than in the *Mill on the Floss* of George Eliot, or in some of the stories of Jane Austen, in which of late interest has much revived? Here in this art, gentle reality, with truth and beauty, is expressed as not elsewhere, and the reader, feeling the art and the life and the truth, gains a deep and composing satisfaction. Who shall not sit indoors for several nights to observe again the subtle Becky at her little games in *Vanity Fair*, no longer 'skipping,' as we were wont to do, but lingering upon this renewed acquaintance? Then surely Scott is for the soft and easy chair, and not an author for the train. I have the pleasure of nearest intimacy with the characters of a great Victorian, whose reputation has somehow suffered in a stupid way by a silly pose of critics and some others, who have affectedly condemned the system of writing to which he, Anthony Trollope, himself confessed,

having a clock upon his table and deciding firmly that a certain number of words should be written in every hour. The posers say that this was contrary to the principles and practices of art, which favours laziness and irregularity; but yet nearly every writer of success and reasonable production adopts something like it, though perhaps not always reckoned or publicly proclaimed in hours and words. Trollope admitted his clock and schedule; a duchess declared it dreadful, and that fancy has remained in all hypocritical minds. For the reflective evenings of a waning and doleful year, and for travelling when, far away, thoughts of our homeland touch us with that hungering tenderness that only travellers know, I know nothing like the Barchester novels, because they are plain and true, and, making a clear and progressive human statement of the course of ordinary life, they are convincing. Knowing the people and where they live and all about them, we join their life at once, happily and sentimentally. Let it be London or anywhere in Europe, Africa, or America, when the day is done we Barsetians like nothing better than a quick return to dear Barchester with the Duke and the parson, the doctor, and all the other people of that simple but intensely human world. We shall look in on Mary Thorne and have a word with her. Anthony Trollope was most excellent in the manner he achieved this effect of intimacy by the simplest and plainest means. He never surprises or excites his reader, all is quite plain and logical, and yet you are never wearied, being with the best of friends. Here is our old country as we remember it, with all its old squirearchical solidity and mellowness, and its rich and rare stupidity. We leave the city or the newspapers, suggesting a strange world of freaks and impossibilities, which are not less absurd because they happen and are reported, and we puff down the backward way of time until here at last is Barchester, with the Duke and Doctor Thorne and everybody, with the most genuine human blood in them. Mary would not bob her hair or shingle it, and she would not smoke; the Duke would always be a lofty duke and not a tradesman; the doctor would play a perfect tact, and the parson's wife would exercise her tongue. Mary, the 'queen of names, Lucy, Amelia, Pamela, Jane—how appealing in sweet old-time simplicity are the names of our friends in some of these old book-bordered communities! We are glad to meet such friends through the same medium as before. No others equal them in human strength, for in this period does it not often seem that after the terrors, the insincerities, of the times in which we live have entered the delicate veins of the characters of new fiction? We make enduring friendships with none of them. We have done for ever with the heroine of the best of sellers as we leave her at the end.

A GALLANT ADVENTURE.

By W. O. SANKEY, M.D., B.S.

IF one earns a living by practising as a doctor in the immediate neighbourhood of Dartmoor one has the great privilege of spending many hours of one's life, both by day, and to a lesser extent by night, in driving alone in the magnificent air and through the lovely scenery of the moor.

Throughout the year the moor charms and fascinates with its ever-changing lights and shades, with its views of the most lovely of the rivers of Devon, the Dart, and its occasional glimpses of sea and coast-line in the distance.

Some of my brother doctors pursuing a more lucrative course may envy one; indeed I have heard some state so after spending a few days' holiday in the district, when the moor is at her best in her raiment of purple and gold.

Let one of these jealous ones accompany me on one of my drives in the small hours of the morning just for seven or eight miles 'out over.' A fairly thin covering of snow makes it difficult to distinguish the edge of the road on the open moor, so that we proceed cautiously. The lack of hedges enables the fierce wind quickly to form drifts through which no car may pass, and if one sticks in the drift the sleet and wind make one ponder whether after all Dartmoor is really the best place to practise in. However, there are compensations.

At times one is intensely interested in the opportunity to witness some unusual happening, and I have longed more than once to have a really good camera, ready for immediate use, in the car with me, together with skill and ability to use it well, in order to record for others what one has enjoyed oneself.

To-day I was fortunate enough to witness one of these incidents, and I have since sincerely regretted that I was armed only with a stethoscope and not with a camera.

After driving about six miles out to a little hamlet on the edge of the moor, I was stopping the car and preparing to walk a few yards to the house of a patient, when I heard sounds of 'Battle Royal.' Glancing down the lane, I saw a hot contest proceeding in a field thirty yards away. The first combatant to catch my eye was a large, heavy, crossbred stag¹ of the Rhode Island type; to my amazement his opponent was a wild cock pheasant.

I naturally postponed my professional visit and hurried to the arena. Before I could get there, two other would-be spectators ran out of a cottage, intent on observing the fray and shouting to me the nature of the fight.

'Twas soon over. The poor stag fell through the hedge and retreated across the lane for home. The victor ran past him, disdaining to take any further notice of his defeated adversary, and rushed on to a small patch of grass where the ladies of the harem were sunning themselves. He singled out one and pursued her across the plot, twice managing to catch some of her feathers in his beak. She, however, while under the observation of her sisters, successfully evaded him, and retired under a bundle of faggots which was standing by a shed. Whether she then surrendered to his bold advances, none will ever know, although I must admit that I ran to see what happened, leaving my two fellow-observers pitying the poor stag, who was standing with bleeding head and comb, and looking as if he had had more than enough of it.

When I got to the faggots the pheasant ran out, and, taking no notice whatsoever of me, passed within two yards in a fierce rush towards another hen, the only sign of disturbance in his magnificent courting plumage being one broken tail feather. Much to my regret the two lady spectators at this time turned their attention from vanquished to victor, and clapped their hands and shouted at him. The invader then rose into the air and flew to the woods by the side of the Dart.

I doubt if the stag would crow loudly during the next few days. I wonder what the elder ladies of the harem really thought about the scandal.

Surely the gallant adventurer will be pardoned, if the excuse that he made to his lawful lady loves to explain the damaged tail feather differed slightly from the tale that he told in strict confidence to his old friend and rival, the cock in the next covert!

AUTUMN LEAVES.

I TURN with pilgrim thoughts for ever tending
In homeward flights, love-laden like the dove,
To where the trees above the Almond bending
Embrace, and seem to love.

I turn from where the late-won gold of harvest
Has vanished from the fields—the stooks are led.
Ungathered gold of Autumn! in the forest
I gather you instead.

Yours is a richer harvest, though forsaken
By passing gleaners, careless where they tread;
For in your pregnant heaps my footsteps waken
Green summers that are fled.

Alone, beneath the sunsets that enshrine Her,
While round my feet the dear dead seasons lie,
Here, in the waning twilight, I entwine Her
This wreath of memory.

W. L. FERGUSON.

¹ Stag, local name for cock or cockerel.

THE EXTRA DAY.

By J. W. HERRIES.

I.

AS John Jamieson McTaggart, W.S., paced through the sedate, suburban streets and terraces in the semi-darkness of an Edinburgh spring evening, the gipsy man's face kept recurring to his mind's eye. He had seen the gipsy only for a second or two under the none too brilliant street-lamp. Yet he seemed to have carried away a remarkably vivid impression of him. He could see still the man's black merry eyes, his gray-brown face—which had also a suggestion of apple-red—the straggling locks of curly black hair which escaped from under his cap. Round his neck was a red scarf. A faded maroon coat was buttoned close, because of the cold, damp air. The shoulders stooped a little. The man showed physical signs of age; yet he had an unquelled boy's spirit in his eyes.

He had seemed to appear from nowhere, near the end of the terrace where the lawyer lived. It was the usual kind of request from a down-at-heel wayfarer—something about an old coat. There was little doubt about the one he was wearing being past mending. The lawyer's sharp glance noted that the upper parts of the cuffs had been worn into semicircles.

He was surprised, and a little irritated, by the stranger addressing him by name. It startled him to realise that he, an unobtrusive figure in an avenue which breathed the very spirit of privacy, should be watched and identified. But of course, he reflected, this was part of these gipsy peoples' trade.

In spite of his appearance, there was no hang-dog look in the man's face or manner. From his eyes, with their hint of merriment, there seemed to come a penetrating look of understanding. He had said something about calling for a cast-off coat at the office. Of course, McTaggart put his foot down on that impertinence. It would never do to have characters of that kind coming about the dignified portals of the Charlotte Square establishment.

And now, as he followed his course through the sedate streets of this residential part of the city, he was conscious of a vague uneasiness. There seemed to be something in the encounter that was struggling for recognition. Something had violently broken in on his complacency; only, he could not give it a name.

Arrived at his club, he made a futile attempt to read. In the middle of the second page he realised that what had gone before had left no impression. This was no new experience. He had for some time been aware of a painful, listless indifference. Everything seemed un-

profitable; but he had never realised the fact with such startling clearness as now.

A vague alarm began to invade him. Why had everything so completely lost its savour? Enthusiasm, zest, the exercise of a lively choice, appetite and satisfaction seemed to have sunk down, leaving only the cold ashes.

This general slowing-down of interest had been a gradual process. The colour had been going out of life for a long time. Why? He had not the least idea. How was it that it had come so forcibly home to him on this particular evening? Was it because of the sharp contrast brought home to him in the person of the gipsy—living hand to mouth, but with a natural vitality surging and glowing within him; whereas he, fortunate from the world's standpoint, was sated with life?

Were other people similarly afflicted? He looked about him. There, in the next arm-chair, was a wealthy architect, cumbrous of figure and blotched of face, a glass of port beside him, a cigar held in his fingers, in the same chair and occupation as on any other evening at this time. Was he enjoying life? He did not look as if he were—with his eyes fixed on vacancy, and his features relaxed in an expression of dull apathy. A government official was reading one of the older more sober magazines, with the air of a schoolboy at a lesson. Two men in a corner were conversing in low tones; and a glance was sufficient to show that neither of them was particularly interested in the conversation.

McTaggart returned to his bachelor home, depressed and out of sorts. No doubt, he tried to believe, the world would have a slightly pinker aspect next morning.

II.

It was always a pleasure to enter the spacious, dignified hall, to note the deferential air of his clerks, to take his seat in his arm-chair at the great desk, and to proceed with the opening of the day's letters. On this morning, the faint satisfaction of this part of the routine quickly faded out. The bundle of letters would bring no surprise for him.

'What had gone wrong?' he asked himself again, for the twentieth time since last evening.

Life had worked out for him according to plan—or better than plan. A fortunate chance had made him partner of an old-established firm. He had found his feet; and saw, with satisfaction, an assured future, with steadily increasing if moderate rewards for his capacity. Then the head of the firm, a family lawyer of the old school, shrewd, solid, and reliable, with sufficient

discretion to leave the finer points of interpretation and the niceties of conveyancing to others, had one day expired at his desk—that desk at which McTaggart now sat. The second partner, Finlayson, a more nervous and fragile type, with a more agile brain but diffident about assuming responsibility, had broken down within a month, and followed the senior partner into the Unknown. The junior partner found himself at the head of one of the oldest and most lucrative businesses in the city. He had taken up his responsibilities with courage and confidence.

His ambitions had been handsomely and prematurely realised, but he felt no satisfaction in the fact. Life had become strangely insipid. Why? Was he out of tone, through overwork? That, he decided, must be the reason.

He proceeded to open the letters. One of them, square in shape, was addressed in an unfamiliar, feminine hand. He opened it, and a glance showed what it was. It was from the niece of the second partner. At the time of Finlayson's death, a year ago, she had been in Italy, and there seemed no adequate reason for her immediate return. McTaggart was one of her uncle's trustees. She now announced her arrival in the city, and proposed to call that morning in connection with some formalities relating to her uncle's estate.

McTaggart rang the bell for one of the clerks, with the intention of directing that certain documents, reposing in one of the green deed-boxes bearing his late partner's name, should be brought to him. His eye scanned the impetuous lines of the letter, written with a broad, fluent pen across the delicately-tinted blue notepaper, and he sought to realise some impression of the writer. He had never seen her. He understood she had been engaged on some research work relating to Roman antiquities. He concluded from the style of writing that she had some of the nervous energy of her uncle, but none of his meticulous precision.

With the corner of his eye he was aware that the figure of his clerk, noiseless, deferential, and attentive, had materialised in front of the desk in answer to his summons. He raised his head to give his instructions.

With a realisation that something was seriously wrong he saw, not the clerk, but the gipsy man of the night before. The gipsy man was looking at him with the same amused and knowing expression that he had then remarked. Alarm seized the lawyer's mind at what he perceived was a disquieting hallucination. The obsession of the gipsy's face had at first rather amused him. This was more serious. Something was happening to him that might require the attention of a mental specialist.

Round the figure of the gipsy was a sort of blue nimbus, as of a different atmosphere, clearer and more charged with vitality than that

of the sombre room. In some respects it recalled the visionary disturbance heralding a digestive derangement, but without the usual nauseating feeling.

As he looked, the margin of blue atmosphere steadily expanded. As it extended, it blotted out the familiar objects of the room. The large oval hid a section of the wall. It extended beyond the bow-window, and obscured it like a shutter. Now it was half-way across the client's arm-chair. He could see the left arm and side of the chair distinctly, but the right side was cut off, as with a knife, by the edge of the blue. Now the door on the left was invisible.

Next he noted a surprising change in the character of the extending blue nimbus. He had apprehended it as a pale-blue plane, as a sort of screen interposed between him and the rest of the office. Now he perceived it had depth. Gazing into it, beyond the gipsy, he saw what looked like distant hills and trees.

This new apprehension caused perplexity and something akin to pain in the lawyer's mind. A little nervously he turned his head to one side—for the blueness now filled in the whole of the area of vision in front of him; and as he turned, the edge of the blueness seemed to swing round as swiftly as his glance; and in a fraction of a second what remained of the room, visible and concrete, was swept away and obliterated. . . .

III.

He was no longer in his chair. He was seated on a fallen tree at the edge of a rough mountain track. On the opposite side of the track, leaning against a dry-stone dyke and smiling at him, was the gipsy. He was browner and ruddier than he had seen him in the street. There was, indeed, something different about him that he could not locate. Was it really the gipsy of last night, or someone strangely like him? He wore an old brown coat, with a deep crimson shirt showing below.

The blueness of the nimbus was now seen to be nothing but space and the blue sky. The track was on the summit of rising heathery ground. In the distance the landscape came into view again—a hilly district with trees.

As McTaggart looked at him the gipsy put his hand on the top of the wall and lightly vaulted over it, disappearing for the moment on the sloping, heathery ground beyond.

Curiosity, perhaps a sense of companionship, impelled him to cross the track to the primitive wall and see where the gipsy had gone. The rough heathery ground sloped steeply down to the bottom of a valley, along which a stream meandered. It was a delightful hill-country stream, its course a succession of pools and cascades. Small trees and bushes grew in profusion along the banks. Here and there were

open stretches; while at different points the stream was completely screened from view by foliage.

The gipsy was lightly bounding down the slope, his movements free and full of life, like those of an animal. An irresistible force made McTaggart leap the wall and follow him.

There flashed through his mind, for an instant only, the thought that this was a strange thing for an Edinburgh lawyer to be doing. He made a distinct effort to wrench himself free from some overmastering force that was carrying him beyond his usual self-conscious habit of reflection. He had a glimpse of the strangeness and incredibleness of the situation; but that point of view required a mental effort, and he felt the power of making it weakening. In a moment or two it had gone. He saw only the leaping figure in front of him, was conscious only of the desire to follow. He was aware also of a new zest and exhilaration. To run bounding down the heathery slope was a joy in itself.

Near the stream the gipsy had stopped, and was crouching down, watching a pool fed by the foaming water of a tiny cascade. In a moment or two McTaggart was beside him, also crouching. Through the clear amber water he could see three or four large trout lazily moving about. As they watched, one of the fish moved quickly upwards, broke the surface of the pool, and for a moment flashed in the sunlight.

The gipsy turned and looked at him. And now, lying on the ground almost within reach, he noticed a peeled wand, intended to serve as a fishing-rod, for it was ready mounted with line and the most primitive fly-hooks he had ever seen. Without anything being said, McTaggart knew the gipsy wished him to take it.

He rose with the rod in his hand. The big trout caught sight of him, and darted off downstream. What a stream it was! Vaguely, McTaggart remembered one like it that he had once fished as a boy—he could not just recall where. He had certainly never seen anything like it since. The fever of the fisherman who senses ideal conditions was upon him. Without a further thought for his companion he set off, crouching out of sight of the trout, for the next likely spot higher up the stream.

The rod was a simple one, but it served. McTaggart was soon wholly absorbed in the fishing. At the third cast he hooked a heavy, strong trout that he had to manœuvre carefully before he had it on the bank. Then, the little pool being disturbed, he moved up-stream to the next, taking one yellow beauty after another.

IV.

Once or twice he paused and reflected on this new and strange experience. But although the reasoning part of his mind tried to concentrate

on the abnormality of the situation, it was a half-hearted effort. The subconscious accepted it as quite natural.

At one point, when he stood opposite a rounded grassy hillock, where the floor of the valley widened out, he had again a sharp impression of the familiarity of his surroundings. He remembered that green mound. But he also remembered an old white house on its summit. There was no house there now, not even a fragment of ruined masonry. The grassy summit had never been levelled to make a site for a dwelling. He had a curious feeling that the house had yet to be built.

The passing of time, of which ordinarily he was always aware, was no longer present to his consciousness. He could not have told how long he had been engaged at the stream-side, or how far he had wandered. But at last he noticed that the sun had declined behind the range of hills on his left, and there were long shadows in the valley; and then he saw the gipsy, apparently waiting for him.

He gathered up the trout, a dozen beauties between half a pound and a pound, and, with a deep-seated feeling of satisfaction and content, made his way down by the stream-side. The gipsy had a couple of partridges and a hare, which he had killed by some strategy of his own; and as McTaggart approached, he turned and led on ahead.

Thus they walked in silence—there seemed no need to say anything. By-and-by they reached the point from which they had started. Farther on, the stream was joined by a tributary, which came out of a narrow, gloomy glen. The gipsy turned aside and followed the smaller stream.

A wood of fir-trees stood in the middle of the glen some distance ahead, and the stream led close beside it. A track ran between the stream and the wood. They emerged on the farther side; and there, in the shelter of the trees, were two gipsy tents, of the semicircular type, formed of canvas stretched on half-hoops. A fire was burning in front of the entrance of one of them, and a brown-skinned old gipsy woman, with keen black eyes, was attending to an iron pot slung from a tripod. She glanced at McTaggart for a moment without any sign of surprise.

McTaggart became aware of a tremendously keen hunger. His companion threw down the game; and he laid the fish beside the fur and feather. By-and-by the old woman came and took them away. He went down to the burn-side and laved his face and hands, and, returning, found the gipsy seated on a fallen tree trunk, and the old woman already serving him with a bowl filled from the steaming pot.

McTaggart seated himself a little distance away; and the old woman in turn filled a bowl and brought it to him along with a horn spoon.

The fragrant smell of the thick dark soup or stew, which contained a generous measure of the tender flesh of some kind of game, almost intoxicated him. Never had he eaten with such a fierce relish.

V.

A drowsy feeling of delicious fatigue suffused all his members. Worry, inquiry, uncertainty had completely left him in the supreme satisfaction of the moment. Not quite completely! There was still a faint element of expectancy, some undefined, unsatisfied longing.

As if in response to this subtle impression there emerged from the entrance of one of the tents the figure of a gipsy girl. Their eyes met; and in the one swift glance, it was as if their souls met too. She smiled slightly, and in her eyes he read sympathy, intelligence, a sweetness and nobility such as he had never known before in any human being. She came forward, innate grace in every movement. The gipsy stooped and kissed her hand caressingly. She glanced again, shyly, at the new-comer, and offered her hand, a strange and joyous emotion surging up within him at the contact.

For a while they sat round the fire, the old woman a silent, brooding member of the party, her face hid in her shawl. The wood and the surrounding hills sank into the blackness of night, and the red glow of the fire became brighter by contrast, throwing mysterious shadows amongst the immediate surroundings. A night bird, with a plaintive cry, flew overhead.

Almost overcome with physical weariness, McTaggart fell at length into a dreamy reverie. Emerging from his abstraction, he noticed that the two women had gone, having apparently retired into one of the tents. The gipsy rose and stretched himself, and led the way to the other, McTaggart following. They lay down on couches of dry heather; and in an instant the lawyer had sunk into a profound, dreamless sleep.

VI.

Some time later, how long he could not say, he suddenly sat up, fully awake. His companion was still asleep. He crept out into the open. Strangely exalted in spirit he stepped forward, his feet making no sound on the turf. Listening intently, he could hear the silvery tinkling voice of the stream near by.

Something made him turn and look back at the camping-place. The form of the tents showed in the diffused light, their outlines softened and uncertain. With a sudden leap of the heart he saw a figure erect and motionless in front of them.

The gipsy girl stood there in the moonlight—a symbol of gracefulness and romance from some dreamworld, that seemed to touch and thrill a chord in his being, and took him back

through the centuries. She saw him, and came forward; and he looked on her bright eyes and her face pale in the moonlight. Time ceased to exist for both of them. Hand in hand they wandered through that dreamland of beauty—where everything seemed to have an intense meaning, or to be waiting on the brink of some great secret.

He became aware of strange longings of the spirit, unfulfilled and crying out for satisfaction, and of depths of his being hitherto starved, but now revelling in sustenance.

They wandered aimlessly, with no thought but for the present. But by-and-by there came a change in the light. Dawn was approaching. They were close to the camping-ground again. Like a startled nymph of classic times, she left him and ran towards the tents. She stopped suddenly, paused, and came slowly back. He took her hands, and read pain and sadness in her eyes. Not so much by any spoken words, but as it were by a process of thought-reading, he saw the sorrow of parting and separation. How it was to come about he did not know, and neither did she; but there was no doubt about an impending catastrophe. There was also steadfastness in her eyes, and a sure message that in the future they would meet again.

VII.

It was morning, and birds were singing amongst the trees, and the whisper of a gentle breeze mingled with the murmur of water. Refreshed and renewed, McTaggart sat up on the couch of heather, to which he had returned. The gipsy was no longer there. He found him outside, moving about beside the fire which he had rekindled.

The gipsy was silent and surly. McTaggart, whose heart was so buoyant that he could have sung for sheer joy, was withheld by a new feeling of hostility which he sensed in his companion. He felt that the other was furtively watching him.

At last the gipsy rose and led the way farther up the glen, signing to McTaggart to follow. The turf was dewy. The sun, over the range of hills, shone mistily through the morning vapours. The gipsy kept on at a swinging pace. The path began to ascend, rising higher and higher above the stream. A sound of roaring water reached the ear. The path swung away from the stream-side for a little, passing through thickly growing young trees, and emerged on a rocky plateau, overlooking a deep black pool. Into the dark depths of the pool the foaming water of the stream, pouring over a steep rock high above the level of their heads, fell vertically in a thundering cascade.

It all happened in a moment. McTaggart, his senses overpowered by the tumult, was gazing at the waterfall, when he heard a girl scream behind him. He turned, and saw the

gipsy about to spring. On the edge of the plateau he struggled and fought. The gipsy's sinewy arms were pinioning him—he felt himself swaying backwards, and he knew he had lost his balance and was falling over into the abyss.

For a moment he saw the gipsy's face, insane with anger and hatred, close to him, and the blue sky beyond. Then the picture faded out. . . .

VIII.

Still breathless from his efforts, and paralysed by the fate that had confronted him, McTaggart found himself sitting in his office chair, his face damp with sweat, with the deferential clerk before him awaiting his instructions.

In front of him was a pile of letters. There was the square envelope which he had opened the previous day. He looked at the letter it had contained, and one or two others, and found he had already seen them.

A little confused, his mind half-numbed, he asked the clerk why the letters had been left lying there. The clerk mumbled something, and looked at him as if he did not understand.

'And why has the calendar not been moved forward?' McTaggart asked with an unaccustomed petulance.

The clerk glanced at the figure. 'That is to-day's date, sir—the 22nd,' he said.

McTaggart paused for a moment. 'What day is this?' he asked.

'Thursday,' said the clerk.

'Oh, very well,' observed the lawyer; 'that will do.'

'I came in to say a lady wishes to see you—Miss Finlayson.'

'Show her in,' said McTaggart, his thoughts in a strange turmoil, and trying vainly to apprehend what the clerk had said about the date.

The door opened, and a young woman in

stylish attire came into the room. He rose to receive her, then stood looking at her in speechless amazement. She was much younger than he expected—little more than a girl. Her face was of a warm brown tint, for which the Italian sun doubtless was partly responsible. She had vivacious and kindly black eyes; and the eyes and the face, the way of smiling, each indefinable gesture and movement, were those of the gipsy maid.

McTaggart had a reputation for quickness and clarity of mind, for a coolness and calmness of judgment which impressed all his clients and created a feeling of confidence in his capacity. These qualities on this occasion entirely failed him. He managed, however, to pull himself together, and talked of her uncle's affairs.

He saw her again at lunch-time, and frequently thereafter. At first she was puzzled at his manner. He showed from time to time signs of joyful satisfaction at apparently nothing at all. He frequently seemed to be watching her expectantly. She did not know that what he was looking for were those little turns and expressions in which personality lies, and which identified her at every point with the gipsy maid.

Intimate friends to whom McTaggart described his unusual experience agreed in considering it an interesting example of the faculty of the human mind—known to the ancients—of compressing into an instant of actual time impressions of apparently prolonged duration. He did not seek to disabuse them. Even the gipsy maid (who was married in due course to her late uncle's partner) so regarded the incident. But in his own mind he rejected that theory. He knew that he really lived through the incidents of that extra twenty-four hours.

This view, however, he kept to himself. It would not do for a lawyer to have it whispered about him that he was in any way peculiar. For the trusty man of business—no!

ASPHALT LAKES AND THEIR STRANGE CHARACTERISTICS.

By FEDDEN TINDALL.

AS we walk on pavements, or our cars run over roads, do we ever stop to think of the toil, the skill, the ingenuity, that have gone to their manufacture? To-day a quantity of oil asphalts, by-products of the oil refineries of Mexico and California, are in use for the roads; but a large proportion of paving is still made by the admixture of stone and sand with fifteen per cent. of asphalt.

The ancients evidently knew a good deal about its properties. Historians tell us that it was employed in the building of the Tower of

Babylon, and took the place of lime in mortar. Early travellers noticed the asphalt in the Dead Sea; and, according to Diodorus, large quantities were collected thence for the embalming of Egyptian mummies. Its use ceased altogether in the Middle Ages, but some two hundred years ago the discovery of rock deposits in France and Switzerland led to a revival. It is found in rocks of all ages, and scientists believe that it is the result of the evaporation and oxidation of petroleum. The first asphalt paving of modern days was laid at Paris in 1838.

Two strange asphalt lakes are among the marvels of the world, one in our own Trinidad and one in Venezuela. They are by far the most important sources of asphalt, and yet the two together would barely cover some large park. Trinidad Lake is about 115 acres in extent, and Bermudez Lake, Venezuela, is 1000. The former has considerably the greater depth and capacity, though it is so much smaller. It also contains more mineral matter, and is preferred for pavements.

Lying in a cup-like depression, 135 feet above sea-level, the black mound-shaped mass appears absolutely tranquil. Indeed, a visitor once remarked that it looked to him very little different from the paving in front of his own house at home. Water flows in channels and crevices, and is inhabited by a number of tiny fish, which can leap great distances from pool to pool, or live a long time on dry land. Rank grass and weeds grow in profusion, and the black mass can be walked over quite safely, though the channels swell after heavy rain so as to be practically impassable. One portion, known as the Mother of the Lake, is soft and unsafe to walk upon, as objects quickly disappear beneath the surface.

Continual complex motion is taking place amid the apparent tranquillity, and enormous holes, made when clumps of asphalt are dug out with pickaxes, fill again in a few days. For forty years work has gone on steadily, and now some 200,000 tons are removed annually, yet the level of the lake has sunk only 14 feet. Three or four years ago an attempt was made to sound its depth; but, after drilling for 150 feet, the tubes became twisted and broken, and are even now coming up in fragments at quite different parts.

Much mystery still surrounds this uncanny lake, which seems almost like a living monster, with its hidden movements. Subterranean gaseous pressure accounts for a great deal. Strange things have happened near by. In November 1911 a small island suddenly appeared south of Trinidad, and disappeared again within a few days.

There is constant drilling for oil in the neighbourhood. At one time the hope was entertained that the lake was reproducing; but now it is believed that holes fill automatically through a sifting and replacing process akin to the way in which water finds its own level. If this is so, the supply of asphalt will be exhausted one day; but it is encouraging to learn that experts estimate this calamity is not likely to occur for another four hundred years.

The General Asphalt Company of Philadelphia has been granted working concessions till 1930, paying Trinidad a minimum royalty of £10,000 a year. On rising ground overlooking the Gulf of Paria stands Brighton, a village

containing offices, refining and barrel factories, a club-house, and many white bungalows, raised on pillars as a protection against mosquitoes. On the other side of the lake, New Jersey is being completed to house some three thousand labourers.

The clumps of asphalt are carried on small cars, which run across the lake on loosely laid rails to a landing-place, where they are weighed, and then raised automatically to an overhead cable tramway, along which, in a steady stream, buckets go downhill, along the jetty, and straight on board waiting steamers. The major portion of the asphalt is refined, however—the water removed by boiling—and then shipped in barrels. On board ship great care has to be taken that those harmless-seeming blocks do not twist away the bulkheads. It is interesting to learn that many roads in devastated France have been restored with Trinidad asphalt.

The Bermudez Lake, in Venezuela, is far less accessible; the journey of forty miles up the San Juan River, and seven miles along its narrow branch, the Guanoco, can be accomplished by ocean-going vessels only if they are towed stern foremost. A narrow-gauge railway connects the town of Guanoco with the vast lake, surrounded by swamps and jungle, inhabited by many animals, including a hideous creature called the mata-mata, described as a 'cross between a turtle, an alligator, and a nightmare!'

The surface of the lake varies considerably. There are springs bubbling with gas, but large portions are covered with trees and vegetation. In parts the men have to toil up to the waist in water, picking out soft masses of asphalt almost like seaweed; in others it is so hard that blasting is necessary. In many places a man is liable to sink into sticky black mush if he tries to walk on the surface, when he can only escape by leaving the soles of his boots behind him.

The same company operates both the Trinidad and the Bermudez lakes. At one time the concession was the subject of litigation with the Venezuelan Government. It is said that an ingenious lawyer prevented judgment being given against his U.S.A. clients by falling in a fit in court. The delay gave time for documents proving the claim to arrive from a distance, and then he acknowledged that he had resorted to the schoolboy trick of simulating foaming at the mouth with soap-suds!

Asphalt is not only used in paving. The tires of many cars contain a proportion compounded with rubber and fabric. It is also valuable in damp courses, concrete floors, roofing felt, and black varnish. Experts called in to exterminate the anopheles, the malaria-bearing mosquito, at the Trinidad Lake, have found the asphalt a useful ally, mixing it with sand for covering drains, and so preventing the vegetation which nourishes the mosquito larvæ.

THE SENIOR PARTNER'S WRATH.

PART II.

v.

A MESSAGE had come from Rushworth's during Mr Maynard's absence asking to be informed concerning the decision Maynard & Co. had promised to make that day. But this decision required the authority of one of the partners, and of these two had gone home ill, so that there remained only Mr Maynard himself, who had apparently forgotten his expressed intention of calling in to see Rushworth's about it. Johnny, therefore, volunteered to try to find his father, and as Mr Maynard was not to be found at his favourite restaurant, and had said something about Ellison's, to Ellison's the unsuspecting, unwarned, unfortunate young man decided to go forthwith.

'They can tell me if he has been there, anyhow,' he thought.

The outer office was still deserted when he knocked, and he also, when he knocked again, heard a faint voice inviting him, if he were any one, to come through. This he did accordingly, and coming in his turn to a door marked 'private,' entered all unknowing and found himself in a big room he thought was empty till he perceived a mass of curls so fair as to be almost golden behind a big roll-top desk, over the top of which a pair of very bright blue eyes steadily regarded him.

'Oh, I . . . I beg your pardon,' he stammered.

'What can I do for you?' inquired a voice that was small indeed, but brisk and business-like.

'Is this Ellison's?' Johnny inquired, feeling the calamity would be unimaginable if it were not.

'This is Ellison's. I am Miss Ellison,' announced the small business-like voice. 'What can I do for you?'

'It's a little matter of business,' began Johnny, and then paused as he perceived that the blue eyes were fixed upon him with a certain attention—or not so much on him as on his head . . . his hat. He had quite forgotten to remove it when he entered, and, blushing, he hastened now to do so.

'I am so sorry—I beg your pardon—I quite forgot,' he stammered.

A stiff, cold bow announced that his apology was accepted.

'I am so awfully sorry,' he repeated, for he felt that to apologise to her was sweet indeed.

'It is of no consequence,' she answered; 'though,' she added thoughtfully, 'I cannot remember that such a thing ever happened before.'

Johnny was suitably crushed, but when he

explained that he came from Maynard & Co. her manner changed. She said it was very kind indeed of Mr Maynard to send him round so soon, and Johnny listened without moving a muscle. She added that she had just had a message over the 'phone. A chance was offered . . . she did not know whether to avail herself of it . . . she would be very grateful for a little advice and explanation. . . . And Johnny, still without moving a muscle of his face, said that that was what he was there for, and might he know the details?

And all unknowing that these things were so, Mr Maynard, senior, slowly recovering under the influence of an excellent luncheon, began to perceive that after all things were not so bad. For his trained and acute mind was beginning now to grasp the fact that while he knew that both Manners and Price had been to Ellison's, they knew nothing of his visit. Consequently . . . well . . . it rather seemed to him that on the whole he had them. His smile grew sweet and pensive as he dallied with a glass of port. Yes, he knew all about Manners and Price, and they knew nothing about him, and they would think twice before letting the story get about the City of how they treated debtors who happened to have very bright blue eyes and fair curls that were almost golden . . . and they would think three times and even four before running the risk of such a story trickling home to their wives—of this Mr Maynard was very sure, for he knew how he would feel himself if Mrs Maynard. . . .

Absorbed in these thoughts, he did not notice how long a time Johnny took that day to his lunch. But Manners and Price, when in due course, since they could not be ill for ever, they came sneaking back to the office, noticed a good deal. Their senior partner was bland, calm, dignified, but . . . well, he understood, and they soon understood, and if he had been something of an autocrat before, now a Bolshevik commissary would as soon have brooked the slightest opposition to his will.

The faintest murmur from Manners, the least protest from Price, was apt to draw a reference to the feelings of Mrs Manners and the emotions of Mrs Price if those ladies ever came to know what indulgence was shown to firms of which the chiefs happened to have blue eyes and fair curls.

'Even in the City you two would never hear the last of it,' Mr Maynard would remark musingly.

Mr Manners lost his temper, and banged his fist on the table. 'It's blackmail!' he shouted; 'neither more nor less!'

'Blackmailer!' repeated Price, glaring fiercely at their unmoved senior. 'Bloodsucker!' he hissed.

Mr Maynard beamed on them both. 'When I was small,' he mused, 'I wanted to be a pirate—and I was right if it's anything like so jolly as being a blackmailer. Oh, by the way, I shall be taking July and August for my holidays this year. You can settle between you which of you will take June and which September. Will you tell Mrs Manners and Mrs Price? Or shall I?'

Those last three words vibrated with a deadly significance, and the two junior partners crept defeated away.

VI.

'He holds us in the hollow of his hand,' sighed Mr Manners.

'We are mere slaves,' groaned Mr Price.

To such a pass indeed had things come that these two unfortunate men no longer dared to call their souls their own.

As for Mr Maynard it was his day—but even while his triumph was still sweet in his mouth, it happened that he chanced to remark in the hearing of his two partners, 'Johnny seems to take a long time to his lunch these days.'

Mr Manners was shrewd, Mr Price was acute; their desperate plight made them more shrewd and acute than ever; and a day or two later, when Mr Maynard was returning from his lunch, he was met by his two partners.

'Come this way,' said Mr Manners.

'Down this street,' said Mr Price.

It was rather like a kidnapping. They marched him along without a word of explanation, and brought him at last to the door of Ellison's.

'Hullo!' said Mr Maynard.

'Hullo indeed,' said Mr Manners sternly.

'Very much hullo,' said Mr Price.

They led him upstairs and through the outer office, always deserted at lunch-time, into the big inner room where Johnny Maynard and Miss Ellison were discussing sandwiches—and business, no doubt—at the big roll-top desk.

Johnny gasped and blinked when he saw the three partners enter. His parent gaped and stared. Miss Ellison sprang forward delightedly, and shook hands warmly with all three.

'It's simply dear of you to come,' she told them beamingly; 'and most awfully good of you,' she added to Mr Maynard, 'to send Mr John so often to help me. I can't tell you how grateful I am to you—to all of you,' she added, fearful lest she should seem to overlook the claims of any.

'You have been helping Miss Ellison, John?' inquired Mr Maynard with enforced calm.

'I've been t-t-trying t-to,' said Mr John, wondering if it were possible that a man who had seen five years of war could nevertheless be at bottom a c-c-coward.

'The greatest help,' asserted Miss Ellison. 'I shall always be grateful to Mr Price for telling me that our account being overdue didn't matter, and to Mr Manners for saying I might have that extra credit, and to Mr Maynard for coming to offer to help me, and for sending Mr John——'

'Ah!' said Mr Manners.

'Ho!' said Mr Price.

And one could almost hear the yoke that Mr Maynard had laid upon their necks fall shattered for ever to the ground.

Then Johnny, not so much brave as simply desperate, stepped forward. 'Miss Ellison and I,' he announced, 'are going to be married.'

'Oh!' protested Miss Ellison. 'I never—I only—I mean——'

Mr Maynard, a little dizzy, looked round and saw how his two partners were watching him. It was the hour of their revenge, and well they knew it.

'Quite a romance,' said Mr Manners.

'Precisely,' said Mr Price.

'The City will be interested,' said Mr Manners.

'Mrs Maynard, too,' said Mr Price.

Mr Maynard perceived very clearly that the situation was, in a manner, awkward. His trained, clear-thinking, business brain told him that at once. And he understood also that when it all came to be explained to Mrs Maynard, then the more united they all were, and the more support they gave each other, the better. In a moment his decision was taken, and with the dexterity of a conjuror he transformed himself from the taskmaster of his partners into their accomplice.

Besides, after all, the boy was bound to marry some day . . . and this Ellison child seemed to possess certain qualities . . . looks, as well . . . and pluck and determination also, besides a clear little mind of her own . . . and if Maynard and Co. took over Ellison's she would certainly not come without a dowry. . . . Yes, if they all stuck together, everything might pass off well. . . . He perceived that every one was shaking hands with every one else, and that in these ceremonies he himself was taking an active part.

'Oh, by the way,' remarked Mr Manners all at once in a very clear and distinct voice, 'Price tells me he is taking July and part of August for his holidays, so that'll leave the rest of August and September for me. You'll let us know whether you decide on June or October for yours.'

'That'll be quite all right, my dear fellows,' answered Mr Maynard.—'Johnny, you have my congratulations.' He turned to Miss Ellison. 'My dear,' he said, 'allow me . . . ' and, bending over her, he bestowed on her a paternal kiss that she gratefully returned.

The last trick remained his.

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

AN INSTRUMENT FOR STUDYING THE STARS.

AN instrument is now obtainable which should prove of great assistance to teachers and learners of astronomy, as, once certain simple adjustments have been made, the setting of a pointer to a star on a celestial globe brings the star into view in a finder. In effect the finder is an astronomical telescope of low power, but without the usual tube, the lenses being held in line by other means. Alternatively, a star may be looked at through the finder, and when it is in the centre of the field of view, the pointer will indicate its whereabouts on the celestial globe. The essential feature of the apparatus is a small globe with the stars and the constellations marked on the outside. A ring, with the end of a pointer in the centre, is held to the surface by three velvet-covered arms, which embrace it closely but yet allow of movement. Attached above this ring, and far enough to one side for the observer's head to clear the globe, is the finder. The lenses of this accessory are set on a line which is exactly parallel with a line from the centre of the globe to the end of the pointer, thereby reproducing the condition of an observer looking at the heavens from the earth. To enable the apparent rotation of the heavens to be reproduced, the globe is provided with an axis in line with the centre and the pole-star, upon which it can be rotated. At the south pole this axis projects through a bearing, and is fitted with a knurled head. A vertical flange, parallel with the bearing and below it, is clamped to a similar flange on a horizontal turntable by a screw through the centre of each. The turntable is provided with a spirit-level and a magnetic compass. These arrangements allow of quickly setting the axis to point at the pole-star. When this has been done with the turntable level, a line is cut across the two flanges which is used for setting the instrument in future when used in the same latitude. The turntable is supported on a metal tripod-stand with telescopic legs, which enable the level to be easily adjusted. An arrow on the compass-card indicates when the axis of the globe is pointing towards the north. It can be finally adjusted by the pole-star. Before any other stars can be found, the globe must be set so that the stars marked upon it coincide in position with those in the sky—i.e. if a hole were made in the globe for each star and the observer could place his eye in the centre, he would see the stars through the holes. Readers of *Chambers's Journal* will know that the apparent rotation of the stars round the earth advances each day until a complete revolution has been made in the year. This feature has to be allowed for

in setting the globe, as well as the time of day at which observations are made. The setting is carried out by moving a time-circle to the correct position against a fixed circle round the south pole of the globe marked with the months and days; then the globe is rotated until the time of day comes opposite a fixed pointer. Naturally, as the heavens appear to move towards the west, due to the rotation of the earth, this adjustment will have to be corrected at intervals. The markings of the instrument are made for observations on the meridian of Greenwich. If the instrument is used much to the east or to the west of that meridian, an allowance in time has to be made. A tiny electric torch is clipped to the finder-support over the pointer, and is lit by a torch-battery on the stand through a flexible cord. This lamp is detachable for reading the circles.

SIMPLE WIRE SUPPORTS FOR RASPBERRY CANES.

A special type of straining wire, with pieces of soft wire for tying purposes at intervals, for training raspberries, loganberries, and fruit-trees, saves much time and trouble when compared with the use of the alternative strings and raffia. Posts are erected in the line of the plants and the wires strained between them. The tying pieces closely resemble hairpins, but have several turns round the main wire at the bend. Being soft, they are easily twisted round the canes. While free to turn round for use on either side of the main wire, they are so secured that they cannot move along it, and therefore keep the canes at definite intervals. The straining wire can be bought in coils of 25, 50, or 100 yards, with wires for tying spaced 6 inches or $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart as desired. Being heavily galvanised, these wires last for many years.

AN ELECTRIC MOTOR FOR ANY GRAMOPHONE.

Most people will agree that the winding of a gramophone after each record is an irksome operation. A tiny electric motor is now obtainable which will turn any gramophone disc at the correct speed. The motor is carried on trunnions in a metal bracket having a rubber-shod foot. A soft rubber wheel at the bottom of the spindle, which is vertical, engages with the edge of the disc and drives it by friction. The weight of the motor holds it in position without any fixing; it simply stands against the disc. By pushing the wheel against the disc the spindle is swung to one side on the trunnions, and its tendency to hang vertically imposes a constant pressure that is enough for the friction-drive. A very ingenious device,

which works by centrifugal force, switches on the current to the motor so soon as the disc is given a preliminary swing round, while it cuts the current off when the disc is stopped. These little gramophone motors are wound for 110-volt alternating currents or for direct currents at the same pressure. For higher voltages small resistances are interposed in the circuit. The amount of current consumed is negligible, being only a trifle over $\frac{1}{100}$ of a unit. It should be noted, also, that the spring mechanism of the gramophone is not disturbed, and can be used at any time should the electric current fail. In fact, the wheels turn with the disc, and the governing device regulates the speed, just as when the mechanism is driven by the spring. The motor is connected to the nearest lamp-socket by a flexible lead and plug.

CHEAP HOME-MADE SODA-WATER.

Steel cylinders of CO₂ gas for aerating water are a stock article in the shops of almost any town. All that the householder requires for making soda-water is the apparatus for reducing the pressure of the gas and for aerating the bottles safely, the gas being compressed to a very great degree in the steel storage cylinders. A small British-made soda-water-making outfit has been recently brought out, which is contained in a folding wood cabinet with bottles and glasses. The CO₂ steel cylinder is fixed vertically to the narrow back of the cabinet. Above it is a reducing valve, a push-in valve to turn on the gas to the soda-water bottle, and a fitting for closing the mouth of the bottle and screwing in the stopper. The bottle is held in a metal guard, which is raised to fix the bottle in position for being aerated by a simple system of levers. At each side of the cabinet back is a hinged recessed door with a shelf for soda-water bottles and glasses, and a space below it for spirit bottles. These doors are opened out so as to be in line with the machine when the apparatus is in use. If folded together, the outfit can be locked up. All metal parts of the apparatus are of nickel-plated brass or phosphor bronze, and the cabinet is of polished hardwood. One 2 lb. cylinder of CO₂ will make a minimum of 400 sodas (5 oz. bottles) at a cost of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a dozen, and at a speed of 150 bottles an hour. Large cylinders of 28 lb. and 40 lb. capacity (for use in hotels, clubs, &c.) make a minimum of 5000 and 8000 bottles respectively.

NOVELTIES IN WIRELESS AERIALS.

Many people, doubtless, have noticed aerials in the form of cylindrical cages which may occasionally be seen fixed vertically to poles in gardens or on the roofs of houses. Probably few, however, know that the conductor of these aerials is a latticework tube of fine wires, having longitudinal straight wires interlaced with them.

This design is based on the fact that the efficiency of an electrical conductor varies to some extent with the exposed surface, which is obviously far greater in this form than in a solid wire of the same weight. Some advantage is also claimed for the introduction of the straight wires, the function being to transmit, with a minimum of resistance, the waves picked up by the lattice wires. The aerial is wound diagonally between the top and the bottom rings of a galvanised-steel frame, and then brought down to the set. The wires being vertical and arranged in a circle, this type of aerial gives equally good reception from all directions. In addition to the ordinary outside aerial, two novel forms of cage aerial are made up from this special wire. One is combined with, and looks like, a lamp-shade. A range of 20 miles is claimed for this device with a two-valve set and a loud-speaker if the aerial is hung 6 feet above the set. With a height of 15 feet, which may be obtained by fixing the aerial in a room above that in which the set is placed, the distance is increased to 75 miles, while a range of 175 miles is obtained with a height of 25 feet. The other novel aerial is a rectangular cage which folds up flat for travelling. It is very suitable for picnic parties, as it can be hung on a tree. When folded, it measures 16 inches by 15 inches by 2½ inches, and the weight is 4 lb.

THE CAUSE OF CANCER.

The brilliant work of Dr Gye and Mr Barnard has revealed almost beyond the possibility of doubt the existence of a minute parasite which, given certain conditions, may invade the cells of the human body and produce the dread disease of cancer. So tiny is this microbe that it passes through the finest of filters, and cannot be discerned in ordinary light even with the most powerful microscope. But by skilful and most ingenious use of ultra-violet rays, with their short wave-lengths, Mr Barnard has made the invisible visible, and his work and that of his colleague have thus rendered *possible* a marked advance in our power of dealing with the cancer scourge. It must be borne in mind, however, that the germ appears to be dangerous only where the conditions are favourable to its operations. When brought into contact with healthy, normal cells it seems to be harmless; but let it meet with cells affected by bruises or by long-continued irritation, and it is apparently able at once to begin its deadly work. Hence there is as great need as ever to remove all causes of irritation—chronic constipation, for example, which can now be avoided by the use of pure medicinal paraffin, as recommended by Sir Arbuthnot Lane. The wearer of artificial teeth and the pipe-smoker should ever be watchful lest constant friction produce harmful effects on the mouth, and should seek medical

advice at the first sign of danger. It may be added that the work of another British scientist, Dr Percy Stocks, goes to show that the failure of the thyroid gland rightly to perform its functions is probably an important factor in the development of cancer, as well as being the *fons et origo* of goitre; while the researches of another worker in this field would appear to suggest that an excess of calcium (or lime) salts in the food, combined with a deficiency of potassium salts, produces a condition of the body favourable to the development of the cancer parasite.

A NOVEL METHOD OF PROMOTING THE GROWTH OF WOOL.

A most interesting experiment is being carried out by Professor Barker, head of the Textile Department of the Leeds University, to determine whether the growth of sheep's wool can be materially increased by the injection of a certain preparation. The idea comes from Japan, but is based upon a statement made some five years ago by a German doctor that unhealthy conditions of the hair and the nails were improved by administering to the patient a particular form of sulphur. (Sulphur, it may be observed, is an important constituent of keratin, the horny substance of which the hair and the nails are mainly composed.) Hoping that the treatment would prove a cure for alopecia, a disease which produces falling out of the hair, a Japanese professor, an authority on skin diseases, began a series of experiments in collaboration with a Japanese chemist. They at length evolved a preparation to which the name of 'Saemin' was given, and which, when injected into a vein, produced favourable results. During the course of the experiments it was observed that the treatment stimulated the growth of fur in the case of rabbits; hence the experiment to ascertain whether it will have a corresponding effect on sheep. The amount of the preparation at present in stock in this country is sufficient for only a single animal; but larger supplies will be available shortly, when experiments will be conducted on a more extensive scale. As injection into a vein of a sheep is necessarily a troublesome process, injection under the skin has been substituted. This, though slower, is said by the inventor to be effective in time. To judge from the results of the experiments on rabbits, it is deemed possible that the wool will become coarser in fibre as well as more abundant, but in view of the American demand for coarse carpet wools this may prove not an unmixed evil.

A RARE QUADRUPED.

'There are more things in heaven and in earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy' is the expression that instinctively springs to

one's lips as one reads the fascinating account of the páca-rána given by Dr James Ritchie, the keeper of the Natural History Department of the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh, in the pages of the *Scotsman*. This elusive quadruped was quite unknown to man—civilised and uncivilised alike—until the year 1873, when a stray specimen was killed in the courtyard of a house in Peru. It was not until thirty-one years later that the animal was again seen, when a living pair were sent in a cage to the keeper of the museum at Para, near the mouth of the Amazon. Living specimens have since been obtained for the Zoological Societies of New York and London, and a páca-rána has now found its last resting-place in the museum at Edinburgh. This rare creature is thought to dwell 'on the eastern slopes and tablelands of the Bolivian and Peruvian foothills bordering on Brazil.' For a rodent it is unusually large in size, measuring about 3 feet from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail, and standing about 10 inches high at the hind-quarters. It derives its name, the páca-rána, or 'false páca,' to its resemblance in colour to the true páca of South America, from which it differs, however, in its well-developed tail, the absence of cheek-pouches, the full development of all the toes, and the wider chest. The páca-rána appears to be of a gentle, phlegmatic disposition, never biting, rarely growling, and moving 'with a ponderous, waddling gait, even when food is the objective. These animals are prodigious eaters, devouring fruits, tree and fern roots, and bread; and almost invariably they sit upright in a squirrel-like attitude as they eat, holding the food in their fore-paws and gouging out large chips with their chisel-like teeth.' It is suggested that the páca-rána is so seldom seen because it finds safety in obscurity; it may be, however, that it is really as rare as it appears to be, and is another illustration of the 'weak going to the wall.'

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE LABYRINTH.

By LEWIS SPENCE.

PART I.

I.

THE spiriting away of Ilario Cavalcanti, whom all the world knows as the most illustrious of Italy's younger poet-patriots, agitated Roman society to its depths, electrifying its masculine ingredients, and constraining great ladies to a fashionable and æsthetic woe. The salons were inconsolable. Rome raved because its demigod had been caught up like Ganymede in an Olympian wind and whirled beyond the radius of its worship. But on all sides there was ready and tacit agreement that no political significance attached to this evanishment. Cavalcanti, the harp of Young Italy, was indeed one of the Government's most precious assets, and that his removal might have been contrived by such negligible opposition to its victorious policy as exists never occurred to even the most suspicious.

Nor were there adequate grounds for connecting the affair with a personal grudge or with those fugitive or suicidal tendencies which frequently complicate poetic destinies. No man was more ardently in love with life than Cavalcanti. Moreover, his disappearance had taken place in a moment of triumph, and at Ancona of all places, the city where his lyrical eloquence found its most powerful and popular echoes.

As I perused the reports of his disappearance I recalled Cavalcanti as I had known him at Tunis. He had spent six months amid the ruins of Carthage while composing his great epic on 'Regulus,' what time I separated its lone and level sands in search of the vestiges of Punic splendour. I called to mind his fervencies, his astounding gift of vehement rhetoric, the romantic cast of the Roman face with the deep olive tingeing cheek and brow, the tumbling cascade of jet-black hair, the visionary gray eyes. I had known him almost intimately, so well, indeed, that in the frank manner of the Latin, which never fails to fray the edges of our Britannic reserve, he had confided to me the hectic and tangled circumstances of a score of personal romances which I did not in the least desire to hear, and to which I listened with

something less than frigid politeness. When I informed him that I had no similar confidences to exchange, he was not only incredulous but a little hurt. All the same, I think that he was drawn to me, as I to him, by the queer law which governs the attraction of opposites.

So when I read that he had disappeared like a puff of cigarette smoke after his evening of coruscation at the theatre at Ancona, I felt as keenly thrilled as anyone in Rome by the sense of mystery which surrounded this extraordinary obliteration. At the moment I was at a loose end. My digging in the Campagna was finished for the season, and I most emphatically did not wish to return to a London of raw October days. Why not amuse myself with a closer study of the drama which was convulsing Italy? The impulse was, I admit, a rather obviously Britannic one. Mystery, I believe, is the biggest ingredient in our national instinct for romance. Let us call it curiosity, or love of hazard, or what we like, nevertheless it is something deeper than a base hankering after thrills, it is finer than a genius for mere meddling. The idea seized upon me, batted upon me, so that I was no longer Aubrey Wyatt, F.S.A., as I had hitherto known that person, but for many days a restless, prying, pursuing Someone Else, the slave and creature of clues and charts, a prentice builder of evidence, and, at long last, a walker in a labyrinth such as even few F.S.A.'s have ever groped in.

And that explains why, three days after the disappearance of Cavalcanti, I found myself in the great Adriatic seaport of Ancona, that white town where swart shipmen swarm and the speech of sea is heard on every side.

II.

I put up at the hotel where Cavalcanti had been staying, and next morning after breakfast handed in my card to the Chief of Police.

He was courteous, but preoccupied. Nevertheless I wrung from his rather detached communication more actual information than I had gleaned from the somewhat garbled accounts which had appeared in the Roman Press. Briefly, his account of the affair was as follows: At the close of his address in the theatre Cavalcanti

had left it by way of the stage-door and had entered his closed car alone, surrounded by a cheering and enthusiastic crowd of patriots, who hitched a rope to the vehicle and drew their idol through the principal streets to his hotel. On alighting there, as the mob in its enthusiasm threatened to overflow into the establishment, Cavalcanti had rushed into the hall and had excitedly urged his valet Eligio, who was there to receive him, to hold back the human stream while he gained the privacy of his apartments. This the man succeeded in doing after a lively skirmish with the leading files of his master's admirers. He then returned to Cavalcanti's rooms to minister to his comfort, but nowhere was the orator of the evening to be found.

At first Eligio attached no importance to what he took to be a temporary absence. It occurred to him at first that his master might be enjoying a bath after his extraordinary efforts. But when he found the loose black cloak which the poet usually affected out of doors lying on the floor of the bedroom his suspicions were aroused. He recalled, too, that Cavalcanti had been wearing gloves, a thing unknown in all his experience of him. Growing more and more uneasy, he at last went to the manager with his fears. A hue and cry followed. The police were communicated with, and official investigations were immediately set on foot.

The first disquieting circumstance discovered by the police was that a lady had called at the theatre before the commencement of Cavalcanti's address, and had requested an interview with him. She was heavily veiled, and had handed a sealed envelope to the commissionaire on duty at the stage-door. On reading this Cavalcanti seemed at first annoyed, but had ordered the man to show her into one of the anterooms, where he presently joined her. Lingerings outside, the attendant heard what seemed to be a rather heated argument leap suddenly into the turmoil of a furious quarrel, but as Cavalcanti and the lady spoke, or rather shouted, in French, he could throw no light on the subject of their disagreement. Shortly afterwards the lady left the theatre, evidently in a violent state of agitation. The commissionaire described her as fairly tall and as a 'fine figure of a woman,' to translate the Italian equivalent of our Victorian phrase. But he had not caught a single glimpse of her face, which, in spite of what seemed overpowering excitement, she kept scrupulously hidden.

But this was not all. The police had discovered that shortly after Cavalcanti and his cheering supporters had set out on their homeward journey a second closed car had driven up to the stage-door of the theatre, the vicinity of which was now practically deserted except for one or two incurious loungers. Into this there tumbled, almost in a bunch, four men, one of whom was evidently in an

advanced state of intoxication, as the others well-nigh carried him. Regarding the general appearance of this party none of the few onlookers could give any definite description. Scarcely had they entered it so precipitately than the car dashed forward, and, making off at high speed, it was soon lost to view among the network of by-streets which surround the theatre.

From all this the police concluded that someone had impersonated Cavalcanti, had ridden alone in triumphal procession in the closed car provided for the poet to his hotel, and after proceeding to his apartments and casting off the disguise, the heavy cloak, and probably the short false beard which had aided him in his impersonation of the Maestro, had made his way out of the hotel by the servants' entrance.

The theory was that Cavalcanti had been lured by some means into the anteroom which adjoined his private retiring-room at the theatre. His abductors, who must have entered by a side door, had then probably pounced upon him, reduced him to a state of semi-consciousness by means of chloroform or a blow on the head, and had removed him by way of the corridor to another apartment, where he was kept while his 'double' quitted the theatre with the crowd at his heels. Once they had the 'double' well on the way Cavalcanti had been hustled out of the place into the waiting car and hurried off—whither?

All this convinced me that the Chief of Police believed the veiled woman to be primarily responsible for Cavalcanti's disappearance. I concurred, especially in view of what I knew of the popular idol. I considered it more than probable that one of the numerous society women with whom he had dallied had resolved to avenge herself by reversing the rôles of the sexes, and had spirited away my all-too-gallant acquaintance.

III.

Seated in my apartment I reviewed the evidence, such as it was. Looking at it roughly, it seemed to me that two salient points appeared rather obviously to hold out the possibility of clues: these were the identity of the lady who had interviewed Cavalcanti, and the destination of the car in which he had been carried off. The first I considered the more likely to repay immediate attention. Doubtless the police had already followed the slender clue which showed upon the path, but I was in this for my own diversion, and would employ my own methods. Of course I might easily exaggerate the importance which seemed to attach to the incident of the lady caller. She might have been a journalist—only as a general rule newspaper women are scarcely partial to thick face-coverings. Recalling those Carthaginian nights, I felt I could not attach too much significance to the theory of feminine intervention; so I

resolved, as an initial step, to discover if possible the identity of Cavalcanti's veiled caller.

Strolling down to the theatre—a blossom of marble in a lake of olive-green garden—I sought out the commissionaire who had admitted the mysterious incognita, and at the cost of a few lire aroused him to fluency. The lady, he said, had arrived on foot. She was, however, handsomely dressed, but in black—deep black, as if she were in mourning. In handing him the note to take to Cavalcanti she had tipped him generously—for a woman—out of a well-filled purse-bag. Had he noticed anything unusual about her? Yes, several things. In the first place—the signor would pardon him—she was a foreigner, and her Italian was ‘infantile.’ There was something else. The envelope she had given him to take to Cavalcanti had strange letters on the flap, ‘the kind of letters used in Greece.’ She wasn’t a Greek, however. He knew a Greek, male or female, when he saw one. Yes, he had waited outside the door of the anteroom while she had been speaking to Cavalcanti, but not as an eaves-dropper, the signor would comprehend—merely to show the lady out when the interview was over. Indeed, he could not understand a word they said. He heard them both speaking loudly. The lady was evidently furious, but the Signor Cavalcanti had not been angry. He seemed to be pleading with the lady. But she! By the body of Bacchus, she was angry enough—as angry as a queen!

As I strolled back to my hotel I felt sure of one thing—the woman of mystery was probably a Russian. The presence of ‘the kind of letters they use in Greece’ on the back of the envelope she had handed to the commissionaire seemed to place her Muscovite origin almost beyond a doubt.

Acting upon this suspicion, I at once despatched a lengthy telegram to a common acquaintance in Rome, asking him to send me the name of any Russian lady with whom he had known Cavalcanti to be friendly, and to favour me, if possible, with a photograph of her. Two days later I received a brief reply that Cavalcanti had not been friendly with any Russian lady, so far as he was aware. He had been at some pains to avoid one, however, a certain Mlle. Natalie Nordiska, whose name would be known to me as that of a celebrated dancer. As I probably knew, Cavalcanti, strangely enough, detested the terpsichorean art and all its votaries, especially if of Russian origin, for to them he attached the odium of having brought about the downfall of the Czarist régime. He had appeared to hold Mlle. Nordiska in especial dislike. It was an odd business altogether, for, as I should see from the enclosed photograph, she was exceedingly beautiful.

In the photograph which accompanied the

letter she was not alone. The picture had evidently not been a personal gift to my friend, but was of the kind which can be purchased at any kiosk. It showed Natalie Nordiska in a terpsichorean pose along with her dancing-partner, a Spaniard, Alfonso Valles. This young fellow had been the rage, and had achieved even a greater celebrity than Natalie. I had never seen a portrait of either, but to my mind there was something oddly reminiscent about the man's face, especially the eyes and brows. He strongly resembled someone I knew well. Who could it be? Ah, now I had it—Cavalcanti! Cavalcanti, of course! The upper part of Valles's face was so like that of Cavalcanti that, did he wear a beard—ah ha! so this was the man who had impersonated Cavalcanti? And it was Natalie Nordiska who, piqued at his neglect of her, had carried him off by force!

At first this partial solution of the mystery seemed to me much too simple to approach probability. If I had hit upon the truth, why had the police not arrived at the same conclusion? The manner in which I had discovered the delinquents had been so ridiculously easy that I felt sure anyone of average intelligence could have hit upon it. They must be duffers, these Anconan police! I would not come to the assistance of such inefficiency. Had I only known that they had been aware of all this for days previous to my ‘discovery,’ and had I foreseen into what my confounded meddlesomeness would eventually precipitate me, I should then and there have abandoned my investigations.

But satisfied—much too satisfied—with the ‘progress’ I had made, I turned to the second horn of the problem. What was the destination of the car in which Cavalcanti had been carried off?

IV.

This, I recognised at once, was a poser much more ticklish than that I had just grappled with. The car had made off in a northerly direction. For the whole length of the coast of the Marches, in which Ancona is situated, the overwhelming Apennines fringe the sea at an average distance from it of about five miles. Thus few inland roads lead from the main coastal track. Had Cavalcanti been taken to some secluded valley on the slope of the Apennines and hidden away there?

From the first this appeared to me unlikely. The mountains, once infested by brigands, were now, through the activities of that most efficient force the Bersaglieri, as open to ordinary traffic as any county in England, and inquiry in the proper quarters speedily assured me that there was little chance of secreting anyone in the hill country in these times.

If my conclusions were correct, there remained only the coast. That did not seem to offer any

better chances for the concealment of a kidnapped person. No one, it seemed to me, could for more than a few days be hidden away on the village-crowded shores of the Adriatic. Nor could I believe that Cavalcanti's captors had taken him abroad. The sea! Was it possible that he had been hustled on board a yacht and transported to some far distant place? I knew that the scrutiny exercised over all in-going and departing craft on the Italian coast was particularly rigid. The risk would be too great, and, in any case, the police had a full record of all maritime comings and goings.

But the obvious thing to do was to try to trace the car as far as possible on its journey, so I hired a small two-seater and steered northwards along the great coastal road.

I had not the slightest clue as to the make or appearance of the car in which Cavalcanti had been whisked away. All I could glean from the few loafers who had seen it leave the stage-door was that it was a 'big' car, evidently very powerful, and painted a dark colour. It was unlikely that Natalie Nordiska would have used her own car for such a purpose. She had probably hired one. On the other hand, it was improbable that she could have engaged such a car anywhere else in the vicinity than at Ancona. But inquiries I had made before starting made it certain that no car of the kind

had been hired out in the town on the night in question.

My progress was necessarily slow. I halted at every village, at every cluster of houses almost, on the long, white road overhung by the tints of autumn. But all to no purpose. The livelong day, with the gentle sighing of the Adriatic in my ears, I sped north-westwards. At Sinigaglia and Fano no car of the kind had been seen on the night of Cavalcanti's disappearance at an hour which would have allowed of its leaving Ancona at about 10.30 P.M. At length I came to Pesaro, after a run of nearly forty miles, where I refreshed myself, and, utterly wearied out by the thoroughgoing manner in which I had pursued my quest, went to bed and to sleep.

Next morning I was up betimes, and on the road back to Ancona, immensely discouraged. But it was not till after I had passed Fano on my southward way that I stumbled upon a piece of information of the value of which I was dubious at first.

I am one of those people whose knowledge of cars is confined to the business of driving them. My ignorance of their inward mysteries is an abiding reproach to me, so when my two-seater began to misbehave, I alighted at a wayside blacksmith's to have it seen to.

(Continued on page 709.)

ANNE OF DENMARK.

By E. MARSHALL.

1.

THE political position of Anne of Denmark was more important than that of any preceding queen-consort of England, for she was the wife of the first monarch who reigned over all the British Isles—James I. Before, however, she attained this dignity, she had presided for fourteen years over the court of Scotland.

Anne was the second child of Frederick II. of Denmark and Sophia of Mecklenburg. The king was the richest prince in the north of Europe, and both he and the queen bore a high character among the Protestants for their many domestic virtues. The princess was born at Skanderborg on December 12, 1574. Though she was extremely well made, and in after years was famous for (and very proud of) her graceful dancing, she could not walk alone till she was ten years old. She was educated as a zealous Protestant of the Lutheran creed, and, as she had a rich dowry, her hand was eagerly sought in marriage by many suitors. There had for many years been talk of a marriage between Anne and James Stuart; but Queen Elizabeth always opposed the match, because the Danish king had exerted himself to clear Mary Stuart's name from

the accusation of having connived at the murder of Darnley by her third husband, Bothwell. As, however, in 1587 the King of Denmark intimated that he would seize the Orkneys and Shetlands (which had been pawned to an earlier Stuart king) if his daughter were still slighted, negotiations were resumed, for the Scots had a shrewd idea that the Princess Anne would bring a rich 'tocher' (dowry) with her. James accordingly sent his old schoolmaster, Peter Young, to make all needful inquiries, and prepare for a speedy wedding. He returned to Scotland with the news that King Frederick was dead, and so Anne had lost the rank of daughter of a reigning monarch; but he also brought a miniature of the princess, showing her to be a very pretty girl. This fact seems to have had great weight with James, for without loss of time he despatched several Scottish nobles, with the Earl Marischal of Scotland to be his proxy. The earl, therefore, acted the part of bridegroom for his royal master, and received Anne's hand in marriage at the strong fortress of Kronenborg on the Sound.

A great fleet was prepared to carry the young Queen of Scotland to her future home, but it encountered three terrible storms, which were

attributed to witchcraft, and which drove the ship carrying Anne into a Norwegian sound. News of this disaster reached Scotland in a roundabout way, and James at once decided to go himself to fetch his bride, so that she might be spared the discomfort of a long winter in the north. An autumn voyage over stormy seas must have been a great ordeal to one of so timid a nature as James's was, and it is much to his credit that he undertook it. He landed safely, and was married to Anne the day after his arrival in the little parish church of Upslo in 1589. (Upslo was the site of Christiania, now Oslo, the modern capital of Norway, which was built by Anne's brother, Christian IV.) The day after the wedding James gave Anne as his 'marrying gift' the palaces of Dunfermline and Falkland. The royal pair were obliged to spend the greater part of the winter at Upslo, but when milder weather came they paid a visit to Anne's mother at Copenhagen. There they were married over again, Lutheran fashion, and so many festivities were provided for their amusement that their stay at the Danish court lasted till April 1590.

II.

The king and queen met with a warm welcome when they arrived in Edinburgh on May Day, and James immediately turned his thoughts to the celebration of his wife's coronation, borrowing for the occasion from his nobles silver spoons and a pair of silk stockings for his own use. The loyal citizens gave her a casket of jewels worth 20,000 crowns. Anne took great pleasure in her palace of Dunfermline, and, though only sixteen, insisted on economy being practised in every department of her new home, which she fashioned on the pattern of the Danish court. We are told that she astonished the officials by her 'marvellous gravity.'

Queen Anne's first child, a son, was born at Stirling in 1594; he was called Henry Frederick after his two grandfathers. The queen's distress was very great when she found that according to Scottish law the heir to the throne should be brought up in Stirling Castle under the guardianship of the Earl and Countess of Mar. In vain she pleaded for the possession of her new home, and when she failed she declared herself the enemy of the Mar family, and made several efforts to have her baby restored to her by force.

The next child was Elizabeth, and then came Margaret, who died in infancy. For these princesses King James wrote an order for 'mutches of laines' (flannel nightcaps), 'four stools for the rockers,' 'ane birst to stroke their hair with, and two babies (dolls) for them to play with.'

The second son, Charles, was born on November 19, 1600. He was so weak that he was baptised immediately, as his death was hourly expected. The number 19 occurs very frequently in this Stuart family—James was born

on June 19; he first saw his wife on November 19; Prince Henry was born on February 19, Princess Elizabeth on August 19, and Prince Charles on November 19.

There was yet another son, born in 1601, who lived to have a grand christening, and to receive the name of his famous ancestor, Robert Bruce. He is generally called the queen's 'dearest bairn.' Several quaint entries in the household accounts are found concerning this little prince, ending with 'ane kist of aiken timber to lay duke Robert in after his death.'

Early in 1603 King James entered into possession of the realms of England and Ireland. He decided to go to London alone, and when one remembers how fatal England had been to his ancestors, it shows unexpected courage in the otherwise timid king, as well as affectionate consideration for his wife and children to save them from possible risks. Accordingly, the queen was left behind, and Prince Henry remained at Stirling with the Countess of Mar. Before leaving Scotland James wrote a long letter of good advice to his son, and dedicated to him a book he had written, called 'Basilicon Doron.'

No sooner had the king gone than Anne set off for Stirling and demanded the surrender of her boy, but the old countess was true to her trust, and stoutly refused to give him up. This so enraged the queen that she gave way to violent bursts of temper, and it required many letters from James, beginning 'My heart,' to pacify her, and in the end he had to consent to the two elder children coming to England with their mother. Having been once successful in getting her own way, we find Anne occasionally becoming very perverse, and the obstinate fit continued till she had gained her point.

III.

Queen Anne left Scotland in June 1603, and at all the resting-places on the way to London she was received with great honour, and fêtes were held on a lavish scale. She was specially pleased with one called 'The Masque of Fairies,' written by Ben Jonson. The queen did not make a very favourable impression on her new subjects, for she slighted all the stately old dames of Elizabeth's court, and bestowed her favour on young, sprightly women of her own age. She held her first court at Windsor, at the same time as Prince Henry was knighted, that ceremony taking place at a solemn Chapter of the Order of the Garter. At her coronation Anne gave great offence by refusing to receive the Holy Communion according to the rites of the Church of England. An income of £6376 was settled on her, and her private residence in London was Somerset House. The plague was raging so badly in the capital that the court removed to Winchester Palace, and there the long autumn evenings were enlivened

by playing at various games. The favourites seem to have been a series bearing the quaint titles of 'Rise, pig, and go!' 'I pray, my lord, give me a course in your park,' and 'Fire!'

Little Prince Charles was soon sent for, and he was placed in the care of Lady Carey, under whose sensible management by degrees he outgrew the tendency he had to deformity, and became a healthy boy. Two more children were born after Anne came to England, both of whom died as babies. Their names were Mary and Sophia. The pathetic monument of an infant asleep in a cradle still marks the resting-place of the latter little princess in Westminster Abbey.

Much of Queen Anne's time was taken up with entertaining the famous foreigners who came to congratulate their Majesties on their accession to the English throne. Amongst them we find Sully, the great minister of Henri IV., King Christian of Denmark and Ulric of Holstein, the queen's brothers, and the Spanish ambassador. For these guests splendid masques and revels were enacted, the most famous of them celebrating the day when Prince Henry became Prince of Wales. There was also the stately court mourning for that prince, whose early death in 1612 was a lifelong sorrow to his parents; for a time, indeed, they were 'beside themselves with grief.' The marriage of Elizabeth to the Prince Palatine left James and Anne with only one child, Prince Charles, who was his father's favourite. The queen never loved him with the same warmth as her eldest son, and she is said to have predicted that he would live to 'plague three kingdoms by his wilfulness.'

IV.

One of Queen Anne's extravagances was having her portrait painted by all the great artists of the time. In one of these she wears a curious hunting-dress, and her dogs are introduced into the picture. They are greyhounds, and a very small one is sitting up begging. She had a negro groom, and generally rode a fat gray steed, with a long cream-coloured mane. Sometimes, when hunting, the queen took a crossbow in her hand to shoot the deer, and one day by mistake she killed the king's beloved dog, 'Jewel' or 'Jowler.' At first James was very angry, but, seeing his wife's distress, he told her 'not to be concerned, for it was an accident, and

he should never love her the less.' The next day he sent her a jewel worth £2000, pretending it was a legacy from his dear, dead dog.

The queen did all she could to save Sir Walter Raleigh from the block. She wrote many letters to the king's favourite, 'Steenie,' the Duke of Buckingham, asking him to intercede for him with James. These letters generally begin with the curious mode of address, 'My kind dog.'

When the king was absent in Scotland, Anne made progresses to Bath, Bristol, and Salisbury, and also spent many weeks at her hunting-lodge, Theobald's Park, in Essex. In London she liked to hold her court at Greenwich, and on one of her visits there she patronised a breaking-up party at a large boarding-school for young gentlewomen at Lady's Hill, near Deptford. Of course a masque was acted, and this was followed by a concert, and then the girls performed three dances, in which they arranged themselves so as to form the name Anna Regina. In a second dance they formed the words Jacobus Rex and Carolus P. in compliment to the king and Prince Charles. After these entertainments they brought to the queen gifts of their own needlework, patterns of acorns and rosemary, the initial letter of these being the same as Her Majesty's—Anna Regina. The queen had some god-daughters at this school. This is the earliest mention of a girls' school in history; up till the Reformation girls were educated by the nuns in the convents.

In 1617 Anne's health began to fail; she had gout first, and often complained of pain in her fingers in writing to the king. James was very anxious about her; he often urged her to make a will, but she would not do this till she was actually on her death-bed. She died at Hampton Court in April 1619. Her body was brought by water to Somerset House, and buried in Westminster Abbey. She was deeply mourned by James, who survived her for six years. He wrote an epitaph upon her containing an allusion to a comet which was supposed to forebode her death. The elaborate composition bears witness to the love James had for the Danish lady whom he had made his wife, and many of the minor poets of the day testified to her virtues in tributes in verse—'To the memory of Anna Regina.'

SHOPPING IN PEKING.

By GRACE L. MORROW.

IN no other city of the world can be found such a superb shopping centre as in Peking!

Leaving the modern 'Legation Quarter' behind, the ricksha coolies amble steadily down the wide dusty roads which do duty for streets in the Tartar capital, through the Ch'ien Men

Gate and Tartar Wall, into Great Ch'ien Men Street, where the pulse of Chinese life throbs steadily, and China goes indifferent to the foreign devil, though far from indifferent to his purse.

Here is the great shopping centre of Peking.

To the right and left stretches a maze of narrow lanes with flowery names denoting the speciality of the shops therein—Jade Street, Silver Street, Embroidery Street, and Lantern Street, with its shop signs of huge red lanterns.

Porcelains and silks can be had in the Great Ch'ien Men. Furs, too, are in great demand, as Peking is very cold in winter. Sable, minx, chinchilla, otter, ermine, arctic fox, mongolian dog, seals, astrachan, and larger skins like wolf and bear, can be purchased very cheaply, but must be disinfected before using. Many a case of smallpox is traced to this omission!

Embroidery Street! who could imagine that behind those little doors in windowless walls are shops containing such gorgeous garments? Penetrating through many little courtyards, we found them. Long-coated, black-satin-capped Chinese men unrolled Mandarin coats stiff with gold embroidery. On the quality of the embroidery and the history of the coat depends the price demanded. If the coat is faced with 'Imperial yellow,' much more is asked; and 'Peking stitch,' which is like tiny French knots, is valued.

Old embroidered garments come on the market through deaths or great poverty in families. But in some cases the embroidery has been cut off from worn-out clothes, and glued or stitched on to new material. Modern embroideries are produced in many districts all over the country, each district having its own special designs and colouring. 'Fakes' are made by cutting out and stitching on designs from European ribbons.

In Jade Street we found shops with glass windows! Rare in the Far East. Here, behind strong iron grilles, were displayed many valuables: pearls, carved ivories, ambers, carved amethysts, and exquisite jewel jade, in many forms and colours.

Among the Chinese shopkeepers much courtesy and quaint humour are found. They waste much time in bargaining; but if the buyer shows a real appreciation and love of good work, then the inner shrine is opened and rare treasures are displayed, for which a very high price is expected.

Bargaining concluded, tea is always offered, and it would be discourteous to refuse. Clad in black satin trousers under her short coat, a woman enters with fragile handleless cups of fragrant 'flower tea,' which she hands round on a red lacquered tray. If a second cup is asked for, pleasure is shown, and 'Missie's' wants are supplied with a smile.

On leaving one shop, customers are accosted by all the neighbouring merchants with urgent invitations to enter theirs. 'Will Missie not come? Look-see! No need buy.' But, of course, once in 'Missie' always does buy something, and, if rash enough to leave her name and address, is never safe from invasion in

the privacy of her bedroom. A knock comes to her door, and without waiting for a reply, in walks a Chinese merchant, followed by an assistant with a bundle, which he at once proceeds to unroll. If discovered in selling a 'fake' he will always give back the money, or substitute a genuine article. It is 'up to' the buyer to know the difference!

A long run by ricksha is out to 'Tiffany's,' owned by a six-foot Chinese, who so delighted the New York 'Tiffany' by his artistic taste that he allowed him to have his name printed on business cards. And huge Chinese Tiffany was a great favourite at the U.S.A. Legation.

In the Lu-li-Chiang is the greatest curio district in the world. Here many treasures of a less expensive order can be unearthed—Peking snuff-bottles, kingfisher feather articles, sets of ivory chop-sticks, ladies' shoes for 'bound feet,' painted fish-bowls, enamelled buttons in sets, coolie waterpipes, and mandarin chains with filigree beads carved in camel-bone, enamelled silver balls, and rank insignia intact.

We, somewhat rashly, visited a Chinese fair. Lung-fu-Ssu is held on six days a month. Leaving our rickshas outside, we jostled in crowded alleys, between stalls piled up with brasses, bronzes, household utensils, and potteries of lovely shape and colour. Tiny birds, *painted* every colour of the rainbow, were for sale; also salmon-pink geese, and pigs with long black hair.

Many Manchu ladies were buying pearls and amber. The Manchus with their vividly painted magenta cheeks, tall-boarded, black satin head-dress, and long silk coats, are easily distinguished from the Chinese women in the wide trousers and short coats, with uncovered sleek black hair.

But the dense crowds and the terrible diseases! Red and fresh smallpox marks on the surrounding faces make Lung-fu-Ssu, however interesting, unpopular with foreigners. Ragged beggars displayed loathsome sores; one woman's head was tied with a scarlet handkerchief, over which her scalp was bulging. We soon had seen enough, and begged our guide to take us out; but, thoroughly enjoying himself, he took us through many densely crowded alleys before we saw the last of Lung-fu-Ssu.

As our rickshas carried us homeward, we looked into the provision shops of Peking—rows of terra-cotta varnished ducks for sale, entrails, and dried octopus, baskets of grains, and bulbs like rotten tulips! Bits of sugarcane, lotus root, and bamboo shoots, bottles of sticky confectionery, sugared melon seeds, and many mysterious things floating in highly-coloured syrups.

When the sunset died from the sky our ricksha boys lit their brass lanterns, and ahead loomed the Tartar Wall with its mediæval watch-towers silhouetted darkly against the

fading opal of the afterglow. At the street food-stalls the evening trade was now in full swing. The Chinese love fried pasty things, and street cooks rolled out bean cakes and mixed dough-nuts, while cauldrons of frying fat were smoking. Hungry, homeless coolies clustered round the stalls. Where the wide roads, which intersect Peking with almost the regularity of an American city, cross at right angles, what noise, what dust and confusion! Hundreds of ricksha

coolies yelling as they try to avoid collisions, and now and then the brazen 'honk-honk' of modern autos, adds to the din.

But, safely back in our large modern hotel—'replete with every modern convenience'—surrounded by the smartest of cosmopolitan society from the Legations, jazzing, and drinking cocktails in true up-to-date luxury, soon we forgot poverty-stricken China and our fatigues from 'Shopping in Peking.'

AFRICAN SILHOUETTES.

II.—PAULO THE BUTLER.

By C. M. M. PATERSON.

MUCH, one hopes, will in the problematic future life to which we are all travelling be forgiven those who have amused others, and lightened by their sayings and doings weary hours in our present pilgrimage.

If this confidence in the pardon for many transgressions of the cheery ones on earth materialises, then my 'boy,' Paulo Oloyich, will assuredly find himself among the blessed, for he has tickled his Bwana's¹ sense of humour, given many hours of amusement, and often sent him off laughing to the trivial round, the common task, on those happily rare days when isolation on a Central African farm, miles from any other white man, has been almost overpowering. Six feet two in bare feet, and ebony-black is Paulo, with perfect teeth set in a gargantuan mouth, and a look of radiant innocent happiness in the big brown eyes, such as one sees sometimes in the faces of little children—and his laugh can be heard half a mile away!

Besides this attractive roar he possesses other virtues, for he can bake excellent bread, and roast venison as well as any cook at the 'Ritz'; and during all the years which have slipped away since first I made my home in Africa, he has ministered to my bodily needs, with much the same tender solicitude that a mother or a devoted nurse gives to a helpless imbecile child!

Paulo was introduced to me by the 'boy' of a friend, who gave me kind hospitality during the opening weeks of sojourn in a strange land.

'He is good "boy," master,' said Paulo's presenter, 'though to-day he has no knowledge of the curious ways of Wazungu,² or the method of cooking the odd food which they eat; but leave him with me a week, and I will teach him—everything!'

In so far as efficiency went, it was not a first-rate character. Paulo, however, seemed

to consider his friend's speech quite the drollest one he had ever heard, for at the end thereof his huge carcass shook with a roar of laughter. Such an infectious timbre there was, too, about that laughter that, helped by the sight of the rascal's cheery countenance, my decision was quickly made—incapable or not, this big nigger must be attached somewhere near by, that I might hear that roar of mirth again, and catch a glimpse of his genial black face.

II.

The guaranteed week's tuition produced wonderful results. Shaving water, boiling hot, was ready at the desired moment. Boots were cleaned daily, and pyjamas folded decently when morning came, and laid under the pillow. Paulo had even mastered the complicated order in which knives, forks, and spoons repose on the table before one begins a meal, though to this day such disposition cannot be hurriedly accomplished—it still requires time and thought!

Into all the daily ordinary ways of the white man he had certainly been rapidly initiated, but to diagnose the reason of any uncommon want or action he was, and often still is, incapable.

Several weeks after this quaint character had entered my service a violent attack of malaria—cursed legacy from the Salonika front—assailed me. Shivering over the fire one evening, at moments shaking the chair on which I was seated with the violence of my paroxysms, at others lying back exhausted, with a dry, burning flame devouring my skin, totally unable to swallow any dinner, I was the object of much commiseration to my faithful servant.

'Paulo,' I remarked at length, 'bed is the only place when one is like this—bed, and warm blankets; and,' I murmured, as he slid past to lay out my pyjamas—'a hot-water bottle.' Now, it is only on rare occasions that this effeminate article is my bedfellow; but when in the grip of malaria to get into a vulgar sweat

¹ Master's.

² White men.

as rapidly as possible is an immediate object, and a hot-water bottle does undoubtedly assist this process.

Rising stiffly from my seat, I investigated a suit-case in which were kept commodities not in daily use, and unearthing the comforter handed it to Paulo.

'See,' I said, 'that the water you put into it is really hot.'

Quarter of an hour later his huge form passed again through the sitting-room to my bedroom—in his hand the consoling rubber bottle.

He was absent, noisily absent, for several minutes. 'Bwana,' he remarked when he did reappear, 'all is ready. Do you wish assistance in getting to bed?'

I nodded a negative. 'No,' I replied, 'and do not call me till past eight o'clock.'

Just as he left another shivering fit seized me. I sat on by the fire, waiting for it to subside before going to undress. When at last, my toilet safely accomplished, I got into bed, it was to discover therein no hot-water bottle. High and low I searched all over the room—there was no sign of the comforter. Paulo's hut was a quarter of a mile away, and it had begun to rain heavily; so, rather than paddle out in the wet to ask him where it had been put, I went to sleep without its consoling influence—cursing the fool I had for a servant.

Next morning, when he brought the early tea, Paulo's faithful, dog-like eyes were full of solicitude.

'Has Bwana's sickness abated?' he asked tenderly.

'It would have abated considerably more, you old fool,' I replied, 'if I had had my hot-water bottle! Where the devil did you put it, and what the deuce did you imagine it was wanted for?'

Paulo's expression, half-puzzled, half-sorrowful, disarmed my anger.

'I put it,' he answered penitently, 'where he could look down on you!' With a forefinger he pointed upwards, and there, just under the rafters of the ceiling, on a forgotten nail, high up on the wall, hung the cold hot-water bottle! Somehow, in all my searchings, I had never glanced skywards!

'Why up there?' I asked savagely.

Paulo shook his head, despair on his face. 'The wants of the Wazungu,' he said at length sadly, 'are difficult to understand. That queer bag, I thought, was a charm to drive away the sickness. I hung it where its eye could watch you.'

The eye was a rubber label in the article's middle, with the hieroglyphics 'North British Rubber Company' written across it!

III.

Though many years have slipped away since that incident, this huge Kavirondo still remains

an imperfect servant. Try—as I know he does—hard, his memory continues hopelessly bad. Three times a week, at least, for example, salt does not appear on the table.

'Paulo,' I said but yesterday, 'you have again forgotten the salt!'

He clapped his great black hand to his woolly head—and his laugh almost shook the flimsy structure in which I dwell.

'So I have!' he exclaimed. 'What *can* be the matter with my head!'

A holy Christian is Paulo, though profession of this creed in no wise deters him from being the proud possessor of three wives! He waits at table with a huge crucifix slung round his neck, and as the sun, in all its African glory, sinks behind the distant hills, and the mystical silence which heralds the tropical night steals over the world, the chant of the 'Ave Maria' bursts on the stillness. Solemnly, every sundown, in the kitchen, before he peels the potatoes for my dinner, Paulo's powerful voice may be heard reciting this summary of his belief—woe betide the heathen who disturbs him at such a moment!

The savage which is (and will remain for many generations) uppermost in the so-called Christianised native is still strong in Paulo's nature—the veneer is of the shallowest description. Behind the crucifix and the 'Ave Maria' is the heart of the primitive savage—the mind of a dear, simple, honest old heathen!

Daily intercourse with him emphasised this fact, but it needed, perhaps, an eventful week at our centre of civilisation, when the big agricultural show was in progress, to expose the distance between our social development and that newly grafted on to the African native. My tent was pitched near the show-ground, so that personal superintendence of some valuable Arab stallions, placed in my charge, could be more easily accomplished.

As I was sitting before a table at my tent door one morning, just about to eat my breakfast, there happened to stroll past the fattest settler in the country, nodding to me as he went. Colossal in build, he carries also more adipose tissue than any man, I should say, the world has ever seen. Paulo was, at that moment, serving me bacon and eggs, but the dish remained suspended in mid-air, as with mouth wide open, eyes gleaming, and the light of a strange zest on his face, he watched this Mzungu lumber past.

'Bwana,' he asked at length, when he had again remembered his duties, and the bacon and eggs were safely landed on my plate, 'when that bwana dies will his relations save the fat out of his stomach?' (Fat is the most valuable luxury among Paulo's tribe.)

'Certainly not,' I replied. 'White men do not eat each other, dead or alive.'

'I know,' he replied, shaking his woolly

head, his eyes suddenly dim with sorrowful regret—'I know! But what a waste! God! What a waste! Why! There must be debbies¹ and debbies full of fat in that bwana's tumbo.'²

No one who has been served by Paulo would dream of exchanging him for an experienced English butler. They are common goods, and he unique.

THE HAWTHORN BUSH.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN, F.Z.S., Author of *Habits and Characters of British Wild Animals, Tracks and Tracking, &c.*

I.

IT was the bleating cry of her fawn which brought the mother roe-deer, red-eyed and furious, to the place. She had left him safely hidden in the bracken, and she knew that he would not leave his form of his own accord. Now she was just in time to see the red fox bowl him over—but the red fox did no more.

He knew, evidently, that he was playing a dangerous game, for though the mother roe-deer made no sound as she came up, shoulder deep in the bracken, the fox saw her. The little fawn was now at his mercy, but he rightly judged that to delay another second would be unwise. He turned and fled, slipping like a snake through the undergrowth, but a desperate mother roe-deer is about as swift as any living thing.

Next moment the fox had to bound, and to bound for his life. One heard the malicious click of his fangs as he did so, and but for a sweep of his spreading rudder, which served to hurl his hindquarters out of the danger zone, he would have got no farther. As it was, two knife-edged forehoofs ploughed up the leaf-mould and cut down to the clay beneath the very place where his spine had been the merest fraction of time previously.

Then, ere the fox could rally, the roe-deer struck again. Dodge he could not, but he shot into the air like a steel spring, and again that white-tipped tail of his came in useful. It lashed across the roe-deer's eyes, momentarily blinding her, and when she recovered she saw the fox 'slick' into the bracken six feet away, as a worm 'slicks' into its hole.

But to rid the country of such a peril to her fawn the roe-deer hind was prepared to go any length, and she made one tremendous bound into the bracken, alighting five feet beyond the point at which the fox had disappeared, and just about where she thought his spine would be. The fox, however, was too wise a hunter for that. He had twisted to the right, and his pearly fangs clicked on one of the mother roe's hind-legs as she landed, smiting only the earth again.

¹ Debbies are four-gallon empty kerosene tins, largely used for cooking and carrying water.

² Stomach.

Then, in the twinkling of an eye, the fox was eight feet up a pine-tree on her right—standing on a limb and regarding her insolently, his tongue lolling. Out of reach he might be, but only just. He had seemed to run up the vertical trunk. Again the roe-deer leapt. Her forehoofs smote the trunk six feet up, and the chips flew, but when she came down there was a gash across her nostrils.

The fox had struck as a weasel strikes. So quick was the movement that human eyes could not have detected it—that one could not have credited that he had actually touched her. But this seemed to sober the roe. She went back to her fawn, which lay quivering in the leaves where the fox had left him. She sniffed him from end to end, but seemingly no hurt had befallen him, though at the scent of her own blood in her nostrils the mother's fury returned. She returned to the fox, and pranced and bounded round the tree, uttering a grunting bark with every bound. These sounds, and the crashing in the undergrowth, reached the ears of the keeper down in the wood, and he concluded rightly that a mother roe had found a foe. Also they reached the ears of her mate, and he came silently and swiftly up, as she had done, his eyes very big and very bright; and when he smelt the blood and saw the fox standing defiantly on the branch of the pine, he too went mad.

II.

For ten seconds he stared at their foe, and Reynard's coat sank a little as he glanced up to make sure that the next branch was within safe reach. Then the roebuck leapt at him like a wild-cat. He did not strike with his dagger horns, but with his hoofs, as the doe had done. These actually smote the branch on which the fox was crouching, and it seemed that simultaneously the fox leapt for the higher fork. He simply sailed up like a red limp cloth, and as the buck fell back there he was—comfortably cradled in the fork twelve feet from the ground. He was safe now, and—the complete audacity of it—he permitted himself a luxurious yawn.

As for the roebuck, his face too was streaming blood, and as he shook his pretty head it spattered down on the leaves. He snorted and seemed veritably to snarl. Both the roe-deer had become obviously uneasy, though the fox

had curled himself up, apparently to sleep, watching them through his bushy tail.

The deer exchanged quick glances; then the doe went over to her fawn. She grunted to him, and patted him with a dainty forehoof, at which he rose and made off down the runway, the doe at his heels and influencing the direction he took by touching him with her nose. So he was partly under her, the safest place for him, while the buck stood by and watched the fox till they were gone.

By that time the fox was also uneasy, and he clearly wanted to come down, because he too had heard. But he had more sense than to try while the roebuck was there, and when finally the roebuck went it was too late to descend.

As a matter of fact the keeper had become interested in the hubbub, for it was part of his training to profit by such indications. Of course the roe-deer might be squabbling among themselves, but he knew that the mothers were partial to the pine corner where the bracken was dense, and there was the alternative that a fox or a wild-cat was responsible. So the man took up his gun, and, leaving his job, stalked silently up the wood.

He did not see the roebuck, because that gentleman departed through the bracken one second before the man appeared. He did not see anything at all, for he failed to look up into the branches of the pine. Had he done so he might have seen the fox, or again he might not; for the fox had flattened himself out like a squirrel, and all that was visible of him was a patch of fur, the same colour as the bark, and about the size of a man's knuckles. So the man gave it up and went on into the wood, but ere he disappeared the fox slipped down on the other side of the trunk and made off, having experienced a very nerve-testing three minutes.

III.

It was the month of June, and the weather was hot—so hot that even the flies were glad to avail themselves of the forest thickets. For three days or so after his escape the fawn was sick, though no actual injury had befallen him. He would not take his food, and in view of the fact that he was a roe-deer fawn, it is rather surprising that he lived, for the roe-deer fawn is the most fragile child of all the woods.

The doe's wound healed quickly, because, though deep and ugly, it was within reach of her tongue; but the wound the buck had received was destined to give him trouble. It was perilously near his right eye, and the tear-pit was injured, and even had it been winter he would have suffered much with it. He could not, of course, apply Nature's massage, and, irritated beyond endurance, he rubbed the wound repeatedly against his outstretched foreleg, which was not so antiseptic as it might have been. So

the wound went wrong, and for days he hid in the thickets, and his wife saw nothing of him. Extremity at last drove him out, and instinctively he went to his mate, and she it was who, by the understanding of those who dwell in companies, applied the only healing power within their reach. So in a few days the wound healed—but it left the buck with one blind eye.

Meantime the fawn had thriven apace, and in the dusk of any evening he might have been seen capering in rings round certain favourite bushes, till he had worn distinct pathways—the roe-deer's fairy rings. Often his mother joined him in this peculiar game, and there was no prettier scene in all those wonderful woods than the dainty mother and the elf-like fawn gambolling thus. Quick they were as the swallows, which flashed and dipped about the waters of the little woodland loch the roe-deer loved so well, in and out among the silver birches, till presently the fawn would turn to menace his mother with lowered head. Then she would leap clean over him as he shook his imaginary horns and skipped aside, and so the game would begin and end among the lengthening shadows.

When the buck came back he occasionally took a part, but he seemed to have something on his memory, and generally he watched. And once or twice, when playing, he collided heavily with the timber on his blind side, whereupon he would retire, dispirited, from the game. But soon he adapted himself to his infirmity, and no roebuck in all the woods was more keenly alert than he was.

IV.

Neither the buck nor the doe forgot the incident of the fox, and even at night-time, when it is customary among the roe-deer to travel far afield, the fawn's mother never ventured far from the place where she left him hidden. No, they did not forget the fox, and one night the buck all but caught him out.

In the hollow of the wood the keeper had his pheasant-pens, and he had been tending these that day when the fox hid in the pine. Alongside the new enclosures, which contained the young longtails of that year, was an old enclosure he had used some years ago—an oblong about thirty yards in length and twelve or so in width, enclosed by a nine-foot screen of wire-netting. As a matter of fact it was not totally enclosed, for the keeper had removed the netting from one end for another purpose, so that only three sides remained intact.

Down there by the pens was some of the sweetest browsing in the wood, and it was a favourite haunt of the buck when his wife was on duty. That night he was there, a ghost among the shadows, when he saw the red fox come sneaking round, gazing covetously through the wire, which he dared not touch.

The buck stood stock-still among the shadows, watching, till presently the fox slipped in at the open end of the old enclosure. There the roe, who knew the place well, had him enclosed on three sides, and by accident or design he chose that moment to charge.

The fox, conscience-smitten as usual, fled for the timber as he heard the buck behind him, but he came up with a thud against the wire, and was hurled back by the recoil. The buck struck but missed, and with a cat-like hiss the fox leapt up at the screen, obtaining a hold six feet or so from the ground. But he had to relinquish it instantly, springing back, for the roe-buck also leapt, and this time he struck with his horns, which smote the wire just as the fox left it.

But luck was against the buck that night. At the top of his leap one of his horns caught in the wire, and there he hung, suspended helplessly. Then, indeed, was Reynard's chance to attack had he chosen to take it, but it would have profited him little, and he selected rather to grasp the opportunity to escape. With an interval now to take in his surroundings he perceived that he had walked into a veritable trap, and in a second he had slipped back by the way he had entered. But for that moment when the buck hung suspended ere he freed himself by a desperate side wrench the fox would undoubtedly have been pinned against the wire.

V.

It has been said that the wild folk do not remember evil—that sordid disposition belongs only to man. This may be so, yet for much that exists in the world of men and women there is an exact counterpart in the wild. Evil to themselves, personal injury, the wild folk as a rule do not remember. They strive only to avoid a repetition of it, but they bear no malice for it. Thus it was not because the fox had done the roe-deer irreparable injury that the latter strove to destroy him. Had that been the buck's only memory he would have stolen quietly to another part of the wood, leaving Reynard to his own devices. But there is one kind of evil the wild folk remember for all time—evil to their young. That they never forget, and sometimes they will go to almost incredible lengths to avenge the death of their offspring; for this is an instinctive bidding, a bidding to keep their enemies in check, so that their race may prosper. It is not a personal enmity—that, indeed, belongs to man—but a patriotic hatred. Thus exist the feuds between feline and canine, between fox and eagle—feuds of world-old bitterness, deep-rooted in an order which knows no change of custom.

Many times that summer the deer saw the fox, and on every occasion they tried to stalk

him in the hope of trampling him down. But the fox was wise. He belonged to the rugged mountain stock, and in the heights above the woods his cubs had been born that spring, and every dawn he carried food for his vixen. Full well he knew that he had made bad enemies of the two roe-deer, and that they were now the most formidable of his wild foes. A master of woodcraft and hillcraft, he knew them afar. There were many roe in the great range he hunted, but most of them he did not fear. In this respect he was different from the roe-deer themselves, for to the outraged parents a fox was just a fox, and they had sworn eternal enmity towards the race, so any fox that came along was in peril of his life.

More discerning was Reynard himself. On his way down from the heather he would often pass within a few yards of a family of roe, paying no heed to them, while they would merely move aside if they found themselves in his direct line of travel. But a little farther on he would see a single buck or a buck and a doe passing through their rack from the wood. Instantly he would 'freeze,' one paw upheld, and when their heads were turned away he would sneak into the deep heather and go by a different route. And he knew them, not by the scars he himself had left across their faces, but as he knew so many of the wild folk about him—as individuals.

VI.

As the fawn grew up and became able to feed himself many of the perils which had existed in his earlier days ceased to be, and that autumn it would seem, indeed, that the old evil was forgotten. In the plenteous fruit and berry harvest the three roe lived less by themselves, and often they joined little herds of their own people, drawn together by some common attraction. There was, for example, the isolated hawthorn bush near to the keeper's cottage. Its fruit was ever the first to ripen, for it obtained all the sun, and this year it bore an exceptionally heavy crop—indication, some would say, of a severe winter. There the roe-deer of the locality were wont to forgather in the gray of morning, and it was no uncommon thing to see as many as nine of them feeding there. They seemed on excellent terms—I am inclined to think that the roe-deer community of the valley was for the most part related, as indeed was the human community.

In due course the present fawn, if all went well with him, would grow up and mate, making his corner near. So he and his doe with their fawn would in due course meet their parents at the meeting-places—no longer as blood relatives, but at any rate as old acquaintances.

Thus that autumn the parents met their children who had gone before, each one now with its own little family ties, so that the com-

munity of the hawthorn bush was a friendly one. That, indeed, seemed clear when one watched the fawns playing together—little cousins of the same parental cluster.

The hawthorn stood far out in the open, two hundred yards from the nearest cover, and as winter drew on the keeper could have shot any one of the roe-deer from his cottage window during the breakfast hour. Nor could one have blamed him for it, for the factor of the big estate had said: 'The roe-deer are becoming too plentiful, M'Leod, and they're playing havoc with the new plantings. You'll have to kill off a few of them.'

But M'Leod was an old servant, whose job was safe, and he answered promptly, 'Nay, sir, that's a thing I canna' dae. I aince shot a roe, and it sobbed like a wean, lookin' up at me with its twa big een. I've never forgotten it, sir, and if ye want thae roe shot, ye maun dae it yersel', or get some ither body. It's nae for me.'

'But it's your job, M'Leod,' the factor protested limply.

'Maybe, sir, but her ladyship likes tae see thae roe about the castle, and I'm no' deprivin' her o' the pleasure.'

So, thanks to the old keeper, the roe-deer had been spared, and they were now strong in the coverts.

But in those same woods Reynard was looked upon as the worst of vermin, for there was no fox-hunting, while the pheasants were regarded as all-sacred. For the factor himself these were anxious days. Many of his calling had gone from the adjoining estates, crushed under the heel of the new order, and he feared that any day conditions might compel his own retirement. One circumstance was in his favour—the exceptionally fine pheasant coverts of that property; and indeed it may be said that his job hung on the sacred pheasants and the moor game. If the estate could be made to produce record bags, big rents were certain and his job was safe.

VII.

The prophecy of the berry harvest was early fulfilled, for in the latter days of November a blizzard swept the country. Two inches of snow fell; frost came—and held. Each morning the sun rose in a dead-clear, cloudless sky; each evening it sank behind the blue hills in a glory of crimson which filled the glens with softest purple haze. And as it sank the buzzards wheeled and the sea-gulls gathered in their thousands, screaming and flashing above the loch. They, indeed, seemed to revel in the remorseless brightness, but for others it brought hunger and departure from their usual ways. Every day the packs of starlings and finches and redwings grew and grew. Birds and beasts accustomed to living solitary lives flocked together, for that is the order of the Frost King. Soon even the red grouse were in packs, which

surpassed all records, darkening the hillside as they passed from place to place, and in the taproom of the village inn a robin took to perching on the cash register.

The snow on the highway was beaten into ice, and between school hours the music of children's voices stabbed the crisp stillness. Even the river froze, all but its central race, and when the salmon had turned seawards from the shallows, where every pebble was ice-rimmed, otter-tracks were seen for the first time on record about the village fowl-houses.

As for the roe, at night-time they travelled far, and the manse garden across the valley bore evidence of their visits; but invariably the breakfast hour found a buck and a doe and a dainty fawn within sight of the castle windows. So her ladyship and the children came to love these pretty creatures. Gentle they seemed, like fairies of the birch groves, and every day food was placed for them on the greensward opposite the French windows.

One day the mistress was discussing the animals with old M'Leod, when the keeper said, 'Ay, yer ladyship, they're bonny, but I'd like you and the children tae see anither pretty scene—the muckle pack o' black game that comes tae feed each sundown in the hawthorn bush opposite the lodge. They come prompt tae the meenit every day, and in a' my experience I've never seen sic a pack. They weigh doon the branches tae breakin' point, but in a few days the tree will be strippit, so yer ladyship maun come sune.'

'We'll come to-day,' his mistress promised. 'I'll bring the children, and we'll take a cup of tea with you, M'Leod.'

So that was settled, but little they guessed what rare glimpse into Nature's ways was to be theirs.

VIII.

The keeper was not the only one interested in that immense gathering of black game which assembled each evening in the isolated hawthorn. Another had watched from the covert edge, but with very different feelings. These were lean days for the red fox of the hill, and he had studied the gorgeous game-birds with covetous, shining eyes, but how to outwit them he did not know. There must be some way, yet to approach unseen across the two hundred yards of treeless park was obviously impossible. He could not have approached the merest robin that way, say nothing of a party of shot-hardened blackcock.

But eventually the fox had hit upon a scheme, and at night-time he went over to the bush and made for himself a bed in the heart of the thicket. In that bed he could lie unseen, and daybreak found him sleeping there, ready to await his chance. How long he had to wait did not matter much, because his bed was sheltered and cosy.

Some time before the black game were due to appear the little party arrived at the keeper's house. It was destined to be quite a merry little party, for the factor and his wife chanced to be passing, so they too were invited to stay and see the black game.

Prompt to the tick of the clock there was a strong burr of wings overhead, and here they came, slanting downwards in a straggling line, each gorgeous creature reflecting the sunbeams in emerald and purple, and even sapphire. Then they came thickly abreast, gliding easily down the slope. They alighted clumsily in the bush, as blackcock do, and on the ground all around it. More and more crowded into the branches, till they veritably crowded each other off the tips. It was indeed a sight worth coming to see. The factor said that he did not know there were so many black game on the hill, which resulted in an indignant snort from M'Leod.

The bush was black with birds, each one pecking greedily at the berries, when suddenly—something happened! It was as though a hand-grenade had exploded in the centre of the bush, for with one accord the game-birds hurled themselves free of its thickets. Some had difficulty in disengaging themselves, but for the most part that pack was a-wing in the twinkling of an eye, scattering in all directions, and as the branches were cleared the party at the keeper's window saw the reason.

There stood the fox, holding a struggling blackcock in his jaws, while he gazed guiltily, half defiantly, towards the keeper's cottage. Where the fox had come from they could not at first make out, because as yet there had been no time to realise that he must have been hiding all the time in the heart of the hawthorn bush. It seemed as if he had arrived miraculously, and the sight of him standing there gave everyone quite a shock.

'The brute!' muttered her ladyship.

'The varmint!' gulped M'Leod, turning for his gun.

'Well, if that doesn't beat——!' began the factor.

Then as M'Leod possessed himself of his thumb-polished twelve bore, he felt the pressure of the factor's fingers on his arm. 'Wait a minute,' said the factor almost breathlessly. 'Something else is going to happen. Look!'

For they had caught sight of a very angry looking roebuck coming quickly up towards the bush from behind the fox. The very poise of his head, with its upright dagger horns, indicated that he was out to cause trouble, and he had almost gained the bush when the fox leapt down, the blackcock in its jaws, and saw him.

IX.

This was a dramatic crisis. The fox flattened down in the snow, his gorgeous quarry between his forepaws, awaiting developments. Of all

creatures on earth, he had not desired to meet that spiteful little warrior just now. Two courses were before him—to stay and fight it out, or leave his long-coveted prize and bolt for the woodlands.

The latter course was evidently distasteful to the fox, or he would have made off with seconds to spare. Instead, he remained perfectly still, while the roebuck came right up to him; and which of them was the first to strike, one could not tell. Reynard was seen to leap, while at the same instant the horns and forehoofs of the roe shot out, and through the cloud of flying crystals they saw the roe whirl round, standing on his hind-legs. Clear it was that the fox was in deadly peril, since, quick though he might be, the roe was quicker, and next moment Reynard was forced to dive headlong into the cover of the bush.

Not many seconds, however, was he allowed to remain there. Heedless of the thorns, the roe crashed in after him, and simultaneously they broke cover on the other side. There followed a bewildering exhibition of twists and turns, the fox striving by dash and twist to get back to his prize, the buck between him and it. Once they collided, and the fox was thrown on his side. How he escaped the rain of blows which followed him up it was impossible to see, but when he had recovered himself it was clear that his only desire was to get quit of the place. He had evidently forgotten the blackcock, or, at least, he was prepared now to leave it; yet he feared to make the dash across the open, knowing that his adversary was swifter than he was.

So, with his head towards the buck, the fox began to back away, while the human spectators expected every moment to see him trampled in the snow, hoping now that that would not be so, for Reynard had played a pretty game. He had attained a great ambition by a piece of strategy worthy of his race, and after all this was the Hunger Moon.

But old M'Leod had no such sentiments. To him foxes were a curse, and he denied them even the right to live. So, while the others watched, he had slipped to the door in the hope of obtaining a long-range shot at the little free-booter. He had, indeed, raised his gun, when he noticed a hind and her fawn coming out of the wood in his direct line of fire. They were stalking up behind the fox, evidently intent on surprising him, but they might as well have tried to stalk one of their own alert race. Without looking, the fox half-turned so as to keep all three of them in his line of vision, and now he was backing and dodging, dodging and backing, straight towards the cottage. Each lightning dash saw him a few yards nearer, as though he were seeking the aid of the very humans—and even M'Leod could not find it in his heart to interfere.

It was a rare thing they saw that day, for the fox came right up to the garden gate, and neither he nor his furious little persecutors noticed the figure in the doorway or the other figures at the window. The hind and the fawn had thrown in their lot, and a veritable barrage of blows followed Reynard through every move he made. As an example of animal quickness it was almost frightening to watch, and it served to illustrate quite a new side of the characters of those gentle woodland deer; yet somehow the fox gained the gate unscathed, and slipped through it. Next moment he dodged to the right, leapt to the roof of an outhouse, and, running along the walls of the kennels, he dropped down on the other side, safe in the woods once more.

'Well, I never!' exclaimed M'Leod, gazing at the three angry roe, which quickly made off. 'Who would ha' thought it?'

'I'm glad you didn't shoot,' said her ladyship. 'It was wonderfully interesting, but I am glad it is all over without bloodshed.'

'Yes,' agreed the factor. 'That fox deserved to live.'

'And the roe-deer too!' added her ladyship meaningly. 'I can't imagine foxes becoming very abundant when those little creatures are about!'

The factor was thoughtful. 'It certainly does open up a new line of inquiry,' he admitted. 'It's worth while having a few roe-deer if they will keep the foxes away. What's your opinion, M'Leod?'

'I expressed ma opeenion long ago!' said the old keeper. 'We havena' been much troubled wi' foxes since the roe-deer increased, an' ma opeenion is that we want tae leave them alane!'

And M'Leod's opinion carried.

THE CORAL FISHERIES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.

I.

THERE is something pathetic about the death of a trade, even of the most commercial and unromantic; but when it is a beautiful and delicate craft, worked for generations by a picturesque people with materials from the very heart of Nature, and yielding as its results ornaments of real artistic worth, the pathos is touched into a deeper emotion.

This is the fate of the coral fisheries of Italy. It is a bare half-century since the coral fleets of Naples and Lipari, Pontesacco and Girgenti, were famous; since bronzed seamen sailed out over the pellucid sea under a sky of intense blue, bound on the eternal task of robbing the pitiless deep of its treasure. Smaller and smaller the white sails would become as the ships crept on, infinitely tiny in the wide waste of blue; and the sailors' chants would fade and die on the softly-moving air as they sailed away on their romantic quest.

It was no easy task they had before them. So many were the dangers of the coral reef, so difficult the manœuvres that must be accomplished before the coral fleet could return home to the safety of the harbour, that the work was considered an excellent preparation for naval men, and a man who had been a coral-fisher was sure to find a welcome from his country's fleet. For the coral banks are hard to come at, and long, sharp-toothed promontories extend under the surface of the limpid blue; winds fail, or veer round to an unexpected quarter; and happy is the fleet that returns to safety at the expected time, bearing its precious load of coral.

That was fifty years ago. Nowadays the

coral fleets do not sail so often, and there are fewer towns that send them out. Good coral is becoming increasingly rare about the coasts of the Mediterranean, and the towns, such as Torre del Greco, that still carry on the coral industry, do not depend on the local fisheries for their supplies, but send abroad for the raw coral which is to be worked up into jewellery. During the first nine months of 1923 the quantity of raw coral imported into Italy amounted to eight and a half tons.

There is, of course, a certain amount of coral in the Mediterranean still, and boats will yet sail in search of it; but only in the Gulf of Naples and off the coast of Sardinia do they meet with any considerable success. In days gone by the fleets went abroad as far as the Ægean Islands and the northern coast of Africa; Sicily was a happy hunting-ground; Corsica, Sardinia, and Vallona were ransacked. Now, owing to the enormous cost of fishing, these ventures are abandoned; and since 1914 Sicily, with its coral bank of Sciacca, is the farthest point of the coral-fishers' journeyings.

II.

Coral itself is a curious substance. It is generally imagined that the coral brought up from the sea is pink or red. Sometimes it is, and when it is 'rose coral,' or 'peau d'ange,' as it is sometimes called, it is worth its weight in gold—quite literally. A really fine piece of branching rose coral is worth £10 an ounce. But pink coral is increasingly rare; and most of that now obtained is the black 'dead' coral, which must be soaked in hydrogen peroxide for some days before it regains its colour. Sometimes an immersion of three days

will restore the desired pink ; sometimes it must be soaked for over a week. The coral obtained from the 40,000 square miles of Sciacca is 'decayed' or 'dead' coral, and must be treated with peroxide before it is worked and polished by the craftsman.

The coral cargo is packed in chests closely locked and tightly roped, and generally unladen in the harbour. The less valuable coral lies on top—broken fragments, black, decayed, unpromising enough in appearance. Below this, carefully packed, comes the better stuff, big branches which will bring in a handsome sum, smaller pieces which are still well shaped ; and, if the fleet has been lucky, there may be found in a corner of a chest a knotted handkerchief containing really fine pieces of 'rose' coral.

The cargo is sold as a whole, the good with the bad ; the coral merchants take possession of it, and the work of the fleet is done, for the time. In a few days they will set out again on the hazardous quest. Only on one day in the year does the coral-fisher refuse to leave the harbour. No sailor, however bold, will go coral-fishing on the Vigil of Our Lady of the Rosary ; neither love nor reward will tempt him out until the bells have tolled midnight and the Vigil is over.

III.

The raw, or unworked, coral is now handed over to the workmen on shore, and many are the processes to which it must be submitted before it is ready for sale. The rare specimens of red or pink coral can be dealt with at once ; but, for the most part, the coral brought in is the decayed black substance that must be immersed in its peroxide bath. In a few days it has regained its colour, and the red coral we know so well is ready to be worked.

There are now very few towns that carry on the industry of coral-working ; indeed, in Italy the manufacture is confined to Torre del Greco. In Naples, Rome, and Paris the only work done now is the mounting of coral, already prepared, in metal settings. In Torre del Greco, however, the industry still survives, and it is there that the coral-fisheries send their cargo. It is a real 'manufacture,' for the coral must be worked by hand entirely, on account of the many inequalities in surface and size.

The processes through which the coral must pass are very many. First, it must be cut with files or nippers into convenient pieces. Any particularly fine specimens, which will be made up into single objects—cameos, penholders, and so on—are put aside. The cutting of coral requires judgment as well as skill ; a fine piece may be spoilt in shape by careless cutting, or a good workman may detect well-shaped fragments on an otherwise poor piece. The cutting

is entrusted to both men and women, who soon develop great skill and rapidity.

When the coral is cut into convenient pieces there follows the work of boring. This is a task that requires a steady hand and a delicate touch, and it is assigned entirely to women. The boring is done with a special tool, a kind of small perforator, which is selected in accordance with the size of the coral to be pierced. The bored pieces are then threaded on iron wire, and there follows the very delicate task of planing or filing.

Only women undertake this work. The coral, threaded on the iron wire, is laid on beams of a specially hard wood. The women, exerting a pressure which only a skilled worker can judge, pass over the brittle surfaces a small grindstone dipped in water. With this instrument they plane down all irregularities, and gradually file the surface down to a uniform thickness.

IV.

The coral, cut to shape, pierced, and planed to an even surface, is now handed over to the polishers. It is put, together with a quantity of crushed pumice-stone, into a small bag made of raw linen, and the whole is shaken in a tub, over which a small column of water plays. A hole in the tub carries away the water as it flows through the bag. When it has been thoroughly 'pumicated' the coral is rinsed and put into a second bag, which contains, not pumice, but a substance known to the workers as 'pulimento.' It is, perhaps, significant that the craftsmen of this dying trade cannot tell what 'pulimento' is ; they merely accept it and use it, and there their interest ends. It is to them merely red or white 'pulimento,' without which one cannot polish coral. In the same way they accept the peroxide that restores the colour to decayed coral without question as to its nature. One thing reddens coral ; another polishes it. Why ask what is the nature of these agents, so long as the work is done ?

The 'pulimento' is not used quite as the pumice was. The bag is first shaken dry ; then a little water is added ; then a great quantity of water is used, and the bag is shaken violently under the swift rush. Then the coral is withdrawn, brilliant and gleaming, ready for mounting.

It is a real handicraft this preparation of coral. Each branch has its special workers, its tools, its own importance, its own skill ; and yet the trade is declining fast. The care, the patience, the love of the craft, which are needed for work such as this, are dying out. Handicrafts are losing the hold they once had ; romance itself seems to be dying. Machinery is superseding the delicate skill of the hand-worker ; and glass and china are ousting as ornaments the branching jewellery of the treasure-house of the sea.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE BRITTANY OF SPAIN.

By W. VICTOR COOK, Author of *Grey Fish*, &c.

I.

SOUTH-BOUND ships, after leaving the currents which eddy far out into the Atlantic off the Breton rocks, cross the Bay, and pick up the jagged cliffs of Spain's north-western corner—bare, mountainous pyramids ranged in sierras against the skyline, sternly dark, but tinged in the sunshine with the purple of their distant heather. Be the ocean ever so calm, the slow heave of its rollers breaks in snow-white foam around their feet, and the smoking surf runs threateningly along the reefs which flank the island masses that stand guard at the entrances to Galicia's deep bays or *rias*.

White lighthouses, like snow-spots in the sunshine, dot the cliff-tops by day, and twinkle along the perilous coast by night. This is the Brittany of Spain, the home of people who, though they have lost the Celtic mother-tongue, retain many of the characteristics of the Celtic race to which they mainly belong, among these being an intense pride of nationality.

Deep into the heart of the land the smiling *rias* run back from the austere coast, their clear waters dotted with little fishing craft, the green slopes of their rich valleys filled with vines and maize, vegetables and fruit. Palm and choice southern flowers thrive in the sheltered spots, and on the heights are the bracken and the long purple heather, and here and there, like feathery crests in the distance, the tall straight pine.

To a casual visitor, especially to one acquainted with the sun-baked barrenness of many parts of 'sunny Spain,' this pleasant land of Galicia seems a veritable paradise of natural wealth. And yet, partly from political causes, partly from the prevalent system of splitting up the tenure of land into infinitesimally small portions, the Gallegos are for the most part miserably poor—so poor that the young men who wish to make their way cannot stay in the land, but emigrate by thousands every year to the southern countries of America. Emigration offices are a feature of the waterside at the principal ports, and it is said that as many as twenty thousand depart yearly for South America alone. Many Gallegos go also to

Portugal, where, though climate and speech are similar to their own, the economic conditions are such as to enable them to turn their own industry as field-workers to profit, and often to return home and become small proprietors with their savings. Many, too, go as hewers of wood and drawers of water to other parts of Spain itself, where their strongly-marked provincial speech, their lack of pride, and their patient industry make the name of Gallego almost synonymous with boor, and where they are the butt of a good deal of undeserved ridicule.

II.

The heavy emigration of the young men of Galicia is largely responsible for a peculiarity which strikes at once the notice of every visitor to the province—the universal labour, and heavy labour, of the women. While a great proportion of the men who remain at home are engaged in the fishing, which is the principal industry of the long sea inlets, and the young men who go abroad become the manual labourers and the burden-bearers in the countries whither they repair, at home in the province the hard work of everyday life is mostly performed by the women. It is embarrassing for a stranger from the north, on arriving at one of the Galician ports, to have his luggage scrambled for by a bevy of women, young and middle-aged, who pile on their heads a load which few Englishmen would like to carry on their shoulders, but it is useless to resist. The woman porter, strong and erect and supple, balancing the heaviest load without apparent effort on a little round pad laid upon her hair, walks with regal gait to the customs office and thence to the hotel of the traveller, passing easily through doors and round corners with her terrifying load without touching anywhere, avoiding obstacles with unfailing instinct, and even turning to chat casually with an acquaintance as she goes. Among the Galician women the head is the one and only place to carry everything except a baby. A huge pitcher of water, which an ordinary man would certainly not care to lift, they will carry long distances up hill and down, to and from the public fountain in the plaza, and with equal sureness

of balance will stride along with a single bottle standing upright on the head.

Morning, noon, and night, the public fountain is the habitual place of gossip, for the jets of water run comparatively slowly, and the great water-vessels which the women slide under the jets along the metal rails laid for the purpose from the fountain's edge take some time to fill, and many others are waiting. So round the fountain the women stay and talk, and sometimes quarrel, while the rows of stone or metal pitchers wait their turn to be filled along the fountain's edge, and the traffic of the town goes by—slow ox-carts drawn by beautiful long-horned brown oxen, pulling tremendous loads without any harness other than the yoke on their great necks and shoulders; pack animals laden with the infinite variety of goods which furnish the stalls of a southern market-place; and now and again, seeming an anachronism in the narrow, winding, stone-flagged streets of a Galician town, a motor-lorry or a motor-bus, the latter still following the lines of the old-style diligence in its divisions of 'berlina' (the first-class compartment in front), 'interior,' and 'coupé' (bare benches on the roof, in front of the piled luggage).

III.

For all the beauty of the country, the comparative absence of laughter is a conspicuous aspect of peasant life. The Gallego has none of the sombre pride of the Castilian on the one hand, and on the other none of the light gaiety of the Andalusian. Beauty of feature and fineness of form are common among the Galician women, but the beauty is quiet and grave, with a frequent hint of the tragic behind great brown introspective eyes. Many a face that would make a painter's Madonna looks at you from the purple vineyards or the crowded, clamorous market-place. The men, for the most part, seem of a poorer calibre, until one remembers that the best of them are earning their return in exile, or swinging in their little vessels on the great slow rollers outside the *rias* of the coast, catching the fish for the factories whose multifarious odours pervade the shore-line of a Galician township.

Like their northern brethren of Brittany, the Galicians in their fiord-like *rias* have always been notable seamen. It was at Pontevedra, midway down the coast, a clean old town of white-flagged, narrow streets climbing round a church-crowned hill, that Columbus's ship the *Santa Maria* was built, though in Pontevedra to-day there is no memorial to mark the site of that notable piece of shipbuilding. Pontevedra men sailed in her on her heroic voyage to the New World, and the Galicians, with a justifiable pride, speak of her still as *La Gallega*—'the Galician girl'—which was her original name, they say, before the Admiral of the Ocean-Sea took her for his

great adventure and the Church rechristened her. When I tried to find the exact spot of the *Gallega's* building a member of the local Archæological Society, who, with a truly Spanish courtesy, gave up an entire day to showing me things of interest in his home city, could locate it no nearer than one of two quays at the point where the river enters the *ria* of Pontevedra—a rather deserted spot to-day near the tawdry sun-baked bull-ring and a dirty fishing village.

IV.

The great church of Pontevedra has a curious origin. In the Middle Ages an Archbishop of Santiago de Compostella, Gaspar Avalos, Primate of all Spain, granted special permission to the men of Pontevedra to go fishing on Sundays, on condition of their devoting part of the proceeds for the ransom of captive Gallegans in the hands of the Turks. In this way a league called the Confraternity of the Holy Body was formed, and became so wealthy and powerful that besides its original purpose it was able to raise the fine church of Santa Maria la Grande, with an extremely good façade in carved effigies—perhaps the finest piece of medieval artistry remaining, with the exception of Santiago itself, in this part of Spain. The maritime character of the church's origin is recalled by a little chapel just outside the most generally used entrance, containing an altar of the 'Cristo del Buen Viage'—the Christ of lucky voyaging—before which a pious taper is generally burning, and many a fishwife kneels to pray.

Religious pilgrimages, though shorn of much of their former importance, are still a feature of Spanish life in various places, and in no place in the land is there a shrine of greater renown than that of Santiago de Compostella, Galicia's most famous city. The origin of the name has been disputed, but the common derivation as the 'Field of the Star' is picturesque, and fits the curious legend associated with the founding of the city.

According to the legend, in the year of our Lord 813, a supernatural light was observed glowing on the top of a high oak-tree among the mountains, and sounds of celestial music were heard. Word of the marvel was taken to the Bishop of Iria Flavia (now Padrón), about fifteen miles distant, and the bishop, with canons of his church and other persons, visited the spot and verified the supernatural manifestations. More than that, they discovered, in the undergrowth near, a cave, and under a small altar in the cave a sarcophagus covered with a stone slab, at each end of which was a smaller stone coffin. On removing the slab they found a body in the sarcophagus, together with a parchment declaring: 'Here lieth the holy James, son of Zebedee and Salome, brother of John, whom Herod beheaded in Jerusalem; he came by sea, borne

by his disciples to Iria Flavia, and thence on a car drawn by the oxen of the Lady Lupa, owner of these estates, which oxen would not pass on any further.'

James the Apostle is credited with having been the first missionary of Christianity to Spain. The story of the miraculous discovery of the saint's body, after nearly eight hundred years, was related by the pious (and possibly astute) bishop to King Alphonso II., who went to Iria Flavia with his great men from Asturias, ordered the erection of a little church on the site of the wonderful cave, and endowed it with a league of land around. Thus commenced, as one of the great shrines of Christendom, the city of Santiago de Compostella, for ages the resort of countless pilgrims, upon which the piety and superstition of medieval Spain lavished wealth and treasure to an almost incredible extent.

At the close of the tenth century the Saracen general, Almanzor, captured and destroyed Santiago, though the sacred tomb itself, beside which a monk knelt in prayer, is related to have been spared. The account of the infidels' booty, including four thousand Christian captives, on whose shoulders the big bells and heavy doors of the church were carried to Cordova, suggests the strides which the new city had already made. The Moors did not long remain at Santiago. More than three centuries later, when Cordova itself was regained by 'Saint' Ferdinand, the same doors and bells are said to have been returned to Compostella, borne on the shoulders this time of Mussulman prisoners.

A new temple in place of the church destroyed by Almanzor grew up during the stormy period of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Money was supplied by the faithful, and armies of pilgrims of all ranks, and of every age and sex, eagerly assisted the workmen with their own hands to convey the stone from the quarries in the neighbourhood. Kings and queens, notable saints and founders of the great religious Orders, were among the pilgrims. So numerous were the English pilgrims alone that they founded a hospital and church for themselves near Lugo.

In the year 1120 the See of Santiago was raised to an archbishopric, and soon afterwards Pope Calixtus II. granted to the cathedral the privilege of the Holy Year, which it still retains. Holy Year occurs when the patron's day falls on a Sunday, and throughout that year the holy door, or *Porta Cœli*, stands wide open, and all who pass under it obtain special indulgences.

v.

The cathedral of Santiago, enriched by the thronging devotees of successive ages, remains to-day an inexhaustible storehouse of Spanish

history and art. Splendid in position and noble in design, the very richness of its internal furnishing oppresses the mind. But from the crowding wealth of its interior ornamentation one thing stands apart, the wonderful sermon in stone called the Gate of Glory. It stands just inside the main western doors of the cathedral, so close to them, indeed, that no adequate pictured representation of it can be made. It consists of a gateway in three arches, occupying the whole width of the nave, each arch filled with the most exquisitely carved figures, and the entire conception preaching with fecund imagination the lesson of the ultimate triumph of good over evil. The sculptor, named Mateo, took twenty years over the work, from 1168 to 1188, a date preceding that of most of the famous porticos of European cathedrals, and drew his inspiration from the Bible alone. The monument is one of the most remarkable achievements of medieval Christian art. It was originally painted in gold and colours, but these have worn off with the passage of the centuries. The Spaniards declare, moreover, that the portico has been injured by the hands of workmen sent from England to make a reproduction for the South Kensington Museum. At the back of the Gate of Glory, kneeling towards the altar at the foot of the central arch, is a figure said to be that of Mateo, which is credited by tradition with the virtue of averting mental disorders from those who touch its head with theirs.

A curiosity of Santiago cathedral is its great censer, or *Botafumeiro*, a huge vessel of silver, the largest of its kind in the world. Its use is confined to special occasions, when it is brought out and swung on ropes running over pulleys attached to a strong iron structure, which is built on to the cupola that surmounts the intersection of the central nave and the great transept. Ten men pull the rope, which slowly raises the huge censer from the pavement of the cathedral above the people's heads. When it is a few feet above the height of a man, an attendant causes it to sway slightly, and men with the rope, with slow up-and-down hauls, set it swinging. Gradually the speed and the length of the arc increase, till the whirling silver vessel is swinging back and forth almost to the top of the roof of the nave, flashing and glowing amid a semicircle of white vapour. This goes on for about a quarter of an hour, while clarionets play a shrill accompaniment—a weirdly impressive spectacle. The use of this great censer goes back very far into the past, and is said to have originated as a means of disinfecting the cathedral in the days when the crowding pilgrims, unable to find accommodation in the town, spent the night in the building. It is on record that in 1499, during a visit of Catharine of Aragon to the cathedral some

time before her departure to become the bride of Prince Arthur of England, the chains of the great censer broke as it was swinging, but that, though it was broken, it neither hurt any worshipper nor even dropped an ash!

VI.

The city of Santiago itself is one of the most interesting in Europe—one of those cities, like Venice or Granada, with an unforgettable 'atmosphere' of its own. It shows itself to magnificent advantage. Encircled by great, dark, boulder-covered hills—grown over with bracken and purple heather—which rise gloomily outlined against the brilliant blue sky, Santiago lies along a hillside facing to the west, the three great towers of its cathedral focusing the landscape. Facing the cathedral from the other side of a wide square, and standing straight up from the bed of one of the little streams which flow round the city, rise the walls of a great seminary; and another side of the square is occupied by a wonderful old building known as the Hospital of the Catholic Kings, originally built by Ferdinand and Isabella for the accommodation of the thousands of pilgrims who flocked to the city. The building, a great rectangle in four courts, with cloisters and balconies, is now used as a public hospital in the modern sense of the word, and is one of the largest and best equipped in Spain. To a British visitor it is curious to find such an institution quite open to the general public, who are allowed to stroll freely through its well-filled wards and courtyards at all times of the day, both men's and women's wards being equally open to the curious visitor.

Just outside the city, across the little bordering river beyond the cathedral square, and facing the hundred-windowed walls of the seminary, lies a bastion-like spur of rising ground, round which in shady avenues and flowered expanses runs a splendid circular alameda, or public gardens and parade. Few promenades command such an outlook. On the one side lies outstretched the old gray city of the Middle Ages, with its thronged, white stone-flagged streets, and at its feet the green river valley with maize and vines and orchards; on the other side, beyond pine-woods and cultivated hill-slopes, the bleak, dark line of the sierras. The aspect of Santiago from this alameda at sunset, with the red light burning on the old stone walls, and wrapping the cathedral towers and the whole city in a purple mist, is something quite impossible to forget.

Like other southern cities, Santiago has its daily market, but it is also the scene of a weekly cattle-market, which is held, of all places, under the trees of the hill round which the public alameda winds. The spectacle of bullocks, horses, pigs, donkeys, and mules being

sold in a setting of flower-beds and ornamental walks and statues of Galician worthies is in itself sufficiently strange, but it receives an added piquancy from the curiously variegated assortment of costumes of the peasants and their animals. The pigs, a stand-by of the Galician farmer, are white and are kept remarkably clean. The Galician looks after his pigs with affectionate individual attention, often calling them by name like a dog, and in the intervals of market business may frequently be seen clipping them with big scissors, much as a sheep-shearer clips his sheep, holding the young pigs between his knees for the operation. Particular attention seems to be paid to keeping the pig's eyelashes nice and short. On the farms it is a common sight to see the wife or daughter of a good-class farmer fondling a pig like a favourite dog, the pig snuggling up to her or lying contentedly on the ground during the process. The pigs are taken to market, if the distance is short, by driving them along the road, sometimes in little flocks kept together by a man or a woman with a long branch—for they appear to be much more amenable to reason than our home pigs—or sometimes, if in ones or twos, with a cord round one leg after the Irish manner. If the distance to market is long—and some of the farmers come a surprisingly long way by road—the pigs are brought in slow-moving ox-carts, converted into temporary cages with hurdles, lined inside with brushwood and fern to keep off the fierce heat of the sun.

VII.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the picturesqueness of the Galician hill-country, where the poorest shack has its own vine-arbour overhanging its plain and often ugly front. The roadside villages of Galicia, like those of Brittany, are frequently ugly in themselves, for, whatever his virtues may be, the Gallego seems to have no sense of the picturesque himself, and the distant view of red-tiled roofs bleached by the hot sun, the white walls, and the green of maize and vine, often rouses anticipations which closer acquaintance dispels. The Gallego of the villages has not learnt the elements of sanitation or public cleanliness. On the other hand the towns, with their bright white houses, their narrow white stone-flagged streets, give for the most part a very agreeable impression of cleanness and freshness, which is helped by the southern absence of smoke or chimneys, by the frequency of broad stone balconies in the upper storeys, the cool colonnades which often run down the whole side of the older streets, supporting the upper storeys of the houses on strong stone columns, and by the numerous miradores which are such a favourite device in Spanish houses—small balconies enclosed with deep glass windows on

all sides, giving at once full opportunity for viewing what is going on, and keeping the inner rooms shady and cool in the hot weather.

Endowed by nature with a climate and conditions which should make it one of the most prosperous lands of Europe, Galicia is still the most thickly-populated province of the Peninsula. In recent years it has made great strides in the direction of attracting visitors from other lands, and the motor-bus, a comparative novelty in most parts of Spain, is already well established on the principal roads, and new services are growing up. The British tourist agencies every year send greater numbers of visitors,

and though to be one of the 'sheep' in an agency flock is scarcely the way to learn to know a country, there is a growing number of appreciative travellers who, wandering at their own will in this nearest corner of Spain, find in it the charm of unsuspected delight. And the quiet traveller may rest assured that it will be long before the combined efforts of the progressive Galician Association and the lure of the tourist agencies will bring back to Galicia's winding hill-tracks the teeming thousands of pilgrims who caused the Spaniards to give to the Milky Way their expressive name of 'the Road of Santiago.'

THE LABYRINTH.

PART II.

v.

SEVERAL fishermen hung about the smithy door, watching the process and whispering among themselves. Presently one of them lounged up to me. 'Did not the signor inquire here yesterday if a certain car had been seen on a certain night?' he asked mysteriously.

I replied hopefully that I had.

'I heard so,' he said, nodding sagaciously. 'I was not here yesterday, or I might have saved the signor a longer journey. I have only now returned from the fishing. But I saw the car . . . and much else.'

'If that is so, and you can give me any information of value about it, I shall reward you handsomely,' I assured him, handing him a twenty-lire note as an earnest of better things to come. 'The car I spoke of was that in which the Signor Cavalcanti was carried off.'

'Cavalcanti!' He started at the name. 'Let us walk yonder, signor'; and he pointed towards the shore. 'Cavalcanti!' he resumed, as if the mention of the celebrated name had given him a fresh interest in the business. 'Well, I was here on the night on which he disappeared, but I never connected what I saw then with that bad business. I had just come in from examining my inshore nets. It was after midnight, one o'clock, perhaps. We fishermen do not carry watches. I saw the lights of a car on the road near the beach. It was some distance away, but I walked towards it, wondering whether the folk in it had had a breakdown. As I came nearer, I saw three men lift another out of the car and stagger down to the water's edge. I hid behind a rock and watched them. Someone whistled, and I saw a boat steered inshore. Into this they lowered the man they carried, and then, jumping in themselves, pushed off.'

'But why did you not report this to the

police?' I asked sternly, blessing the fellow all the same that he had not done so. Oh yes, I felt very clever at that moment.

'Would the signor have had me tell this to the police—to my worst enemies?' he exclaimed with Southern emphasis. 'Give information to those who fined me for drying my nets on the beach in accordance with immemorial custom?'

I could not be angry with him. In fact I sympathised with him. Yes, the police were absurd blockheads. But where had the men in the boat disappeared to? Was there a yacht or other vessel standing off the coast?

'None, signor,' he answered earnestly—'none that was visible; on that I will stake my soul. The affair puzzled me for a while, puzzled me greatly until—until another man told me what he had seen that morning some miles out and shortly after sunrise.'

'And what was that, pray?'

'I can tell you just as much about it as that other can,' he said eagerly. 'He does not need the reward, and I am a poor man. I know the signor is not of the police. Well, this man—I need not tell you his name—was returning about dawn from the fishing and saw the periscope of a submarine about three miles from land.'

'The periscope of a submarine! Do you mean to say that you think it was to a submarine that these men carried Cavalcanti?'

'Reason would seem to agree with such a conclusion, signor,' he said sententiously, in one of those flights of 'superior' language that interlard the speech of the Latin peasant. 'There was not another vessel within miles of this place, except a few small fishing smacks.'

'And that is all you have to tell me?'

'That is all that anyone could tell you, signor. The man who saw it himself could tell you no more.'

'Well, here is another note for you. But in what direction did this submarine of yours seem to be steering?'

'Oh, straight out across the Adriatic, signor. She was going at a high speed.'

VI.

When I returned to the smithy the slight defect in my car had been rectified, and I hastened back to Ancona. After a late meal, I sat down with a pipe to try to get my bearings.

If my fisherman was right in his surmise the business was much more complicated than I had thought it. The appearance of the submarine gave quite another aspect to the affair. To me, indeed, it once more assumed a political significance, for I could not believe that a mere Russian dancer had acquired such a vessel for the express purpose of spiriting away the man she both loved and hated. The idea seemed preposterous. Nor could I bring myself to think that she could have prevailed upon any naval officer to aid her in so wild a business. But when I came to consider the political power, wealth, and amazing resources of *mesdames les danseuses* I didn't feel quite so sure of my conclusions. Such a woman was not to be easily turned from her intention and, having set her mind upon it, might well call to her assistance resources at which I could only guess. The first thing was to find out what opportunities Natalie Nordiska had of acquiring such a vessel. That she was not now in Ancona the police had grudgingly informed me. In any case I resolved first of all to proceed on the assumption that she had inspired this submarine abduction. It was clear to me that I must necessarily absolve the Government from all complicity in the affair. Again, as Cavalcanti had by no means striven to reawaken the dormant patriotism of his countrymen by diatribes against other powers, none of the neighbouring states could have desired his downfall. It seemed absurd to presuppose foreign intervention. One thing was very clear—a suspicious vessel on the coast near Ancona would at once have been remarked, and the use of a submarine seemed to point to a carefully premeditated scheme.

At the same time, I could not for the life of me discover any definite reason for connecting Natalie Nordiska with the whole extraordinary business other than the fact that she had had an interview with Cavalcanti on the night of his disappearance. This, however, seemed to me sufficient evidence on which to suspect her of being responsible for that occurrence. But where had she taken him? 'Straight out across the Adriatic,' the fisherman had said. What did that imply? She might have taken him to—I consulted a map—to Greece, to Yugo-Slavia, to Albania!

Two things weighed with me here. The

submarine had been sighted making as if to cross the Adriatic. Then why had Cavalcanti's abductors waited their chance until his visit to Ancona? So that he might be the more easily conveyed by sea to a place prepared for him? It was not likely that he could have been removed to any other part of Italy. Yugo-Slavia, too, was out of the question. National barriers would have prevented him from landing on its mainland, or in Greece, or Albania.

The problem, indeed, began to take on a hopeless complexion. And then it occurred to me to do what I might have done before. I ferreted up and down Ancona for two whole days in an effort to discover in what manner Natalie Nordiska had busied herself while in the town. Assisted by her photograph, I found at last that she had put up with a maid at a small but select hotel in one of the suburbs, under an assumed name. They had not much to tell me there except that they had hired a car for her. I hunted up the driver of the car, who informed me that amongst other journeys he had on several occasions driven her to the neighbourhood of the docks, where she had made several purchases. Yes, he could take me to the very shops she had visited. I drove to one of them and found that she had purchased there a couple of oilskin wraps such as are used at sea, some pairs of stout boots, and several powerful electric torches. Oh yes, the ship-chandler remembered the lady quite well. She was the same lady who, some weeks previously, had bought a large Government chart. A chart of what? He could not recall now, but his assistant might. The assistant did. It was a chart of the Archipelago of Quarnerolo, which lies among the more northerly Dalmatian islands. But there was more. The lady had asked him to procure for her, through a firm of booksellers in the town, a copy of Stampa's *Archæology of the Dalmatian Archipelago*.

'Now we are coming to it,' I thought.

I at once bought every guide-book on the Dalmatian islands he had in stock, and in a mood of fervent expectancy hastened to the municipal library to examine Stampa's book.

VII.

Interesting as is its subject, *The Archæology of the Dalmatian Islands* is scarcely an inspiring volume. But between its covers, I felt sure, was to be found the secret of Cavalcanti's whereabouts. I knew that many of the Dalmatian islands are occupied as summer residences by people of all nationalities—Italians, Austrians, English. Their wonderful beauty and the comparative isolation they afford cause them to be sought after by people of artistic tendencies. The larger islands are haunted by painters, while the smaller, mere islets some of them, are rented by more solitary-minded folk, who turn these detached spots into hermitages, visited

only at wide intervals by small steamers and launches, which bring occasional supplies. How in such a micronesian maze was I to discover any trace of my abducted friend? True, I might charter a yacht and cruise among the islands on the offchance of picking up some clue. But that hope seemed vain enough. No! I must seek the end of the clue in Ancona before going any further.

However, I recognised that my search must now be restricted to the Archipelago of Quarnerolo, of which Natalie Nordiska had purchased a chart. This group stretches over an area of about sixty miles in length by twenty broad, and lies nearly forty miles south of Fiume. At least a dozen fairly large islands occupy its waters, and a regular constellation of lesser islets and rocks lies between its greater cyclades. I argued that if Natalie Nordiska had specially ordered Stampa's book on the archæology of the Dalmatian islands it must have been to study conditions in some island of the Quarnerolo group, the chart of which she had procured. Hastily I consulted the contents list of Stampa's volume. Only one island of the Quarnerolo group was alluded to therein—the island of Velo.

There were, indeed, many pages relating to this island, but one of the guide-books I had purchased furnishes an account of it so brief but so useful that I append it here.

'The solitary island of Velo,' it says, 'lies about three and a half miles to the east of Lago, and is seldom visited unless by those of an antiquarian turn of mind. It presents the appearance of a large, circular rock, about a mile and a quarter in diameter and nearly four miles in circumference, honeycombed by a network of caves and artificial galleries, the origin of which archæologists refer to a prehistoric people of Pelasgian affinities. It has never been properly explored, owing to the impossibility of threading its maze-like passages, and this has led to the assumption that it was formerly one of those ancient labyrinths in which the image of a monstrous deity was secluded, as the Minotaur, the bull-headed god of Crete, was supposed to be confined in the labyrinth at Gnosus. Travellers are advised not to enter the galleries without adopting every possible precaution.'

Stampa's book alluded at great length to this labyrinth, but it was obvious that he had not visited it. He recited many legends regarding it, but I gravely doubted the dimensions of its galleries which he pretended to supply. Indeed, as in so many foreign works on archæology, the actual facts were overlaid by a mass of legend, rhetoric, and pseudo-scholarship.

At the same time I was convinced that I had hit upon the retreat to which Natalie Nordiska had taken Cavalcanti. Her purchase of Stampa's book, and the character of the island itself, were

both eloquent of the justice of such a conclusion. I made up my mind quickly—rashly, some people might say. I resolved to go to Fiume and there charter a yacht to cruise about the Archipelago of Quarnerolo. I would take Cavalcanti's man, Eligio, with me, if he would go. The poor fellow was still hanging on in Ancona, as if hoping against hope that his master, whom he adored, might suddenly reappear as miraculously as he had vanished.

When I told Eligio of my plans he at once volunteered to accompany me, and so one fine morning, after a long and wearisome journey, we found ourselves in Fiume, that city of Italy's hope and agony and ultimate triumph.

I had little difficulty in chartering precisely the kind of yacht I required, a craft of about forty tons, specially suited for cruising among the islands. After we had laid in such stores as we needed, and the usual formalities had been complied with, we set sail one cloudy October morning, heading down the Gulf of Istria with a light north-easterly wind behind us. I had not seen fit to acquaint the commendatore and crew of four with the exact purpose of our cruise, which they evidently imagined was merely a pleasure trip.

That night we arrived at the northerly fringes of the Quarnerolo group, and anchored off the island of Lago, about three miles from Velo.

Then I gave the commendatore a general idea of what we were there for. At first he was uneasy, and seemed to think that some political significance attached to our cruise. But I reassured him as to this, and I think he believed me, although he certainly retained the impression that I was one of the craziest 'mad Englishmen' he had ever encountered. Then, seeking out Eligio, I told him that that night I intended under cover of darkness to creep within half a mile of Velo, showing no lights, and reconnoitre in a small boat in which he would accompany me.

(Continued on page 728.)

TO THE MADONNA OF THE 'STEADFAST EYES.'

THE restless murmur of an angry sea,
The moaning of the wind in stay or shroud,
The moving blackness of the storm-tossed cloud,
The placid stillness of a southern sky
Soft-mirrored in the gently swaying tide—
All these alike before your eyes shall pass,
As dim reflection of a shadow-world
Whose darkly looming spectres, Sin and Grief,
To our unseeing eyes alone have form
Clear-visioned in their frame of time and space.
But still beyond the shadow-play of time
Your eyes shall pierce the mystery of 'Was,'
And, gazing past the sunrise of 'To be,'
Find Peace and Hope in that which always 'Is.'

L. D. DU TOIT.

SOME DISCLOSURES OF AN AUTOGRAPH CATALOGUE.

By JOHN HORNE, F.S.A.Scot., Author of *A Canny Countryside*, &c.

'BURN this letter.' So concludes an epistle by George Borrow to his mother. The subject is private. He is uncomfortable in his work, and is inclined to resign his position as representative of the Bible Society. But he wishes the matter kept quiet. 'Burn this letter and speak to no one about it,' he urges her. Yet here it is, offered to anyone who will pay for it! Perhaps it is human nature to keep what we are implored to destroy; but the reasons for this frailty, could we analyse them, might turn out to be trivial enough. Anyhow, the habit—for such, I fear, we may call it—is not without value. Scraps from private letters often tell us more than pages of laboured biography. They reveal incidents of circumstance and temperament which enable us more faithfully to picture the real person. As they are generally of such a fugitive nature they escape the net of the dignified biographer. And there is much encouragement to humble souls in the revelations of the irritations and struggles of greater people.

It was well known that Blake was subject to fits of temper and even spleen, which alienated many of his friends; but a few lines from a letter in this catalogue are illuminative, and show that rare soul in the toils. 'I begin to emerge from a deep fit of melancholy,' he writes, 'melancholy without any real reason for it. A disease which God keep you from, and all good men.' Overleaf is a letter from Charlotte Brontë which, singularly enough, sings something of the same sad dirge. She is hard on herself. 'Many a pining and repining hour, many a day of fruitless despondency, stands against me in the book of the Recording Angel; many silent but impious rebellions are registered there.' Then she softens the confession by the reflection that 'I believe there is hardly a human being breathes but might say as much.' There are several Nelson letters in the catalogue, and they confirm the opinion of his almost relentless jealousy about his 'beloved Emma.' He writes as a Frenchman might write. A certain prince is anxious for Lady Hamilton's acquaintance. Her Horatio will have no weakness displayed. 'May God bless you and make you firm in resisting this Vile attemptor. May God blast him. Be firm. Go and dine with Mrs Damer on Sunday; do not, I beseech you, risk being at home. Did you sit alone with the Vilan for a moment? No, I will not believe it. Oh God, oh God, keep my senses; do not let the rascal in.' Was ever lover more dramatic? But great men must be great in all their attributes. Like commoner mortals, however, he has his spells of disappointment and belittle-

ment. In another letter to the same lady (whom he addresses as Mrs Thomson, as he occasionally did, when desiring secrecy) he uncovers a human heart. 'I have had my days of glory, yet I find this world so full of jealousy and envy that I see but a faint gleam of future comfort'; but he hopes 'to find in the smiles of my friends some alleviation for the cold looks and cruel words of my enemies.' Less ambitious aspirants for the world's medals may wisely extract some useful philosophy from this frank avowal of our incomparable hero.

Not infrequently the writers disclose hints of their unguessed sufferings and worries. Famous and obscure are alike in this very natural propensity. One scarcely knows in what mood to take these lines from a letter by George II. to his son, the Prince of Wales: 'The Professions wch. you have lately made in Your Lettrs for your Particular Regard for me, are so contradictory to All your Actions that I can't suffer my self to be impos'd on by them. You shall not reside in my Pallace, which I will not suffer to be made the Resort of Those who foment the division you have made in my Family. It is my Plasure that you leave St James's with All your Family.' This is so emphatic as to sound like comedy; but it proves that palaces are no more exempt from inner feuds than cots. R. D. Blackmore is pained by an estrangement from his brother, who loses no opportunity of showing his hostility; yet the writer is quite in the dark as to the cause of it all. So human, too! In an epistle by Swift to John Barber he gives rather a moving account of himself. 'As to my self, I am grown leaner than you were when we parted last, and am never wholly free from Giddiness, and weakness, and sickness in the Stomach. I ride a dozen miles as often as I can; and I always walk the streets except in the night, which my head will not suffer me to do'—being a neurotic subject. But he has some consolations. 'My chief support is French wine, which although not equal to yours, I drink a bottle to my self every day.' No situation in life is wholly unrelieved! Mark Twain has trouble of another kind. He has been lecturing to a disappointing audience and is nettled. He is in New York and writes from Langham Hotel to his agent. 'The fog got so thick, and so depleted my audience, that I got desperate. I can't talk to thin houses. I would so cheerfully have paid half-a-crown to every man who would come, but I couldn't say that, and so I had to talk and go on suffering.' It is gratifying to the humdrum man to realise that Mark Twain himself cannot find humour in every situation, even when it has an aspect which (as in Mark's case)

suggests that quality to bystanders. One other distinguished character is also fretted; and his letter shouts for quotation. Whistler has had some trouble with his secretary. An application for money sets this eccentric soul on fire, and (writing from the Continent) he answers: 'Your complaints of want of money I have no sympathy with for reasons that you well know. You were idle and ill behaved habitually long before I came away. Why should you be furnished with money beyond your salary, that your friends may still believe in your sham pose of ease and influence?'—which is biting enough, in all conscience. But, like the impulsive swaggerer he is, he surrenders to a new whim, and adds, 'I enclose cheque for two pounds—which is rather a weak conclusion to what I am writing.' It is; but the conclusion is wholly creditable to his whimsical heart. One wonders what could have tempted the secretary to preserve this defamatory letter.

Perhaps those letters which discover the private opinions of great men, and especially of each other, are the most inviting. In this catalogue are not a few; and although the particular references are short and scant, and buried among a mixture of detail, they are quite vivid. Here, for instance, is Wordsworth letting slip his opinion of Wellington in a line or two. 'As to the Duke of Wellington . . . poetically treated he may pass for a hero, but to the searching eye of the Historian, and still more to the biographer, he will, I apprehend, appear as a man below the circumstances in which he moved.' In the same letter he alludes to Byron as 'the bold, bad Bard.' In these quotations the gentle poet of the Lakes justifies the reputation his biographers have given him of possessing some other qualities as well. In a similar belittling strain, Browning has a pinch at Dickens—which is more surprising. He rates Victor Hugo far above our English writer, and asks his correspondent to compare the two in scenes to which they have both set their hands. Then he adds, 'Since, two or three years ago, I went regularly through all the romances of the gifted Frenchman, my admiration for our countryman has paled down paler and paler.' The comparison with Hugo is rather unfortunate; but Browning's bias is evident. The biographer of Dickens, John Forster, is represented by a letter to Ainsworth, which, although not issuing any opinion of him, indirectly delineates Ainsworth as a lazy and tardy worker. He is urgent. 'I only wish I could prevail on you to write on my principle—to fill a certain quantity of paper every day—no matter how. For God's sake consider this—revising all errors of the MS. after it is finished. . . . All your friends are waiting for you. I speak for them all, as yielding to none in affection or hope.' There is a letter by Hood, in which he writes of Lamb, which must not be omitted. 'Lamb was an

odd man,' he says, 'and a shy one. It was necessary to know him to understand him—to understand, to like him. I was very intimate with him when his neighbour. We spent three evenings a week together at one house or the other, and I found him an excellent friend and the best of critics. I saw him to his grave.' This short but touching picture of the two intimates is very unaffected and sweet.

There are lively and skittish passages in some of the letters, which demonstrate that the big men can be boys at play when they like. Beaconsfield writes a gossip epistle to his sister; and in the course of it he refers to Bulwer Lytton in the following comic fashion: 'Bulwer has taken a new house in Savile Row—de street ob de corncutter and all that sort of respectable gentlemen.' How much is conveyed in a sentence like this—raillery, fun, criticism, complacency, and what not! In a somewhat parallel mood of poking witticism, Lewis Carroll declares that 'the qualities I like best in children are (1) Pride, (2) Ill-temper, (3) Laziness and deceitfulness (these two always go together, they set each other off so well). . . . He writes thus to a little friend because some of the girls he would like to know are said to have one or other of these inapposites! Butler of *Erewhon* (whose letters, by the way, are very rare) must be the last example of this happy group. He airily distinguishes between lying and inaccuracy in this entertaining strain: 'I don't mind lying, but I hate inaccuracy (copyright). This last is because I so very often find myself inaccurate & it gets me into such holes. I very often lie, too, but I generally have my wits about me when I do this, & it gets me out of more scrapes than into them, whereas inaccuracy being guided by no intelligence is like walking down a dark lane at night & tumbling over half a dozen posts.'

IN THE BLACK SALT MARSHES.

WITH fever-laden eyes and teeth chattering,
As the ague gripped them;
With hands buried deep within their hands,
They sat in the Black Salt Marshes—
Beings who once had been men.
Slowly the sluggish tide went crawling seaward,
Leaving mud banks, where the cayman crawled;
Silent the poisoned mist rose upward,
Stifling God's own purer air.
Then from across the oozy Black Salt Marshes
Rose a ranting, wild sea-song;
They with fever and death-haul on them
Straightened their backs and sang.
As closed the long shadows about them,
Roared they their ranting sea-song—
Then rose with the marsh-fever on them
And chorused that song again.
Thus they met *Death* in the Black Salt Marshes—
Sing a wild refrain;
Thus they met *Death* in the Black Salt Marshes,
Men of the Spanish Main.

CAMPBELL OF SADDLE.

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

(3) OLD BLUNDERBUSS.

By ASHLEY L. BARNES-LAWRENCE, Author of *Jacob Bateman's Ladder*.

CHAPTER I.

I.

WITHIN a mile of my rectory, and just outside the borders of Wingate Parish, there is a fine stretch of common, where it is possible to ride as hard as you please for a couple of miles without drawing bridle.

The turf is not so tough and springy as, let us say, on the Downs between Brighton and Lewes—that grand Southdown country which I used to enjoy when going at speed with the Southdown foxhounds, or nosing along after a hare with the Brookside harriers; but still on Rudstone Common it is possible to get a good gallop, and towards the common, therefore, it was my custom to turn my horse's head as often as opportunity occurred. He was a powerful Irish chestnut, with not particularly good shoulders, so that he was a rough goer, but he was amazingly good at getting over the ground, a fine trotter, and a hard galloper.

I had just pulled up three miles from home, and as 'Oolaboy' was rather blown, I stayed for a few moments to breathe him, and to enjoy that lovely view of a well-wooded undulating country which opens upon one from the corner of Birkin Copse. Just then the beat of a horse's feet was to be heard in the direction of Wingate, and it was evident that whoever was on our trail was coming along at a great pace. And sure enough, in a couple of minutes a rider turned the corner, and with a view-halloo, and shaking his hunting-crop at me, he was speedily at my side.

'Caught you at last!' he cried. 'But what a chase you have given us!' It was my old friend George Ullathorne.

He told me he had been to the rectory, and on learning the direction I had taken had followed hard in pursuit.

'You will come back and lunch with me,' I insisted; and so he did.

Ullathorne was an old school-fellow of mine. At the close of school life we had been at Oxford together; and now, quite recently, he had come into my neighbourhood, about eight miles from me, having bought a very nice little place there, with pretty surroundings and good gardens. He was a bachelor, fond of outdoor life and devoted to hunting, and had taken, he informed me, the earliest opportunity of hunting me up.

This, then, was the renewal of our earlier friendship, and before long I was calling him 'Old Blunderbuss,' as we all used to do in the old school and college days long gone by.

II.

Except that he was now a burly country squire, and stouter than he used to be, Ullathorne was the same warm-hearted and impulsive fellow, of somewhat careless speech and manner, whom I had known before. At luncheon we recounted some of the scrapes he was always getting into when we were younger, and his roars of laughter showed how keenly he enjoyed the recollection of them.

No wonder he had been called 'Blunderbuss.' But of all the scrapes my friend ever got into, none was so big and so bad as the one still in front of him that day when he galloped after me and caught me at the corner of Birkin Copse. If he had never caught me perhaps the colossal blunder of his life would never have been perpetrated. But it is impossible to know these things with any certainty. All we can say is that, in a sequence of events, we are sometimes led to believe that a really important matter has hinged upon the veriest trifle.

'I'm off to New York next week,' I happened to say, and went on to outline my prospective journey and month's holiday.

He listened with evident interest, and at last broke in, 'Now, my dear man, why shouldn't I come with you? Do let us arrange it. Of course you'll go and stay with your friends there, but I shall be quite happy for a few days in my old quarters at the Washington Hotel. I've not seen New York for an age,' he said; 'but the voyage is the thing, a sniff of sea air, and your good company.'

'I ought to have told you,' I said, 'that I sha'n't be entirely unattached on the voyage, for I've been asked by my old friend General Maxwell to keep a fatherly eye upon two of his daughters; they are going across in company of an aunt of theirs, but I've promised to do what I can to see to their comfort.'

'Oh well, then, I'm afraid I shall be *de trop*,' and he seemed to be disappointed. Probably his proposal to accompany me would have fizzled out, but, upon reflection, it occurred to me that, in the circumstances, his companionship would be a decided relief to me as an esquire of dames, if only he cared to come.

So presently I referred to the subject again; and as, in answer to his questions, I was able to depict all three ladies in an attractive light, and as quite *comme il faut*, I was pleased to find that he still wished to accompany me.

It had been settled with the ladies that I

was to meet them in London, and take them down to Southampton, and see them safely on board the White Star liner *Oceanic*; so Ullathorne arranged to join me there.

III.

On the appointed day I took my party down with me, and we went on board. The ladies disappeared into their cabins; and I was free to inspect my own quarters and take a general look round.

Ullathorne was to share my cabin, and now, as there was no sign of him on the vessel, I began to be anxious, and to keep a look-out for his arrival. It was just like 'Old Blunderbuss' to be slow and sure: 'slow to depart, and sure to be too late.' Or, if he was not going to be 'too late,' he generally made up for previous slowness by a hurry and skurry at the expense of all other persons, making them skip about while he affected a judicial calmness which was designed to show that every one else was late, or slow, except himself.

I had just about given him up as a bad job, for all the usual signs and signals for departure had been made, when, with a rush of porters, there he was. He really had to run for it, and in a few seconds he and his luggage were hustled over the gangway.

But he was quite his old self—immensely amused at my anxiety, and inclined to think he had shown exceptional prowess in overcoming difficulties such as few travellers had ever had to encounter.

That evening he ingratiated himself with my ladies, and paid great attention to Miss Maxwell, the aunt, and it was evident he made a very favourable impression upon her and upon the young ladies in her charge. The fact is that Ullathorne could be a very amusing fellow when he liked, and his best stories were always those he told against himself. He had smiling eyes and an open countenance; and the very tones of his voice, and the easy dignity of his somewhat massive frame, radiated a cheery contentment, and made him a pleasant companion.

But it was somewhat of a surprise to me to find him day by day devoting himself in a half-brotherly, half-fatherly fashion to the young ladies. I had not regarded him previously in the character of a ladies' man, and chaffed him about it.

'But, my dear chap,' he exclaimed, 'you don't come across such nice girls every day! Don't you think they're charming?'

And, as a matter of fact, they were thoroughly nice girls—refined, educated, unaffected, intelligent, friendly, and withal attractive in appearance and manners.

IV.

Elizabeth was the eldest of three sisters, her age about twenty-four; Henrietta came next,

two years younger; and Letitia the youngest—my special pet, who had stayed at home on this occasion with her widowed father—was still in her teens, though quite grown up.

Probably it had never occurred to the parents when they named their offspring Elizabeth, Henrietta, and Letitia, that before they left the nursery they would be known as Betty, Hetty, and Letty; but so it was. By intimates of the family they were never called anything else.

Betty was, perhaps, a little more thoughtful and grave in manner than Hetty, as became the eldest of the family; and for the past three years, since her mother's death, she had tried to take her mother's place.

Hetty, who was a little taller than her sister, was also more vivacious, and was described by Ullathorne as 'great fun.' She was a good horsewoman, and good at sports, and it seemed to me that if friend Ullathorne at his time of life was at last going to succumb to female charms, he was in a fair way of sacrificing himself upon the altar of Miss Hetty—that is, if she would have him.

Certainly he and she speedily entered into a state of mutual understanding and *camaraderie*, though, of course, the sort of flirtation they seemed to engage in might have been, like many another flirtation, all on the surface.

An unfailing source of amusement to our party was Miss Rachel Maxwell, the aunt. She had the apparently incurable habit of calling people and places by the wrong names. In fact, she was quite a Mrs Malaprop, so that when she addressed Betty, she as often as not called her Hetty, and *vice versa*; and when she referred to any one of the three sisters in general conversation, Betty, Hetty, and Letty, it became a very complicated question whether she really meant the one she had spoken of.

Hetty evidently thought all this to be great fun, and rather laid herself out to make 'confusion worse confounded'; for perhaps the funniest part of it all was that Ullathorne himself, being a real 'Blunderbuss,' blindly followed Aunt Rachel into her maze of ambiguity, and with an injured expression upon his face often seemed unable, for a while, to collect his thoughts, and to say with certainty who was who.

We were all very happy together, and were favoured with pleasant weather, and too soon the voyage was over.

V.

Arrived at New York, we separated. The ladies were carried off by an Americanised uncle, who came down to meet the *Oceanic*; George Ullathorne went to his hotel; and I hurried to catch my train for Belleville, as the friends with whom I was going to stay resided there, some thirty miles away.

Two days afterwards a letter reached me

from Ullathorne, and as it rather startled me, and gave me pause to think, it may be as well to give the important part of it *in extenso*.

'My dear old chap, I want you to be a good friend to me—not for the first time in my life—in a matter largely affecting my happiness.

'No doubt you noticed on board ship how greatly I was taken with the eldest daughter of your old friend General Maxwell. Of course I know there is a considerable disparity of years between me and the young lady, but I think she is fully aware of my feelings towards her. I did not venture, before we parted, to make a definite proposal of marriage; for in the circumstances it seemed hardly fair to her, and more decent to wait till she got home again, and then to ask her father to allow me to address her.

'But since we said our "adieux" I have felt so desperately lonely in this crowded place, and so tormented by hopes and fears, that I have rushed the matter, and have written to-day to her father, and enclosed a letter for him to give to her as soon as she gets back.

'They will be back, she told me, in a fortnight's time, and as I daren't trust myself to return by the same boat, I shall clear out of this as soon as possible and go home.

'Now, dear man, what I want you to do is to back me up if paterfamilias should write to you about me. You and he are old friends, and I have told him that you know all about me, and that we were intimates at school and college. To some extent also I have felt that the young ladies while on board the *Oceanic* were in your charge.'

There was more to the same effect; and it was obvious not merely that Ullathorne was head over ears in love, but that he meant business.

It occurred to me how joyfully many a match-maker of the opposite sex would have revelled in taking a hand in such a business; but, for my part, I have never wished to get rid of my bachelor friends or to lose my lady friends by marrying them off; for, in the nature of things, marriage does get rid of them, by transferring them to a different plane, if not to a different hemisphere.

But, of course, I promised George I would do what he wished, and congratulated him heartily on his excellent choice of a wife, and told him he would be a very lucky fellow if he got her.

I did not tell him that I thought he was a fool to have rushed matters instead of waiting patiently until he could have called upon the general *in propria personâ*. Nor did I tell him that I had never thought of him in connection with the eldest girl Betty, as he had seemed to devote himself on the voyage to the younger sister.

But then, of course, I don't profess to be very cunning about these matters, and George's

byplay with Hetty may have been one of a lover's modes of approach to Hetty's sister. I remembered also he had been very attentive to the aunt, probably for the same reason. Let us hope that the aunt had not been misled by such subtle devices into thinking that she herself was the intended.

However, after pondering the whole subject, it seemed to me that Betty was just the sort of girl to train up Master George in the way he should go, and I had no doubt he would make a thoroughly good and devoted husband. He was able also to assure to her a thoroughly good position in society, with adequate means; and altogether it wasn't a bad catch for her.

The only thing for me now was to await the development, or *dénouement*, or whatever the result might be.

CHAPTER II.

I.

NO further news of Ullathorne's affair reached me until my return home, when amongst the letters awaiting me there was one from General Maxwell, and one also from George himself.

The general invited me to come and spend two or three days with him at his place in Berkshire, and very particularly specified a day for my arrival, because he expected another visitor on that same day. He went on to tell me that this visitor was an old friend of mine, George Ullathorne of Stapleton Hall, who had just become engaged to Hetty, his second daughter.

'It is his first visit to us,' he added, 'and I can't say I know him very intimately, though we have met once or twice in former times, but of course I know all about him; and I may say that the fact that he lives near you, and is a personal friend of yours, has weighed with me in giving my consent. My sister also, who was one of your party to New York, can't say enough in his praise. He wrote me a very good sort of a letter from New York, and is prepared to make a handsome marriage settlement. I can only trust that my little girl will be happy.'

George Ullathorne's letter also announced the engagement, and was full of exuberant self-congratulation; and he expressed his gratitude to me for being the means of introducing him to such happiness.

I noticed that in referring to his fiancée he called her Hetty, and as this tallied with what her father had just written to me, it was evident that in his previous letter to me at New York he must have blundered in telling me that it was the eldest daughter who had captivated him. At the first, as I already have stated, it had seemed to me that his choice was likely to be the second daughter Hetty, and not Betty; and

then I had had to revise my ideas when he informed me it was the eldest girl. And now I had to revise them once more. Well, Hetty must be the one to be congratulated then, and not her sister, when I went into Berkshire to pay my visit.

II.

It was now Saturday, and Tuesday was the day I was expected; and as George also was to be there, the occasion was to me a very interesting one.

Upon my arrival there was, of course, a good deal of very hearty hand-shaking and congratulation. The general, as usual, was full of welcome; and so were the girls; and Letty kissed and hugged me as she always had done from earliest days.

'And what's become of Betty?' I asked.

'Oh, Betty would go to town,' said her father, 'and I'm sorry she will miss this opportunity of seeing you. She is staying with my sister Rachel, and I expect she'll be there a week or two.'

'And you are expecting Ullathorne, are you not?'

'Yes; he ought to arrive pretty soon now if he's to be in time for dinner. We dine at half-past seven.'

It was not until a few minutes after that time that I set eyes on him. In fact he kept us all waiting for dinner; and at dinner it amused me to notice that, seasoned man of the world as he was, no youth in his teens could have been more nervous and ill at ease than he.

Possibly this was not unnatural in the circumstances; but during dinner that night, and throughout the evening, the thought occurred to me that George would have presented a more youthful aspect, in harmony with the occasion and with the appearance of the bride-elect, if the exuberant good spirits which he had displayed on board ship had not deserted him.

There had been plenty of sunshine about him then, and his wit had sparkled; but now it was as though the sun had retired behind a cloud. He was absent-minded, and looked worried and out of sorts.

My young friend Letty, however, did her level best to redeem the evening, and played and sang, and radiated such a fund of merriment and good-humour that my heart cried 'God bless her!' For, to tell the truth, although I had had really nothing to do with promoting this engagement, it was just possible that Hetty's father thought I had.

Before we retired to rest the general managed

to get a bit of a chat with me, and it was a relief to my mind that he had taken a liking for his prospective son-in-law. He commented, however, upon Ullathorne's gravity and reserve, for he had been given to understand that this was not usual with him.

III.

The evening wore on, and about half-past eleven we all said good-night. In due course I was just about to hop into bed, when a gentle knock at my door announced a visitor.

'Who is there?' I challenged. And on my opening the door, who should enter but George himself.

'May I come in?' he said. 'So sorry to intrude upon you, but the fact is I've been wanting all the evening to have a word with you in private. I am in a most awful huddle. Something must be done about it at once, but I haven't the least idea what I ought to do.'

'Well,' I said, 'I must get into bed, and you shall sit in that chair and tell me all about it.'

And so he did; and if, poor fellow, he had looked worried and ill downstairs, he looked ten times more so now, for in the privacy of my room he made no effort to conceal his real feelings.

Our conversation lasted a long time, for he told his story disjointedly, and it was necessary to ask him a good many questions; but the gist of the matter was as follows.

It is to be remembered that in the letter he addressed to me at New York he stated that he had fallen head over ears in love with General Maxwell's eldest daughter, and that he had written to the general enclosing a letter to the daughter, and this letter contained a definite proposal of marriage.

It is also to be remembered that upon my return home I had received two letters, one from the general, and one from George, announcing a definite engagement, and mentioning Hetty as the young lady in question.

But now it appeared that George had addressed his letter to Hetty, under the impression that this was the name of the eldest daughter, to whom he had given his affections.

What would have happened if Hetty had not accepted him, it is impossible to say. Perhaps the blunder would never have become known. But, poor girl! and poor man! she did accept him; and of all the blunders that poor old Blunderbuss ever perpetrated, surely this was the worst. He had actually proposed to Hetty, and had been accepted by her, when all the time the girl he had set his heart upon—oh, it was too awful for words!

(Continued on page 734.)



SOME UTILITY HERBS.

I.

THERE are a few plants intensely bitter to the taste that used to be regarded with a respect almost uncanny. Bitterness really seems to have been looked upon as the mark of pharmaceutical perfection. Of such plants is Rue. Rue was the specific for the pest, and formed the chief ingredient in plague-water. The houses during a visitation of that dreadful scourge were permeated with the stink of rue, the bare spaces at the back-doors were sprinkled with rue-water, and people went about their business with their nostrils stuffed full of its leaves. Rue keeps 'seeming and savour' the winter through, and botanically is very interesting on account of the beautiful provision it possesses for the fertilisation of its flowers.

Wormwood and other species of *Artemisia* also for long centuries have been notable among bitter herbs. The name is supposed to be a modern form of an Anglo-Saxon original, which alluded to its employment as a destroyer of moths. Nearer our own times it was esteemed as a spring tonic, but one has to look up what Nicholas Culpeper has to say about it to comprehend how much wormwood was thought of. Now, when its honourable connection with medicine has lapsed, the pretty gray foliage in which it clothes itself in summer and autumn renders it, along with rue, an acceptable addition to the flower-garden of the æsthetic in temperament.

A far more popular herb than this is Southernwood, so loved for its peculiarly searching fragrance; its popularity demonstrable from the large number of names it is endowed with. Its value in pharmacy is now overlooked, yet its physical properties were known to Horace, who remarks on the foolishness of the uninitiated prescribing *Abrotanum* to the sick. Yet those persons, if there be any left, who carry a sprig of Applingie meekly to church are unconsciously acting on the principle that induced sixteenth-century people to carry it and other aromatic herbs about them as a preservative against infection. Applingie, it may be remarked, is a very interesting Scots word, which can be traced through French to the Latin *Abrotanum*.

The Common Mugwort is another of the *Artemisias*, and along with Jack-by-the-Hedge, Archangel, and Bryony, is a frequenter of old hedge-banks. Mugwort at one period enjoyed a splendid popularity. Mothers of anæmic daughters fed them on 'Nettles in March and Muggarts in May.' Now it is passed on the wayside without recognition, save perhaps by

some precocious schoolboy who smokes its leaves as a substitute for tobacco.

The last of the genus worth mentioning is the Sea Wormwood. Up to about thirty years ago villagers near the coast between Dunbar and North Berwick gathered this herb annually, and of its dried leaves made a decoction that the members of the family drank in spring. It was regarded as a prophylactic that assured a state of robust health during the succeeding months of the year.

II.

Sea Wormwood grows abundantly near the mouth of the East Lothian Tyne, where it was wont to be gathered. Near by is a colony of Henbane, whence is derived the invaluable hyoscamine.

Henbane in many respects is a most interesting native plant, and that in spite of its coarse foliage and flower and the distinctly revolting fœtid smell it emits. Yet the plant is of great value, and during the Great War its habitats were diligently sought for, and, when found, its seeds carefully gathered to satisfy the need for hyoscamine. Henbane at first sight would lead one to suppose that the name alludes to a bane or poison fatal to domestic fowls, though many ingenious attempts have been made to show that it means something else than a purpose so vulgar. However, it is always worth while to hark back as far as possible to find what people of earlier times called things. Therefore, when we get 'hennedwole' as one of its earliest names, the case seems clear for hen-poison, dwole or dwale being a known name for a general poison that stupefied. It has, on the other hand, too readily been assumed that the 'juice of cursed Hebenon' was derived from the *Hyoscyamus*. Henbane, again, has for centuries been associated with witches and quack-salvers. The method employed by the latter to cure toothache is mentioned by a sixteenth-century herbalist, and the operation of the inhalation is described more than a century later by Dr Salmond in the *British Herbal*, thus: 'Mountebanks and Quack-Salvers pretend to cure the toothach with the fumes of the burned Seed and to bring many Worms out of the Teeth and Gums therewith. It is true that the Fumes of the Seed will give ease in that pain, but the pretence of Worms falling out of the Teeth is a Cheat which they put upon the bystanders, for these Vile Fellows, to deceive those from whom they would get Money, cause the Patients to hold their Mouths over a Bason or Bowl of fair warm Water, they receive the Fumes of the burning Seeds up a Funnel: these Seeds are stuck fast upon a

Stick, with a great many bits of very fine Lute String, which being mixed with the Rosin and fixed on the Stick with the seeds afterwards, while the Rosin is hot, as the Rosin stick is then kindled and burns melting the Rosin, and as the Rosin burns the Fumes go up the Funnel into the Mouth, and the Seeds burst and the very small bits of the Lute string fall into the Water, which seem to move or stir themselves, whereby the lookers-on think them to be live Worms come out from the Teeth and Gums, whereas in truth they are nothing but these bits of Lute String mixed and blended with the Rosin.' After this involved description and exposure, it may be added that a simpler method, probably still in use among herbalists, was to cast the henbane seeds on a shovel of glowing embers, catch the rising fumes in a tumbler which was immediately thereafter filled with hot water, the steam being inhaled by the sufferer. There is no reason to doubt that this simple process cures caries in the teeth.

III.

Folklorists know well that the pre-Reformation church bothered itself about the food of the people, at least during certain periods of the ecclesiastical year, some of these old customs remaining till the present day. Thus in the north of England, perhaps still, but anyhow at a not far distant date, people on the second Sunday preceding Easter ate roasted peas. These were the common gray field peas and were called Carlins, while that Sunday was known as Carlin Sunday. There is an old couplet showing the sequence of the Sundays in Lent, in which carlin appears:

Tid, mid, and misere,
Carlin, palm and pace Sunday.

The 'a' in this case has the very broadest accent, while in carlin, denoting an old woman, the 'a' is acute. The latter word is clearly the feminine of Carle, but the other carlin is obscure. There is no pea that has ever been known by that name, and the use of the pea was not confined to a religious ceremony, for carlins formed a dish at Border merrymakings, as we find in a line of an old song, where there were 'Carlins baith sodden and raw.' It has been assumed that the cooking of the legume may have evolved as a reminder of the time when the painful penance of walking to church with uncooked peas in the boots of the penitent was an ecclesiastical punishment.

There was another dish usual in the north of England, but confined to the western counties and extending as far south as Lancashire, carlins, on the other hand, being perhaps solely confined to Northumberland and Durham. This was called a herb pudding or arb puddin', and there were other ways of pronouncing it according to local peculiarities of speech. And

here it may be noted that although this was usually an Easter dish, herb puddings or pies were common even in the south of England, as is demonstrated by a recipe contained in *Markham's English Housewife* (1623, 3rd ed.). Also the dish is not by any means out of date, though one may look in vain for it in modern cookery books. The writer has frequently partaken of herb puddings, which, when properly mixed and cooked, are appetising and rich in vitamins.

The dish may be had at any time of year, and the selection of vegetables varies with the seasons, but in the case of the Easter puddings the choice was restricted. Though no recipes I have seen are exactly similar, yet in every instance they contain a few herbs of the same kind.

IV.

The following is extracted from a periodical of date 1849 for an Easter pudding. Mercury, spinach, coleworts, young nettles, turnip sprouts, white foxglove, easternman giants or ledges, one leek or a few chives, parsley and sorrel, a small quantity of pearl barley, with condiments to taste.

Some of these ingredients are known to everybody; the identity of others is obscure, and from time to time questions appear in appropriate periodicals asking what they may be.

Mercury is *Chenopodium Bonus Henricus*, and is still cultivated in Lincolnshire under the vulgar name. Up to the time of Linnæus, *Mercurialis* was its botanical designation, hence mercury. However, it is most commonly called Good King Henry, to distinguish it from the poisonous mercury of damp woods. Many good people have thought that they were indebted to Henry VIII. for this herb, whereas 'king' is an interpolation of some amateur botanist unaware that it is the Guter Heinrich of the Germans. The plant is frequently to be seen near the site of an old garden, and close to the decayed village of Preston, in East Lothian, it still grows abundantly opposite one. The leaves, which are slightly bitter, are the parts used, but the young stems, divested of foliage and peeled, were also at one time eaten, being cooked like asparagus, to which they assimilate in taste.

Concerning Nettles, it is a well-attested fact that the young shoots were very widely in request as a spring vegetable. Need one remark how among the self-laudatory accomplishments of Andrew Fairservice was that of cultivating nettles? There is even a rhyming catch about 'cowing' nettles; and, strange as it may appear, of two varieties that with reddish stems and dusky leaves was considered superior to the bright green variety. Nettles to the taste are more sharp than bitter.

Turnip Sprouts are the young growths from old roots in spring, and are very bitter. White Foxglove is not the plant which we know as such, and which, indeed, would be a rather dangerous addition, but the *Campanula latifolia*, which would yield its young shoots, similarly to nettles. It could be only of local use, as it is not a common plant.

The next in the list is by far the most interesting of all, and has been the cause of more inquiry than all the others put together. The forms of the name are very many. Easterman Giants is properly Easter Mangiants. The form Easterledges is common, and as the name is traced back we find it simplified to Oisterloyte and even Oisterich, which gives a clue to the origin of this certainly strange appellation. The particular plant is the Bistort (*Polygonum Bistorta*), and how it happened to be burdened with these names is explained from the fact of far-away physicians believing it to be the *Aristolochia* of their Greek medical forerunners. It is not difficult to understand how Oister became Easter and loyte ledges, but mangiants is not so easy to place. I think that 'giants' may be put out of court, and the supposition that mangiants is French is as likely as any.

The other vegetables call for no remark.

But these herb puddings possess an interest more far-reaching than the names of the vegetables of which they were composed. It will be noticed that several of these are bitter, and others sharp in taste. Does it not strike one that besides being a food suitable to the Lenten season, these Easter puddings may have been representative of the bitter herbs of the Jewish Passover?

V.

I approach with some diffidence a part of my subject which may appear too common for serious discussion—that of the homely Cabbage and its affinities, all sprung from an original stock. The cabbage itself might well be hoary, if antiquity would impart that condition, but older still is that delicious winter vegetable called Kale, better known in the north as Greens. The Savoy has at least three centuries of usefulness to its credit, the Cauliflower quite as lengthy a period, though Broccoli has only two hundred years or so, that is, as an inmate of English gardens; Brussels Sprouts not much more than a hundred years, though cultivated previously on the Continent for an indefinite number of years. There is every reason to believe that cabbages originated on the Continent too, for the figures of these in early English herbals were printed from blocks drawn for foreign herbals, and it may be remarked of useful vegetation in general that facts point to its original having been exotic and not indigenous.

As already noted, a coarse kind of Kale or

Colewort would be the earliest type of the vegetable. The parts eaten were the midribs of the leaf and the pith of the stem. Not so long ago the pith was utilised for food in the northern counties and in Scotland, and probably it may still be occasionally. Elderly women thirty years ago, when preparing cabbages, used to scoop out a bit of the pith as a tit-bit. Readers of Burns need no reminding how the lasses on Hallowe'en did the same—

And gif the castock's sweet or sour,
Wi' joctelegs they taste them.

The old song already put under contribution tells us that at the wedding feast—

There'll be costies and reeforts
An' skink to sup 'til ye rive.

Also there is an old saw inculcating liberality in these words, 'Cast the cat a castock: every day's no' Yule day.' The castock is Scots vernacular for kale stock, a derivative of *caulis*.

Of broccoli it may be noted that it was almost unrecognised until the thirties of the eighteenth century, though John Evelyn, better known for his Diary than for his profuse output of horticultural literature, mentions 'brocauli' many years previously. In the thirties, then, Stephen Switzer, who kept a shop opposite Westminster Hall, published a pamphlet recommending along with a few other vegetables this new 'brocoli.' He states that the varieties were white, and green, and purple, and the Sprouting Broccoli of the present day gives a good idea of what they were like. He further states that it was also called Italian Asparagus, and why is obvious from the directions given for cooking it. The parts eaten were the flower stems; these were peeled, tied in bundles like asparagus, and so cooked. Cauliflowers, which, up to little more than a hundred years ago, had very little curd, were treated similarly.

The fact is well-attested that a seaside weed having leaves somewhat like kale, but glaucous in hue, had been used as food by coast-dwellers from time immemorial. In order to whiten the shoots when these began to push through the sand, they covered them with more sand, and called the plant Sea Kale. It has always been assumed that the celebrated Dr Lettsome brought sea kale into notice as a vegetable of merit. But long previously it had been noticed in a very scarce book entitled *The Gentleman Gardener*, of date 1716, and written by a schoolmaster, who calls it Beach Kale. Seeds had been brought from Italy a few years earlier than this date, and they were sold by a seedsman named Gray in Pall Mall at five shillings per ounce. The author informs his readers that this new vegetable is ready for use the second year after sowing the seeds, that its sprouts were to be covered with gravel in mounds of the shape of a hop-hill, and that a plant provided several cuttings annually.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE KING OF THE ISLAND.

By W. D. GRAY.

PART I.

I.

THE boat's keel grated on the shingle. Hurst rose to his feet, caught at the painter, and waded ashore. He moved stiffly and painfully, for he had been three days and nights alone on the sea, and though he had not suffered from hunger or thirst, he still ached in every limb, and was almost blind from loss of sleep. His first act was to pull his boat up high and dry, his second to fling himself down on the warm sand with a gasp, almost a sob, of joy and gratitude. For the first time since the wreck of his ship he dared to hope.

'I have a chance now,' he said to himself. 'I'm the only one left—but I have a chance.'

His mind wandered back over the events of the past four days, and he gave an involuntary shudder. He was a man of thirty-five, and had spent most of his life on the sea; but it was only during the last week that he had realised its immeasurable strength and cruelty. Four days ago he had seen his ship crushed and destroyed like a handful of rotten sticks. The tempest had rushed upon them suddenly and swiftly, as a tiger leaps from the jungle. He remembered how the wind had yelled in his ears and battered at him like a living thing possessed by a desire for his individual life. The hurricane had come upon them at nightfall, and when it abated with the dawn, they saw the *Vulcan* was sinking fast. The captain and four men had been swept overboard during the night. Hurst, as first officer, took charge and gave orders to man the boats. But they had delayed too long, and there was little time for it. The *Vulcan* was settling down more and more every minute, sinking by the head. Only two boats drew clear before the end, and one of these was drawn down and sucked under in the vortex. The other, containing Hurst and three sailors, by the most desperate exertions had managed to keep clear, and the rising sun saw them safe—but alone.

A further tragedy followed that same afternoon: the weather was still wild and unsettled, and a sudden furious squall came down on them which swept the three sailors overboard and

filled the boat with water. Hurst gave himself up for lost, but baled for his life, and almost by a miracle his life was preserved. His boat still floated—the weather moderated. Then came three days of absolute loneliness, his little craft a black speck in one unchanging circle of sea and sky. By the third day his loneliness pressed upon his heart; he grew somewhat light-headed and almost thought of himself as the sole survivor of humanity in a dead world—in a world as indifferent to his extinction as to the death of a gnat.

But Hurst had all a sailor's toughness of fibre, and in the midst of his loneliness had formed a plan. He knew his ship's position when she sank, and was aware that she had gone down in the midst of the great ocean, thousands of miles from any continent. But some hundred miles to the north was Stoneland Island, and for that island he steered. There was a compass in the boat, and after the squall which had destroyed his comrades, the weather remained fair and the wind true. His was a race against time and the sea, for he had only a week's food and water, whilst any further bad weather would have meant the end of him. But the Fates were kind, and on the morning of the fourth day, an overcast dawn, he saw the island right ahead. That same afternoon his boat grounded on its shore.

Stoneland Island received its name from the man who first sighted it—Captain Stoneland, of the whaler *Michigan*, in the year 1836. As has been said, it stood alone in the midst of hundreds of miles of empty sea, and was uninhabited. So much Hurst knew, but he also knew further comforting facts. The island was not sterile and desert, but was well watered; it was of some size, four miles long by two in breadth, and was the haunt of many sea-birds. There were also reputed to be wild goats in the interior. But further, and most heartening fact of all, Hurst knew that on the southern beach, somewhere near to his landing-place, there was a hut, or supply depot, full of stores, established for any shipwrecked unfortunates such as himself. A British man-of-war periodically visited the island to inspect this depot, and

though she made only yearly visits, it might be that one of them was nearly due. All things considered, Hurst could esteem himself fortunate. It seemed as though, out of all the *Vulcan's* company, the jealous sea had relaxed its hold of him and ordained that he should be saved.

He rose to his feet and shook himself, with a vast accession of strength and spirits. Then, after taking a drink of water from his beaker and eating a biscuit, he looked about him keenly. He had landed in a little bay, whose shores sloped gently upwards towards the centre of the island. Grass grew almost down to high-water mark; there were scattered shrubs and trees, which on the left thickened to make a considerable wood. The sun was declining, but still shone down brightly and warmly from a cloudless sky. Hurst heard the twittering of birds in the trees and the buzzing of wild bees as they flew swiftly to and fro. After his three days and nights of the empty sea, even such evidences of life were inexpressibly comforting. But his first task was to find the supply hut before darkness fell, for he promised himself he would sleep in its shelter during the coming night.

He considered for a few moments. From where it stood he thought it must be somewhere beyond the point on his right, perhaps no more than half a mile away. There was no safe anchorage off Stoneland Island, but the depot had been established in the most sheltered spot available. Hurst set off, keeping just above high-water mark. As he strode onwards birds rose up almost from beneath his feet, and he heard small unseen animals scampering swiftly away from him amidst the undergrowth. At all events, there was no lack of life on the island. He breasted the slope on his right and looked down on to another wider and deeper bay. Right in the centre of it a little stream meandered down to the sea. At its mouth a rough stone jetty had been built, and some two hundred yards inland was a strong timber hut with a galvanised iron roof. Hurst gave a shout of joy, forgot his stiffness, and broke into a run. Report had not lied: here was the supply depot.

He reached it in a couple of minutes, after splashing through the little stream, and saw the door on his left. There was no lock or key, but he lifted a stout wooden bar, and entered without difficulty. Two small windows lit up the single room, and he looked around expectantly. But the hut was empty, save for a broken packing-case and one or two logs of wood lying on the floor. There was nothing else in it, nothing from which a fly could have obtained nourishment.

Hurst fell back against the door-post. The blow was staggering. He suddenly realised how much he had relied on these supplies, and

now, confronted with this empty desolation, his disappointment seemed almost unbearable. He did not know what to think—whether the depot had been abandoned as useless and the stores removed; whether some passing ship had callously taken them off; or whether the whole report had been false from the start. One thing at least was certain—there were no stores now.

He tried to pull himself together, squared his shoulders, and moved outside again. The sun was very near the horizon; in an hour it would be almost dark. 'They've left the hut itself,' he reflected grimly. 'I may as well sleep in it.'

He retraced his steps back to his landing-place, launched his boat again, and rowed round to the other bay, where he moored her securely to the stone jetty. Then, taking up his boat cloak and his scanty supply of provisions, he re-entered the hut and closed the door behind him. Twilight was coming on and the island was very quiet. The only sounds were the distant splashing of the waves on the beach and the nearer gurgle of the little brook. He felt immensely tired; his three almost sleepless nights in the open boat seemed to descend upon him suddenly and weighed down his eyelids. 'I'm done,' he muttered heavily. 'Got to sleep. Must think of what to do in the morning.' He spread his boat cloak in a corner, flung himself down, with a log for a pillow, and in a few moments sank into a dreamless sleep.

II.

When Hurst awoke, the sun was shining merrily again through one small window. He had no idea of the hour, for his watch had stopped long ago; but, from the height of the sun, it seemed the morning was well advanced. He rose to his feet and stretched himself, feeling hugely refreshed. Now, after a long night's rest, his disappointment did not appear so staggering. After all, things might have been very much worse. He was safe ashore; he had a few days' provisions left; there was an abundance of fresh water on the island; he had a fishing-line in his boat; and, though he had no gun or arms of any kind, he could surely devise traps or snares of some sort for the birds and beasts of his new country. No, he would not starve at the worst of it.

He went out, bathed in the stream, and made his breakfast off two more of his ship's biscuits. Then, cutting a stout stick from the nearest bush, he set himself to explore the island with some thoroughness. He thought he might be able to cover it all in the course of the day. As a commencement he walked to the other end of the bay, for there was some object on the beach which attracted his attention and puzzled him. As he drew nearer he saw it was a ship's boat, rather larger than his own, and

in a broken and wrecked condition. She had been cast up by the tide above high-water mark, and was lying on her side with her planking stove in. Hurst considered her with a puzzled face. There was no ship's name on her bows, or if there had been it was obliterated, and she was absolutely empty, save that a broken oar was lying across her thwart. From her condition it was evident that she had been lying there some months.

'Queer,' said Hurst at last. 'Perhaps she broke adrift from somewhere. But it's queer she should be on this beach.'

He gave up the mystery and turned to his explorations again. After walking for an hour, he supposed he must have been nearly half round the island without finding anything noteworthy. The scenery everywhere was the same, a grassy slope down to the sea, sometimes rising inland to inconsiderable little hills, with clumps of bushes and small trees scattered about which occasionally thickened to small woods. Always the higher ground was towards the centre of the island. At last he came to another stream running down towards the sea, and turned aside to follow its course. He thought it might be as well to reach the higher ground in the interior, whence he might be able to survey the whole of Stoneland Island.

As he walked inland the grass grew longer and more luxuriant, and the bushes and undergrowth more frequent. There was a constant calling of birds all about him, and once he saw, far off, on the side of a hillock, a couple of large animals, which he took to be wild goats.

Suddenly he emerged into an open space by the side of a stream, and halted with a low cry. An expanse of short, close-knit turf lay before him, almost like that of an English park, surrounded by moderate-sized trees. In the centre of this open space was an oblong green excrescence, evidently the work of human hands. Hurst gazed at it with wide-open eyes, and then slowly approached. It was not until he was close upon it that his suspicions became a certainty. 'It's a grave!' he muttered to himself. 'Someone's buried here.'

A chill seemed to settle on the sailor's heart as he looked down on the ominously-shaped mound. What could this mean? Who could be buried on Stoneland Island? It had never been inhabited. It was one of the forgotten places of the sea. If a ship sighted it once in a twelve-month that was as much of the world as it ever knew. And yet here was this mysterious last resting-place of some sentient human being. 'Perhaps he was landed from some ship,' he thought; 'or perhaps he came in that boat. But then—who buried him?'

He moved around the grave, and coming to the head, he saw a piece of planking embedded there, half covered by the long grass. Some words were roughly carved on it. Hurst

brushed the grass aside, and with a little difficulty made out the half-defaced inscription: 'John Cavanagh,' he read. 'Executed May 2nd. H. R.'

Hurst's lips framed themselves in a soundless whistle. He straightened himself up and stepped backwards from the grave with a rather white face. 'Executed!' he said, in an astonished whisper. 'What for? Who executed him? What does it mean?'

There was no answer. Birds flew out from amidst the trees and settled down again. The stream gurgled happily over the stones, and a little breeze blew pleasantly from the sea. But the grave seemed to cast a deep shadow over all that glade.

The sailor bent down and read the inscription again. 'Executed!' he repeated. 'There's no mistake—that's the word. Well, it's beyond me. And it's not very old, either, perhaps only a few months. That poor devil—who can he be? Ay—and who is H. R.?'

Again there was no answer. The cold chill settled deeper into his spirit. He shook himself angrily and turned away. 'No good wondering,' he said aloud. 'It's a mystery. It's about the biggest mystery I have ever handled. And I have not the key to it.'

He looked back over his shoulder at the silent grave, and then, with a short irrepressible shudder, moved on through the scattered trees until it was lost to sight. It was now getting towards afternoon, and he took food from his pocket and sat down on a fallen tree to eat it. But he discovered small appetite. That lonely tomb and its curt inscription still seemed to brood over him and daunt him. 'This is August,' he thought. 'He was "executed" in May—presumably this May. It does not look any older. Executed! That's the word which fairly sticks in my throat. Well—let's get on.'

(Continued on page 749.)

SULIMANI THE BOATMAN.

ACROSS the cool green waters that to the ocean flow,
Among a maze of palm-trees—'tis there all day I row,
With my load of golden mangoes, and pawpaws ripe and brown,
And many a dusty traveller who seeks the distant town.

The mighty ships go by me, a-sailing out to sea,
With many precious cargoes of gold and ivory;
But I shall never wander far from my native sands,
Nor carry wondrous treasures unto the northern lands.

But here I am contented each day to row and row,
To bear the market burdens, and folk who town-wards go;
My oar is sometimes crazy, and tattered is my coat . . .
Yet who can cross the waters without my humble boat?
MALCOLM HEMPHREY.

THE SCHOONER *AMERICA*.

By FRANCIS B. COOKE.

I.

ALTHOUGH there is no sporting trophy better known than the *America's* cup, comparatively few people have any knowledge of the history of the famous vessel from which it derives its name. Yet no craft has played a more prominent part in the evolution of the racing yacht, and few have had such an adventurous career.

The visit of *America* to this country in 1851 originated in a casual remark made by a London merchant when writing to a business friend in New York. He mentioned that there was likely to be a regatta in connection with the forthcoming Great Exhibition, and suggested that the inclusion of an American yacht would add interest to the event. This letter was shown to Messrs John C. Stevens and George L. Schuyler, prominent yachtsmen who, a few years before, had taken a leading part in the formation of the New York Yacht Club. Captivated by the idea, they persuaded five other members of the New York Yacht Club to join them in the formation of a syndicate with a view to building a yacht to race in England. Letters were exchanged between Mr Stevens and the Earl of Wilton, Commodore of the Royal Yacht Squadron, who, on behalf of the members, extended a cordial invitation to the American yachtsmen.

The contract for the American yacht was placed with George Steers, who had achieved a considerable reputation as the designer of speedy pilot-boats. Steers was confident that he could design a boat to beat any vessel of her tonnage in the world under any conditions, and he and Mr W. H. Brown, who financed him, having the courage of their conviction, agreed to take back the yacht if she suffered defeat either in the United States or England. It was a strange contract for a shipwright to make, but Steers's confidence was fully justified by subsequent events.

The schooner *America* was launched on 3rd May 1851, her principal dimensions being as follows: length overall, 94 feet; length on waterline, 83 feet; beam, 22 feet 6 inches; depth of hold, 9 feet 3 inches; and draught, 11 feet 6 inches. Her registered tonnage was 170 tons, and she was rigged as a fore-and-aft schooner. Her mainmast measured 81 feet, her main topmast, 33 feet. Her foremast was 79 feet, and she carried no fore-topmast. The mainboom measured 58 feet, and her bowsprit, 32 feet. As soon as the vessel was ready for sea she was tried against the sloop *Maria*, which, at that time and for a good many years

after, was the largest single-masted yacht in the world. As *Maria* was no less than 25 feet longer on the water-line than *America*, her defeat of the new craft was not perhaps surprising, particularly as the trial was sailed in smooth water off Sandy Hook, conditions that suited the big sloop admirably.

A suit of racing canvas was made for *America* by R. H. Wilson of New York, the total area of the three lower sails being 5263 square feet. Her racing sails and gear, however, were not used during the voyage across the Atlantic, being carried in the hold, and she made the passage under some sails borrowed from the pilot schooner *Mary Taylor*. Her sailing master was Captain Dick Brown, a Sandy Hook pilot, who was part-owner of the *Mary Taylor*. He had with him, as mate, Nelson Comstock, and eight other hands. The ship's company also included, as passengers, George Steers, her designer and builder; James Steers, and the latter's son Harry, a boy of fifteen.

II.

America sailed from New York on 21st June 1851, and, after an excellent passage, arrived at Havre on 11th July. Her best day's run was 284 miles, giving an average speed of almost twelve knots, a fine performance for a vessel of her size, sailing under an old suit of canvas not made for her.

During her stay at Havre the yacht was painted and refitted for racing, her owners thinking it undesirable to give her future rivals any opportunity of studying her lines before meeting her. Commodore Stevens and Mr Edwin Stevens joined her whilst she lay at Havre, and she then sailed for England, entering the Solent during the night of 31st July in rather thick weather. She brought up about six miles from Cowes, where the news of her arrival aroused considerable excitement. Early the following morning, the *Laverock*, one of the fastest of the British cutters, sailed down to meet the visitor and show her the way to Cowes. The owners of *America* were not by any means anxious to try their vessel's paces with an English craft, as she was heavily laden with stores and all her cruising sails and gear. Immersed some four or five inches below her designed water-line, the yacht could not be expected to show her true form, but as *Laverock* stood by and waited for her, they had no alternative but to get under way. Any doubts they may have had were, however, soon set at rest, for *America* quickly worked out to windward of *Laverock* and reached Cowes roads with a lead of more than a quarter of a mile.

The schooner was accorded a great reception on her arrival, but her performance with the *Laverock* created something like consternation among the British yachtsmen. Although the utmost hospitality was extended to the visitors no owner cared to pit his yacht against the redoubtable Yankee schooner. Commodore Stevens issued challenge after challenge to race *America* against any British vessel of any size or rig for any sum up to £10,000, but there were no takers. The *Times* pointed out that, although there would be no disgrace in defeat, the courage of our yachtsmen would be in question if *America* were allowed to return home without a match. Then, at last, Mr Robert Stephenson offered to race his schooner *Titania* against *America* for £100.

America, however, had an opportunity of showing her prowess before the match with *Titania* was sailed, as her entry was accepted for a Royal Yacht Squadron race to be sailed on 22nd August. The prize was a cup presented by the Royal Yacht Squadron, and not, as has sometimes been erroneously stated, the gift of Queen Victoria; and the race was an ordinary regatta match, and not in any way an international contest.

This famous race has so often been described that there is no necessity to do so again. Let it suffice that *America* defeated her fourteen opponents—the flower of the British pleasure fleet—with consummate ease. Great crowds, both ashore and afloat, turned out to watch the race, and among the spectators was Queen Victoria in the royal yacht *Victoria and Albert*. The story is told that the Queen, whilst waiting for the return of the racing vessels, inquired of a signalman, ‘Are the yachts in sight?’

‘Yes, Your Majesty,’ was the reply.

‘Which is first?’

‘The *America*, Your Majesty.’

‘And which is second?’

‘Your Majesty, there is no second.’

As a matter of fact the *Aurora*, which brought up a breeze with her, finished twenty-four minutes after *America*, but few of the others were timed in.

III.

Attempts have been made to belittle the performance of *America* by pointing out that several of her competitors ran ashore, and that she did not round the Nab lightship. To such criticism it may be replied that the mishaps to the British yachts were occasioned by faulty navigation, and the Nab was not mentioned in her sailing instructions as a mark of the course. Furthermore, *America* was leading by a mile off Ventnor, long before the yachts approached the Nab, and the result was even then a foregone conclusion. But perhaps the best answer to *America*’s critics is the extraordinary effect her

victory had upon British yachting. The science of yacht design was, indeed, revolutionised, our naval architects thenceforth abandoning most of their preconceived ideas.

Prior to the advent of *America*, the yachts of this country were, for the most part, of what is called the ‘cod’s head and mackerel’s tail’ type. That is to say, they had bluff bows and their greatest beam well forward, tapering away gradually to the stern. *America*, on the other hand, had her greatest beam amidships and a fine hollow bow. And it was not only the shape of her hull that upset the theories of our designers, for her sails were equally revolutionary. In those days the sails of our yachts were made of hand-woven flax canvas, and cut with so much flow that they hung like bags upon the spars. To make them stand better it was the custom to wet them when the yacht was on the wind, which was done by means of buckets secured to the end of long poles. The crew of *America* had no need to resort to such practices, as her sails were cut to set as flat as cards. They were, moreover, laced to the spars, whilst those of the British yachts were loose-footed, and being fashioned of light, machine-made cotton duck, the American schooner’s sails caught every little draught of wind. She was thus able to make appreciable progress under conditions of weather that left our vessels stationary, and, thanks to her flat-setting canvas, could lay a course much closer to the wind. Indeed, so superior were her sailing qualities to those of her rivals that it was a popular delusion that she had an engine concealed on board. The effect of her victory was at once apparent. British designers created vessels of similar type, or as near to that type as they were able, whilst existing craft were cut in halves in order that new hollow bows might be built on to them.

The day after her victory *America* was visited by Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, who were shown all over the vessel by Commodore Stevens, and it is safe to say that no other craft in the history of yachting has created such a sensation as this Yankee schooner, which was little more than a glorified pilot-boat. If we lost the historic trophy which now bears her name, we reaped much benefit from the visit of *America*, for from her advent dates the first big advance in the science of yacht design in this country.

IV.

The match between *America* and *Titania*, which was sailed on 28th August 1851, resulted in an easy victory for the former, despite the fact that *America* carried away the jaws of her fore-gaff, and lost a deal of time in temporarily repairing the damage. The race was sailed in a strong wind, and the fifty-two minutes by which *America* won was estimated to represent a

distance of seven miles. After this race the American schooner was bought by Lord John de Blaqui re for the sum of £5000. Her new owner at once proceeded to alter the yacht, cutting down her masts by some five feet and stiffening her internally with iron braces. These modifications completely spoilt the vessel, and the following season she suffered defeat by the British cutters *Arrow* and *Mosquito*. She, however, contrived to beat the Swedish schooner *Sverige*, a vessel built on much the same lines as herself, but nearly thirty tons larger. During the same year *America*, whilst cruising in the Mediterranean, was caught in a severe gale, and lay hove-to for four days. She came through the ordeal triumphantly, thus proving herself as good a sea boat as she was a racing vessel.

In 1853 *America* passed into the ownership of Lord Templeton, who, after using her during the following summer, laid her up at Cowes, where she remained in a mud-berth until 1859. She was then taken round to the Thames, and hauled out at Pitcher's yard at Northfleet. When surveyed the vessel was found to be in a deplorable state, owing to dry-rot, and as she seemed fit only for the scrap-heap, the owner of the yard bought her at a nominal figure. The purchaser, loath to break up a yacht of such fame, decided to rebuild her. This he did at his leisure, substituting for her rotten timbers new ones of oak, and replanking her with teak and elm. Although probably a good deal heavier than in her original state, the schooner thus rebuilt was strong enough to last a lifetime. When launched she looked much the same as when she won her famous victory, but the golden eagle and scroll which had previously adorned her stern was missing, for this emblem had been placed on the parapet of the Eagle Hotel at Ryde in lieu of the usual publican's signboard.¹

America was bought in 1860 by Mr H. E. Decie, who changed her name to that of *Camilla*. Her new owner raced her occasionally that year, but met with little success, and she then departed for a cruise to the West Indies. The yacht was subsequently sold to Savannah, where she arrived early in 1861, but the name of the buyer has not been recorded.

On her return to her native country the schooner once more changed her name—to that of *Memphis*—and entered a new sphere of activity, for a gun was mounted on her deck, and she served the Southern forces as a blockade-runner and despatch-carrier. Little is known of her activities during the American civil war, but it is recorded that the Northern blockading fleet occasionally saw a schooner-yacht of extraordinary speed, which defied all their efforts to

capture her. Once she was chased by the frigate *Wabash*, but contrived to escape. So great was her speed in a good breeze that she could run clean away from their fastest steam vessels, and, as in light weather she was successfully hidden away in some secluded anchorage, she for a long time led a charmed life. In April 1862, however, the gunboat *Ottawa* found her sunk in the St John's River, the yacht having been scuttled to avoid capture.

v.

The schooner was raised, and Commander Thomas H. Stevens of the *Ottawa* waived his rights to prize-money for her capture on condition that she was taken over by the government for use as a training-ship for midshipmen at Annapolis. For several years after this, *America*, which had reverted to her original name, was used for the purpose of instructing young naval officers in seamanship. Her yachting days, however, were not over, for, when Mr James Ashbury challenged for the *America's* cup in 1870, the historic schooner was fitted out by the naval department to take part in the defence of the cup. Although then in her twentieth year, she finished fourth in the contest, defeating no fewer than fourteen of the eighteen vessels that competed in the event. A few days after the defeat of the British challenger *Cambria*, the *America* was put up for auction and purchased for \$5000 by General B. F. Butler, and she remained in the ownership of his family for many years. Resuming her racing career under General Butler's colours, she defeated, among other noted vessels, the schooner *Resolute*, and also won the Philadelphia Exhibition race from Sandy Hook to Cape May and back.

During the summer of 1876 *America* met with an accident that necessitated her being partially rebuilt again, for, as the result of running on the Brigantine Shoal, she tore off her keel and stove in her garboards. The work of repairing her was entrusted to Mr D. D. Kelly of East Boston, who in 1880 gave her new timbers and deck beams, and almost entirely replanked her. The following summer General Butler raced her against the full-rigged ship *North American*. Sailing over a course of five hundred miles out to sea, the yacht beat the ship handsomely. After that race General Butler cruised in her to the West Indies, and in the course of the voyage the schooner covered four hundred miles in forty hours, and on one occasion made good two hundred and sixty miles in twenty-four hours. Although she still had a fine turn of speed for cruising purposes, it had been apparent for some time that the yacht was outclassed by the more modern racing vessels. Her owner therefore decided to have her modernised. He placed her in the hands of Edward Burgess to be brought up to date as far as possible, and she was given a lead keel weigh-

¹ Some years ago the golden eagle was purchased by the Royal Yacht Squadron, who presented it to the New York Yacht Club, a graceful act that was much appreciated by American yachtmen.

ing twenty-five tons, new masts and spars, and a new suit of sails. At the same time her old jib-boom was removed and a bowsprit thirty-five feet in length substituted.

In her altered trim the form of *America* proved disappointing, and after she had twice been badly beaten by *Fortuna*, General Butler was forced to the conclusion that her racing days were over. The yacht was, however, retained by the Butler family for cruising purposes, and at many of the subsequent *America's* cup contests the old schooner that had originally

won the trophy figured among the pleasure craft which followed the contestants.

For a good many years past *America* has been laid up in the Charles River at Boston, but she has recently been taken under the wing of the United States Naval Academy, and converted into a naval museum at Annapolis. No more appropriate use could be found for the old schooner, and yachtsmen all the world over will rejoice that the most famous vessel in the annals of their sport will be well cared for as long as she holds together.

THE INDEFATIGABLE LETTER WRITER.

By AGNES BROWN.

SOME months ago I accepted an invitation to spend a week-end with Colonel and Mrs Gibson. They have a rather nice house at Marlow. When I arrived on the Friday afternoon, Mrs Gibson met me at the station, full of lamentations and apologies; three of her friends had failed her, and she was afraid it would be dreadfully dull for me, as there were only two other guests, her nephew Tony and the girl he was engaged to; also, Tom (the colonel) was beginning one of his bad colds.

When we reached the house, after a short drive, she was still lamenting, and I began to wish I had stayed at home. It was pelting with rain, and there was an atrocious icy east wind. I thought with regret of my cosy little flat in town, and week-end visiting seemed a foolish sort of pastime.

We found the colonel, with Tony and his fiancée, sitting by the fire in the big hall waiting for us. Tea was brought in, and I began to feel more cheerful—but not for long. It was painfully obvious that Colonel Gibson was not only suffering from a bad cold, but was in a pronounced Anglo-Indian mood as well. When these moods are on him he seems to seethe with ill-suppressed grievances. His theme at this moment was tea; some fool or other had forgotten to order his special China tea, and, according to him, this was the one unforgivable crime. Tony and Miss Waller talked to each other during Colonel Gibson's monologue, and paid not the slightest attention to anyone else.

Miss Waller was a rather insolent noisy young creature. Tony called her 'Mouse.' She seemed to me more unlike a mouse than any other animal; and during the week-end I failed to discover her mouse-like qualities. I was glad when the dressing-bell rang—one step nearer to bedtime, I found myself reflecting.

The evening was not very lively. The moment dinner was over Tony and Mouse

disappeared, and were no more seen. Colonel Gibson played Patience in a furious manner all evening, and, quite regardless of appearances, had a small gray woolly shawl draped round his shoulders. The effect was extremely depressing.

Mrs Gibson and I sat and talked, or rather I listened while Mrs Gibson talked. She had a great number of things (all bad) to tell me about her servants, and her three daughters-in-law. I was thankful when the time came for barley-water and bed.

I awoke the next morning to the dismal sound of rain beating against the window-panes. At breakfast Mrs Gibson made the horrifying suggestion that I should spend the morning on the links with Tony and Mouse! A painful silence followed. Tony tried to look pleased, but with small success; a slightly cat-like expression began to appear on Mouse's face; I alone rose to the occasion, and in a firm tone announced that I had some very important letters which I simply *must* write.

I hastened to the library immediately after breakfast, and sat down by the writing-table near the fire. I had no letters to write (no one hates writing letters more than I do), but the fact remained that I must write at least two letters, or what would Mrs Gibson think of me? I thought of a cousin in South Africa who sends me a card every Christmas. I hardly know her, and haven't seen her for years, but no matter—I might as well write to her as to anyone else. I did so, a very long letter full of all kinds of family news. I then remembered a sort of second cousin in British Columbia, and wrote to her as well—eight pages. Still an hour to pass before lunch, and the rain had begun to drip on the panes again. Why not write to my old school friend Enid, who went to India nine years ago? I had just finished these three long letters when Mrs Gibson came into the room.

'Still writing! What an indefatigable letter-writer you are;' and she smiled the pleased

smile of the hostess who sees her guest happily occupied, without any strain or effort on her part.

The next day, Sunday, was fine. In the morning I went to church with Mrs Gibson, and in the afternoon two pessimistic colonels came to tea. I left early on Monday morning.

It is now more than two months since my week-end at Marlow. I have had lengthy replies to my three letters, and they all end with this dread sentence: 'Now, *do* write soon again, another long neway letter; I shall look forward so much to it.' And now I am reflecting bitterly on what I have done. I have wantonly stirred up those harmless, far-off phantoms;

so remote, so passive, and so consistently refraining from troubling me. It had been so easy and pleasant in the past to send them cards (rather beautiful and expensive ones, as they were so delightfully far away) every Christmas. In a vague and tranquil way I used to think of them (but only at Christmas). I imagined them, and their various activities, in those far-off lands; dancing and flirting in India, tending their ostriches in South Africa, plucking their magnificent apples in British Columbia.

But now! I can see myself, down a long vista of years, eternally engaged in the hideous occupation of writing the long 'neway,' 'chatty' letters of the indefatigable letter-writer.

THE LABYRINTH.

PART III.

VIII.

WHEN night had fallen we up-anchored and sailed in the direction of the island of Velo. In about half-an-hour we saw its rocky mass loom out of the darkness, a deeper shadow among the sapphire glooms of the Adriatic night. Eligio and I got into the yacht's dinghy with two of the crew, and, muffling the oars, rowed slowly towards the island. For nearly a quarter of an hour we pulled in absolute silence, and coming fairly close inshore, rowed completely round the place. The southern night had such a luminous quality of its own that every detail was almost as distinct as during the day, and this even though the moon was in her thinnest phase. The great rock—it was little more—towered above us in cliff-like blackness, and here and there among its shadows the mouths of caverns showed like deeper blots of darkness. I counted at least seven of them, but my chief preoccupation at the moment was to discover if any lookout was stationed on the island. Peer as I might through the blue darkness with my night-glass, however, I could not observe the least sign of human occupation or any sign of watchfulness. If Natalie Nordiska and her friends were on Velo they evidently had confidence in the impenetrable nature of the labyrinths with which the place was honey-combed to guard the secret of their presence there, and to have posted a sentry on these heights would, indeed, merely have drawn attention to the fact that the island was occupied.

Having satisfied myself that our operations would be unobserved, I next sought to discover which of the cavern mouths was the most probable entrance to the labyrinth of passages. With the utmost caution we essayed an opening on the southern side. But it proved to be

nothing but an anteroom of the ocean, an upper hall of the sea, perhaps forty feet long and half as broad, which ended abruptly in a black wall of porphyritic rock, smooth and towering. A second cavern was merely a smaller reproduction of the first, and a third proved too narrow to permit of the entrance of our craft. The fourth inlet gave us a good deal of trouble, as it extended far into the recesses of the rock in a narrow funnel, from which we had some difficulty in emerging. But here, too, we drew blank. On entering the next, however, a capacious and vaulted cavern on the north-east side screened by a barrier of rock, I felt more hopeful, for at the entrance the beams of my powerful electric torch glimmered upon the iridescent colours of oil floating upon the smooth, black water. Indeed, we had not penetrated the place for many yards ere there loomed up the dark hull of a fairly large vessel lying deep in the water within the cave as in a dock.

'The submarine!' exclaimed Eligio in a loud whisper, and indeed the submarine it was. One of the yacht's hands at once identified it as an Austrian vessel which had been sold to a firm of shipbrokers on the Italian occupation of Fiume. It was small and of an obsolete type, but still in good enough commission for all but combatant purposes.

We floated past its black length, and our lamps searched out a weed-covered stairway cut in the rock, and leading into an upper darkness so intense that I must say I faltered at the bare idea of negotiating it. Indeed, the moment I saw those steps I concluded that we had gone far enough for one night, and that, keen as Eligio was to prosecute the search out of hand, we were not properly equipped to undertake any prolonged examination of such labyrinthine galleries as those we must

traverse. But the longer I gazed at that flight of steps the more attracted I was with the idea of the mystery which lay beyond them, and at length, giving way to Eligio's pleading, I agreed to test them and reconnoitre a little.

So I gave instructions to the two yacht hands who had accompanied us to await our return, impressing upon them that if we did not show up within a couple of hours they were to come in search of us. This they promised faithfully to do, and we paddled up to the foot of the stairway and clambered on to its lowest step.

IX.

I must say my heart misgave me at first. The steps were extraordinarily shallow and their angle was as upright as that of a ladder. Although it was plain an effort had been made to clear them of the sea-growth of centuries, they were still so slippery and offered such a precarious foothold that I could scarcely believe it possible that a captive man could have been dragged or carried up that treacherous height. Up we went, slipping and stumbling for nearly forty feet, until I thought that nightmare of ascent would never come to an end. Then I saw Eligio, in the white ray of my electric torch, suddenly fall forward, engulfed in blackness.

I called out to him, and he answered. He had merely stumbled on the top step and had sprawled forward on to solid rock. In a moment I was beside him, and, flashing my powerful torch in front of me, found that we were in a long gallery about six feet wide, the far end of which was lost in Egyptian darkness. The first thing that struck me was the peculiar character of the symbols scattered over the walls. These, I saw on closer examination, were the imprint of human hands in red ochre, and out of my archæological experience I immediately recognised their significance. Such impressions of the human hand are found in many parts of the world, the prehistoric caverns in the Dordogne in France, in Bushman caves in South Africa, on the north-west coast of America, in Mexico, in China, and elsewhere. They are, indeed, relics of human sacrifice, registers, as it were, of the immolation of a captive to some god or demon who dwelt within the recesses of the cavern where they were made. This place, then, had evidently been a centre of human sacrifice like the famous labyrinth of the Minotaur at Gnosus in Crete, where an annual tribute of maidens was driven into the monster's den by priests who held the secret knowledge of the paths which approached it. It was probably tunnelled by a people of Pelasgian origin, of the same stock as the Cretans, I surmised, as I stumbled along on the heels of Eligio, darting the rays from my torch hither and thither among the assembled shadows.

Well, from an archæological point of view, at least, I was glad I had come to Velo. What a brochure could be written round the place!

We made our way down the gallery for at least fifty yards before we came to any turning. At length the tunnel forked into two separate paths. We chose that to the right, but had only proceeded along it for perhaps a hundred feet, when we encountered such a network of passages as, I saw at once, it was hopeless to choose from if we did not wish to get utterly lost and remain for ever in the depths of Velo. One thing I observed, however, and that was, on our entering the second tunnel the impressions of the human hands had disappeared.

Retracing our steps, we essayed the passage to the left. Here the handmarks reappeared. And then a great light broke upon me. Was it not probable that these impressions were made by the long-dead victims on the route to the place of sacrifice alone? There would be no purpose in leading these unfortunates up a cul-de-sac to force them to record the symbols of their doom. In the course of centuries thousands of unhappy wretches must have been immolated to the evil deity in the inner shrine, and in all likelihood the evidences of their dreadful journey would extend right up to the inner sanctuary itself.

The hope of justifying my theory made me throw caution to the winds. I took the lead, and flashing my lamp, now in front of me on the lookout for pitfalls, now on the walls in the search for handprints, I forged ahead at a great pace. At about every fifty feet now we encountered a branching gallery. But doggedly I continued to choose those upon the walls of which the doomful signatures of the red handmarks were visible. If they did not lead anywhere, they would at least provide a clue by which we might regain the entrance.

I need not say that we proceeded almost noiselessly along these silent galleries. But I was not a little discouraged to find not a single trace of human occupation. Not a speck of dust lay on the hard, rocky floor of these ancient tunnellings, so that no footprints showed. Indeed, had it not been for the evidence of the submarine, I should have gravely questioned the presence of any human being in the recesses of this dreadful place.

On, on we went. We must have walked for miles, and, according to my pocket compass, had several times changed our direction, now going south-east, now due west, then north-west, but always following the direction of the handmarks. It was now about two in the morning, and I was seriously considering giving up the quest, for that night at least, when suddenly I started back—for my torch had flashed on the surface of water.

We had just rounded a corner, and almost at the very turning was a treacherous slope,

lapped by a dark, seemingly profound stretch of water. Where on earth had we got to? Had we emerged at another outlet to the labyrinth, which gave on the sea? No, for on each side of the watery channel before us rose rocky walls similar to those by which the galleries were bounded. The light of my torch would not carry to the end of the canal, for that is the only word I can find adequately to describe it. I dipped a finger in the water and carried it to my lips. It was salt. So the sea must enter somewhere, and had been utilised by the ancient contrivers of this mysterious retreat to assist in keeping out intruders. Taking some of the cord I had brought with me, I attached it to a bunch of keys and sank it in the water. I heard the keys rattle on the rocky floor of the 'canal,' and drew the line up. When withdrawn, it reached nearly to my shoulder, and there was no saying how deep the water might be farther on.

But here Eligio asserted himself. He was, he whispered—it was astounding how we had caught the trick of whispering in this queer place—a swimmer of extraordinary strength. He would explore this stream. Without waiting for my sanction, he doffed his clothes and, placing them neatly on one side, slid into the water. He struck out strongly, but it was with misgiving that I saw his sleek black head and white shoulders gradually disappear in the gloom outside the radius of the beams of my torch.

X.

I waited for what seemed an eternity. I could hear the rhythmic splashing of Eligio at what seemed an extraordinary distance, then the distant sound of his landing. The moments passed, but I dared not hail him. A faint splash followed, and then the remote noise of the returning swimmer, uncannily loud in that hollow place. Another interval, and the gleam of white skin in the ray of the torch.

Eligio clambered on to the rock at my feet. 'It is about two hundred yards,' he gasped, 'and very dark. I thought it would never end. I was nearly turning back, signor, when I came to the steps.'

'There are steps?'

'Yes, three steps, leading out of the water to a rock floor, and to the right and left there are openings into two passages. I felt my way.'

'They must have a boat—they could not have brought your master across otherwise.'

'I cannot say, signor. Had I only taken my torch—'

'I will go,' I replied. 'I will tie my torch round my neck. There *must* be a boat.'

'As the signor thinks best.'

I slipped out of my clothes, and, securing the torch to the nape of my neck by a piece of cord

so that it would remain clear of water, launched noiselessly into the dark canal-like stream.

It was cold as death, a heart-seizing chill, and for a moment my courage forsook me so badly that I almost turned back. But I simply couldn't face up that plucky Italian boy, who had never even hinted at the icy rigors through which he had passed, and, cursing myself for a coward, I struck out with all the vigour I had. Oh, that two hundred yards of snowy water, chilled to Arctic temperature by lying in the deep, rocky basin into which it had flowed. I cannot adequately describe the agonies of my passage. Such a nightmare of icy pain I hope never again to experience.

How Eligio had ever succeeded in swimming back through that terrible stretch of frigid water I cannot imagine. I only know that when at last, after what seemed ages of agonized struggle, I crawled up the three steps which he had reached, I collapsed for a moment into miserable semi-consciousness.

But once out of the ghastly clutch of that soul-grIPPING chill, I rallied. I unshipped and flashed my torch, and gazed blinkingly around. Yes, there it was, sure enough, a yacht's dinghy, capable of holding four people, and triced to a worn iron ring in the rock. I loosed the rope and jumped in. The oars lay in the bottom. With a jerk I pulled them out, and began rowing back.

In a few minutes I was back at the other side. I got out, and scrambled into my clothes, and we both took a good pull at my flask. Then we tumbled into the dinghy and rowed to the steps opposite.

XI.

On leaving the boat I saw that, as Eligio had said, we had a choice of passage-ways. But here we had no longer the guidance of the handprints. Both walls were bare. We must be getting nearer the nucleus of the labyrinth. In desperation I chose the left, and we crept cautiously along the tunnel.

We had gone perhaps thirty yards when we came to a winding staircase cut in the solid rock, such a staircase as one might find in the turret of a medieval castle. Up this we climbed cautiously. It seemed endless, and I concluded that it must reach almost to the 'roof' of the island. And now for the first time I began to observe other signs of human proximity than those vouchsafed by the submarine and the boat. The impression of feet littered the dust-covered steps, and here and there packing-straw and paper flecked the rocky floor. At length we had scaled the steps. Another passage confronted us, a single one this time, and as I entered it and groped my way along, something rocked slightly beneath my feet like a sewer-top on a roadway. I halted, and looked down. It was a man-hole, cut in the rock, and

covered with a stone slab into which was let an iron ring. With infinite caution I knelt, and raising the slab, shadowed my torch with veiling fingers and peered down. The length of a long, wooden ladder plunged into seemingly bottomless depths. In a moment I was descending it, followed by Eligio.

We stood in a fair-sized cellar, crammed with bales, bundles, and boxes of every kind. To the right was a kind of alcove, shadowed by dusty curtains.

I heard a rustling, a shuffling of feet behind the curtains. I signalled to Eligio to draw his revolver, and springing at the screen, saw it gently aside. A smaller cellar lay beyond. Three men, tough-looking fellows, were tumbling out of truckle-beds.

'Hands up!' I cried, which order they obeyed drowsily and with very evident bad grace. 'Where is Signor Cavalcanti? Better speak quickly, or it will be the worse for you.'

'He's in there,' replied one doggedly, pointing to a narrow passage beyond the cellar. 'You'll have to—'

'I'm not asking for advice,' I said sharply. 'Now, Eligio, keep these beauties covered. If they try any tricks, don't hesitate, but shoot.'

Eligio having made it clear that he would be only too pleased to have the chance of shooting, I dived into the passage. To the left was a door—quite a modern door, recently fitted, it seemed, and this I opened without hesitation. I started back, for I found myself in what was obviously a lady's bedroom. A dim light was burning, and from the depths of a great bed a female figure rose in a tangle of dark hair and heavily-draped protesting arms.

'Stay where you are, Natalie Nordiska,' I said sternly in French. 'I am armed, and your fellow-conspirators are overpowered. What have you done with Ilario Cavalcanti?'

'I shall not tell you,' she stormed. 'How dare you intrude in this manner? How did you . . . how *could* you possibly find your way here?'

'That shall be explained to you when you appear before an Italian court of justice,' I replied. 'But I have no time to waste. Where is Cavalcanti?'

She raved, she threatened me with penalties possible and impossible. I allowed her to go on until she seemed exhausted.

'I have a yacht lying off this island,' I said, when she had simmered down to silent wrath, 'on that yacht Cavalcanti returns to Italy to-night. Where is he?'

She smiled—not pleasantly. 'Very well,' she said, 'but if he goes back, monsieur, he does so as a discredited man. If I choose he can never hold up his head in Italy again.'

'And why, pray?'

'Why, my English friend? Because Cavalcanti the poet, the patriot, the adored of all

Italy, was the dancing-partner of Natalie Nordiska, the Russian danseuse. That is why. Will he face his people again with such a tale, this writer of epics, this great orator who was so fond of dancing that it absorbed one half of his life? Will he tell them how he took the name of Alfonso Valles, how he shaved off his beard the better to appear as the Spanish dancing-partner of the notorious Russian woman, and how he procured a wonderful false beard from the clever American hairdresser at Nice? How Italy will laugh!'

'Good. But you didn't kidnap him because he danced with you?'

'Monsieur, you are absurd! I hold him here as a hostage because he refused to do so any longer. He dreaded detection, he who was so closely associated with the Government, who was one of its most powerful props. You can see, monsieur, that his withdrawal from partnership would have utterly ruined my prospects. Natalie Nordiska without Alfonso Valles! The thing was hopeless——!'

'So you got a man to personate him while you abducted him? You managed to secure an obsolete Austrian submarine by some extraordinary means—you took all this trouble and risk for an end so ridiculous—all because you had made up your mind to coerce him into remaining as your dancing-partner?'

'And why not? I am a woman of business. My entire future was at stake. There was nothing more in it than business. Cavalcanti is nothing to me. Alfonso Valles is everything. Cannot you comprehend, monsieur?'

I saw Cavalcanti. He was in normal health, but like a caged lion after his fortnight of incarceration in the depths of Velo. He was alive to the danger of exposure, and dreadfully apprehensive that if the facts of his abduction leaked out he would become a public laughing-stock.

How it came about I can't really say, but that evening, on my yacht, they approached me like a couple of shy children. They had, they said, arrived at a compromise. It had occurred to them simultaneously, it seemed, while leaning over the yacht's rail watching the slow coming of the soft Adriatic night, that marriage would render it unnecessary for Natalie to continue her terpsichorean career. The necessity for a dancing-partner, too, would vanish automatically. With this view I heartily concurred.

They were married at Fiume.

I need not tell you how Cavalcanti was received on his return to Ancona, as it must be fresh in your memory. He explained his absence as being due to a romantic desire on the part of his wife to spend the honeymoon in the absolute seclusion of an uninhabited island.

'Ah, so like Cavalcanti!' said his Italy.

THE END.

RANCHING IN PATAGONIA.

By ANTHONY RYLAND.

I.

PATAGONIA, as the British call it—the Argentines have long discarded the name, and speak only of the territories of Rio Negro, Chubut, and Santa Cruz—begins south of the Rio Negro, about 38 degrees lat., and stretches for a thousand miles almost to the Straits of Magellan, in lat. 53 degrees. In breadth the country reaching from the Atlantic seaboard to the foot of the Andes is at its widest about 480 miles; there the Chilean boundary runs, and thence Patagonia extends to the Pacific. Argentina and Chile own Patagonia between them, the former republic having by far the larger share of the territory, and in addition the finest pasture lands for sheep.

It is a wild, desolate, forbidding-looking country, almost devoid of vegetation other than the coarse pampas grass and stunted shrubs, over which the fiercest and coldest winds in winter blow with hurricane force from the Pacific. In summer the temperature goes to the other extreme, and you may swelter on the plains under a burning sun, with the thermometer at 120 degrees F. As you ride along these vast endless plains, which in their monotony are like the sea itself, the wind almost lifts you out of the saddle, and stinging sand rises before it, making the skin smart and the eyes water. Here and there swift and dangerous rivers have carved for themselves passages from the Andes to the Atlantic; of these the Gallegos and the Santa Cruz are the best known. This monotone in brown, the prevailing colour of the Patagonian pampas, stretches right away west until it is swallowed up by the thick forests that begin on the eastern spurs of the Cordilleras, the home of wild animals, and as yet virtually unexplored, so far as settlement is concerned.

Magalhaens, it is now believed, overrated to a great extent the stature of the Patagonians, and judged these wild men from a Spaniard's viewpoint. They are not more than six feet in height, as a rule, and do not even carry off their height well, as they become pot-bellied with age, and look much smaller. The Patagons (literally 'big feet') were given this name by the early navigators; but a Scottish or Irish policeman has quite as good a grip on this planet as any Patagonian. Of course, the foot of a big savage with all the toes growing as nature intended, and not cramped into a boot, looks to us inordinately large.

The pampas of Patagonia offer splendid hunting of a sort that does not, as in East Africa, endanger the life of the pursuer. Ostriches, pumas (akin to the panther, not

ferocious if he can slink away), the guanaco, skunk, and other wild beasts are to be met with. Lady Florence Dixie obtained a good deal of notoriety some forty years ago by riding with her husband through what must have been then an even more desolate country, and in her book, *Across Patagonia*, she gives some amusing descriptions of the total lack of civilisation and creature comforts in this trackless waste.

II.

It was in 1877 that Patagonia first attracted the attention of sheep farmers who came over from the Falkland Isles, some three hundred miles from the coast, bringing with them the nucleus of stud flocks and making homes for themselves on the uninhabited plains. These men were hardy Scottish and English pioneers, and their descendants are carrying on to this day the ranches that they had so much difficulty in starting; and year by year Patagonia contributes in increasing quantities wool and frozen meat to the export trade of Argentina. In addition to Britons, many Argentines of Spanish ancestry are to be found, as well as Italians, Austrians, and French, all engaged in shepherding, shearing, fencing, and carting.

Despite the climatic drawbacks, the population of Patagonia is increasing, and the towns of Gallegos (West Wind), Santa Cruz, and Punta Arenas are places of considerable importance. The country round Punta Arenas (owned by Chile) carries perhaps some 2,500,000 sheep, and farther north, south of Rio Santa Cruz (Argentine territory), a million and a half or more may be taken as a conservative estimate. All the wool is shipped from these three ports, the bulk being put on board at Punta Arenas, which one-time sleepy settlement is now very wide-awake, and holding its own as one of the big shipping ports of the world, so far as wool is concerned. Punta Arenas exports, as a rule, from sixteen to twenty million pounds of wool in good seasons, having a value of close on two million dollars, to say nothing of a million or so of hides and other things. When Argentines boast—as they do justly—of Buenos Aires as one of the largest wool and hide markets in the world, it must not be forgotten that the Patagonian contribution goes far towards making up its grand total of 80,000,000 head of sheep, or thereabouts.

When the traveller lands at Gallegos, the port at the mouth of that river, he must not expect any hotels Majestic, Ritz, or Plaza, or even a decent 'taxi' to convey him over the execrable stony tracks—for 'road' is too good a name altogether to call them by. They are, in

truth, vile; and the *coche*, with its rats of horses, galloping over the ruts, is one of the best cures for a torpid liver that the writer knows of. Everybody comes down to meet the small steamer, as her arrival is an event, and Gallegos, on this occasion at all events, springs into life. The process of loading wool at Gallegos is a simple and inexpensive one, due to the enormous tide (about 40 feet) of the river. When the tide is out steamers and other craft are left on *terra firma*, so that all the wool carters have to do is to drive their teams up alongside and roll the bales up a plank. When the ship's hold is full she steams out quite easily on high water.

III.

As in Australia, the lonely wayfarer, riding or driving over the cheerless, treeless plains, is always assured of hospitality when he arrives at an *estancia*. The ordinary life, however, of a Patagonian *estanciero* is far more primitive and comfortless than that of the average settler in Australia, simply because nature has done nothing for him to make his home comfortable. A garden is one of the greatest rarities, and often there is not a tree within hundreds of miles to give even a stick of firewood—much less timber to build a house.

Now and again one comes across a homestead with a row of willows planted to break the razor-like blasts that sweep down from the Andes, and, perhaps, some cabbages and turnips growing to make life a little more tolerable. But the average *estanciero* has literally nothing but his corrugated iron shanty—an edifice imported in sections and carried scores of leagues on bullock-carts at great expense, and his fuel for cooking purposes is dried sheep manure, which is quite a good substitute—'like Irish peat. In this box-like habitation he tries to make himself and others 'at home,' and some have succeeded in their endeavours, lining the living room and furnishing it with arm-chairs and sofas.

This applies more to the English and Scottish 'rancher,' who makes a home, no matter where he is, and will have a garden if it is possible to grow anything. But the Patagonian hybrid, the man descended from the old Spanish-Indian stock, is often a veritable savage. He leads a lawless kind of a life, usually lives out of wedlock, eats the coarsest of food, and washes not, nor takes his clothes off for months at a time. These settlers, it is true, will give the traveller a 'shake-down' for the night and allow him to corral his horses, but you may not always be asked if you are hungry and want a meal after your journey, as at an English, Scottish, or Irish *estancia*, and you may have to throw yourself down on a pile of malodorous sheepskins and sleep as best you can. The *viagiero* not long out from Europe may be forgiven if he feels nervous sometimes in the presence of these

semi-barbarians, and keeps his Colt or Smith-Wesson handy. Indeed, in many cases, this 'hospitality' is offered to travellers, not through any good-will, but simply because, were it refused, the wayfarer might do the ranch-owner not a little harm by cutting his wire fences, mixing up stock, killing sheep, and in other ways taking revenge for being refused shelter.

IV.

Owing to severe snow-storms in winter, freezing winds, and lack of sustenance, the losses among Patagonian flocks are frequently terrible. It is recorded in one instance that a sheep-owner at the end of a severe winter had but a thousand left out of an original thirty thousand. The constitution of a well-fed sheep is proverbially strong and able to withstand heat or cold, but when herbage is wanting the poor animal must lie down and give up the ghost. The grasses found in Patagonia in the summer are sweet and succulent, and stock thrive remarkably well, but the Antarctic severity of a Patagonian winter is dreaded by man and beast. A sheep dying in the snow, however, is not altogether a dead loss, as the cold preserves the carcass, and at the end of the winter every shepherd goes wool-gathering. He skins the carcass and brings in the fleece, baling it with the rest, until the sum total compensates in some degree for the loss of the stock in winter.

Every article, from a needle to a windmill, is hauled at funeral pace over the endless plains by bullocks. Wool comes to the Atlantic seaports from as far back as the spurs of the Andes. It naturally takes a man of considerable substance to withstand this constant expense on his 'clip,' and by the time those bales reach Antwerp or London, what 'with freight, insurance, and agents' fees, the Patagonian *estanciero* can hardly be dubbed a profiteer. Getting goods into these remote regions costs as much as getting them out, and, as nothing but grass grows 'way back,' all the necessities of life except meat and water have to be pulled league after league on bullock carts.

Anyone contemplating ranch life in Patagonia must of necessity be as tough as nails, stout-hearted, able to withstand any weather, and to put up with little or no society. True, he will find crowds of wasters and idlers at the *boliches* (roadside drinking taverns), but he will do well to give these undesirables plenty of sea-room. He must, on the other hand, be he English, Irish, or Scottish, take care not to offend the native *estanciero*, as the latter can make things very unpleasant for him.

Many well-to-do settlers in Patagonia to-day own tracts of 175 square miles of country, with flocks of thirty to forty thousand sheep, and probably do not regret the day they went there. They are men who take a lot of beating—the true, unflinching, straightforward type of pioneer.

IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

(3) OLD BLUNDERBUSS.

CHAPTER II.—continued.

IV.

'BUT surely,' I said, 'you found out the mistake the moment you got here and actually saw her?'

'Well,' he said, 'I did and I didn't. I'll tell you exactly what happened. As soon as I got here the servant showed me to the drawing-room, and there—at least so I expected—was my young lady waiting for me.'

'She was standing at the window with her back to me, and as I hurried across the room I called out, "You darling Hetty, here we are at last." And then, just as I was putting my arm round her, she turned her face to me, and I saw it was not Hetty—I mean it was not Betty—confound those names!—it was No. 2, I mean, and not my girl at all.'

'However, she turned round, and not only allowed me to kiss her, but seemed as if she fully expected it. And I thought what a jolly sort she was for a sister-in-law.'

'She began asking me about my journey, and then said, "How wonderful to think that that trip across the water should have made such a difference to us all!"'

"Yes," I replied; "but where's Hetty? I haven't seen her since our landing at New York."

"You mean Betty!" she exclaimed.

"No, I don't," I said; "I mean Hetty."

"Oh, you dear old thing," and she burst out laughing. "You are as naughty as ever you were. I declare you are as bad as Aunt Rachel."

'She then drew herself up, and put her hands on my shoulders, and, smiling in my face, said, "Now, tell me, am I Hetty or Betty?"'

"Why," I said, "of course you are Betty."

'She almost screamed with laughter. "Really you are too killingly funny!" she exclaimed; "and you said it as gravely as a judge, and as if you quite believed it."

'The dinner-gong now sounded, and she told me dinner would be ready in half-an-hour; "so we had better go and dress," she said, "or we sha'n't be ready."

'Off I went to my room therefore, and, as a matter of fact, I began to feel rather piqued that my young lady had not been the first to welcome me.

'Hetty called after me, "You will see Letty at dinner. She's awfully excited about meeting you."

"That's all right," I replied; "but you haven't answered my question about Hetty yet. What's become of Hetty?"

'Her only answer was another peal of merry laughter.

'I left the drawing-room, and on my way

upstairs to my room all of a sudden a horrible suspicion seized me and sent a chill to my very bones.

'It so happened that just at that moment a maid-servant was coming downstairs, and I detained her for a moment. "I understand that Miss Letty, the youngest daughter, is at home?"

"Yes, sir, Miss Letty is at home."

"And her eldest sister, Miss Hetty, is she not at home?"

"You mean Miss Betty, sir. No, sir! Miss Betty has been in London since last Saturday, and won't be at home until next week."

V.

At this point Ullathorne paused, and begged for a drink of water.

'Pon my word, George, I am sorry for you,' I murmured; 'this looks like a bad business. But what did you make of it? What happened next?'

'Well,' he said, 'I went to my room and sat in a state of bewilderment, feeling sick and dazed. And then I began quite mechanically to dress for dinner, and scarcely knew what I was doing. Of course I felt that something had gone utterly wrong; but it was only after some minutes that I was able to take stock of the situation and to understand clearly what had happened. And then it all flashed upon me like a blaze of light.'

'I could hardly pull myself together to meet you all at dinner. I was a bit late, you remember, coming down, and you couldn't fail to see what a pitiable exhibition of myself I must have presented all the evening.'

'Then you haven't said anything yet, George, to Hetty or to her father?'

'No, not a word. Just think of the bomb-shell it would be! And how impossible my position in this house would be! Why, the general would simply have me kicked out of the house.'

The position did, indeed, seem very desperate; and the more I thought of Ullathorne's plight, the more truly I pitied him.

All the same I felt exceedingly angry with him. What about poor Hetty's unenviable position? And the whole family—they were such dears! And this blunderbuss of a fellow—how could he have blundered so hideously! But perhaps the girls themselves, and that idiotic aunt of theirs, were partly to blame, with their 'Betty' and 'Hetty,' and teasing and mystifying poor simple-minded George as they had done on board the *Oceanic*.

My surmisings were interrupted. 'For God's sake tell me,' he said, 'what you think I ought to do!'

CHAPTER III.

I.

FOR some moments I looked at him. 'George,' I said, 'you have just invoked the name of God. Do you really believe in God? Do you ever pray to Him?'

'I do sometimes,' he answered wearily, 'but not, I'm afraid, as much as I ought to. But what's that got to do with it?'

'My dear man, it has got this to do with it: you've managed to get into an awful hole, and it almost passes the wit of man to pull you out of it. And it isn't only you who are in a tight place; we must think of our poor friends here also.'

It is wonderful how the humility of prayer, and the sense of reliance upon a power and wisdom infinitely greater than our own, tend to calm the mind, and to clear the understanding until that path of duty, which previously may have seemed to be only full of pain and punishment, is discerned to be the path of safety and the way of peace.

'Now, George, tell me,' I said at last, 'have you considered the possibility of going forward with this engagement of yours? Have you any overpowering objection to marrying Miss Hetty? She is a very attractive girl, and would make you a good wife, and do you credit.'

Poor Ullathorne gazed at me. 'I might have entertained it,' he moaned; 'indeed, it might have been my duty to do so if there had been no one else mixed up in this business. But then, you see, there's Betty; and the very fact that she left home when she heard I was coming here shows how deeply she must have felt it.'

'Felt what?' I asked.

'Why, my coming here.'

'Do you mean to say,' I rejoined, 'that before you parted from her on board ship you gave her to understand that you really cared for her in that kind of way?'

'I did,' he assented; 'and, what is more, I do care for her, and as long as there is any chance at all of marrying her—why, I could never bring myself to destroy all my hopes of winning her by going on with this affair. I couldn't go through with it. It's all a beastly misunderstanding; and as for me marrying her sister in such circumstances, it couldn't possibly bring happiness for either of us.'

He spoke with bitterness and passion, but his view seemed not unreasonable.

'Well, then,' I rejoined, 'the only alternative is that your engagement with Hetty must be put an end to. But how are you going to do it?'

I warned him that in ordinary circumstances it must be a painful business to throw a girl over, but in this case Hetty would have the additional mortification of feeling that she had been made a fool of, and that while she was thinking of marriage with him, and indeed had

consented to marry him, he, on his part, had never even given her a thought. A horribly humiliating position for her!

One thing, however, stood out clearly; if the engagement with Hetty was to be broken off, it must be broken off at the earliest possible moment. Any further make-believe of love and marriage would indubitably brand him as an impostor and a villain, and would make the position worse and worse.

II.

The longer I considered it, the more certain I felt that there was likely to be a very painful experience for us all, and possibly a very unpleasant scene. Miss Henrietta was a young lady of high spirit, and her self-respect would be mortally wounded; and the general, her father, would be simply furious; and I feared Ullathorne would have to make a very ignominious departure.

And as for any chance of securing Betty hereafter, it seemed to me that he might as well whistle for the wind.

'Now, George, have you made up your mind what is best to be done?'

No, he hadn't.

However, I told him that if he hadn't I had. 'There is only one way of it; you must cut and run. Remember, there are times when discretion is the better part of valour.'

I made him fetch me a *Bradshaw*. It appeared there was a train due to leave Tollington Station at a quarter past seven in the morning.

'You must clear out of this house, bag and baggage, at six, before any of the family are up. There is a man who is a cab proprietor not ten minutes' walk from here, and you must rout him out before six.'

'I won't go with you to the station, because I must stay here and fight a rearguard action to cover your retreat.'

'I'll tell them that to your dismay you discovered that there was business at home which you were bound to attend to, and by my advice you had taken the first train back—the business was too important to wait—and that you would write and explain. That will serve for the moment.'

'And what you have to do on getting home is to write to poor Hetty, and to the general, without any delay. That is the important business you have to transact. And I should advise you to make a clean breast of it, and to write as nicely as ever you can.'

'For my part, if I can get the opportunity, it may be as well to give to the general and his daughter an inkling of the truth before they get your letters, and to refer as sympathetically as I can to your very difficult position. I'm not sure I sha'n't lay the blame for it upon Aunt Rachel. And poor Hetty herself was, I imagine, partly in fault. Of course I shall

tell them you are writing, and by the time they get your letters the first blaze-up will be over.'

Poor George's eyes filled with tears as he grasped my hand and said, 'Good-night,' while he murmured something about a friend in need.

I need hardly say it was a big burden for me to shoulder, but I saw no other way out.

III.

It is not necessary to recapitulate all that took place next day. Ullathorne, of course, was not at breakfast; he had managed to get off, as we had arranged, by the early train. My apologies on his behalf were humble and profuse rather than convincing; and when breakfast was over I took the earliest opportunity of making my friend Maxwell acquainted with the real facts.

He was quite as furious as he ought to have been, but after a while calmed down sufficiently to consider the case as affecting not merely Hetty but the happiness of her sister Betty.

'We must wait,' said the general, 'for his promised letters, and see how he regards the matter himself, and whether he is sufficiently apologetic for making such an ass of himself. And perhaps we had better say nothing yet to my poor Hetty, but let her hear it all at first-hand from him.'

In the end he agreed that it might be as well if he prepared Hetty for her bad news of to-morrow by telling her that some difficulties in the way of the marriage had arisen, and that George's letter would explain matters.

The following day the post brought the letters we expected, and I returned home.

Subsequently General Maxwell wrote to let me know that, upon Betty's return home, he had told her all about it, and that she had felt it very much. So far as he was concerned, he did not object to Ullathorne renewing his proposal of marriage at the right time; but that time was not now, for at present Miss Betty was tremendously up in arms on behalf of her sister. And so there, for the present, the matter must rest.

Such was the tenor of General Maxwell's letter, and I told George how the ground lay.

George's idea, however, was that as a matter of honour he ought not to delay to acquaint Betty that if he had blundered he had not been unfaithful, and that he cared for her as much as ever, indeed more so.

He wrote to her, therefore, and told her so.

Her answer was not long in coming. 'I beg you,' she wrote, 'to forget all about me, even as I myself wish to forget the resentment which I feel when I think of your inexcusable conduct towards my sister.'

IV.

And here my story might have ended; but there was one person who apparently thought

that such an ending would be altogether too pitiful, and not at all satisfactory.

My 'sweetheart' Letty (as she loved me to call her) has not hitherto appeared much on the scene, but she appears now. She had that gift of true womanhood, a heart of pity, which is a heart of gold. She greatly pitied Hetty; but pride—very proper pride—came to Hetty's support, and within six months she was engaged to a very nice young fellow, an officer in the 5th Lancers; and, no long time after, married and went to India. A few months later Betty also married, and this time it was a young barrister who was the fortunate man.

Letty, therefore, felt that she was not called upon to waste any more pity upon her sisters.

At first she had pitied Betty immensely; but when, soon after Hetty's departure for India, Ullathorne had tried his luck again with Betty and renewed his proposal to her, and once more had been refused, all the pity that Letty's heart had ever felt for her two sisters was transferred to the unfortunate man who seemed to her to have been torn to pieces between them.

From time to time when I saw her she shyly and tenderly inquired how he was, for I had told her that my poor friend Ullathorne was sadly changed from what he used to be. But I also told her that one good result from his trouble was that he had become more considerate about other persons, and was interesting himself in church work and in the welfare of his poorer neighbours.

All this was of great interest to Letty, who was a religious girl herself, and a great church worker.

Well, the long and the short of it was that when Letty came to me on a visit, as she did occasionally when I had my sister with me, I happened one day to ask Squire Ullathorne to come over to dine and sleep.

And there is an old saying that 'pity is akin to love.' It was so in this instance. And so that is how George married Miss Maxwell at last—not Betty, nor Hetty, but Letty.

'So that's your story, is it?' said an old college friend. 'I often wondered what was the real story of George Ullathorne's marriage. But he's been lucky. When a blunderbuss goes off with a bang, as he did, and peppers a whole covey, a man is lucky if he bags a single bird.'

'Quite right,' I said; 'but Old Blunderbuss is not such a bad shot after all. Anyhow, you take my word for it, he's managed to secure a rare good bird. And his wife tells me that if he had not been a blunderbuss, one thing is certain, she would never have married him.'

They are quite devoted to each other, and as happy as the day is long.

THE END.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

TALES OF THE GERMAN AIRSHIPS.

II.—THE LAST AIR-RAID IN SCOTLAND.

By Brigadier-General WALTER B. CADDELL.

I.

DURING the latter part of April and the beginning of May 1916 the whole of Scotland was visited with perfectly delightful weather. Indeed, an anticyclone had spread itself far out over the British Isles and the North Sea, and even those awful miry ditches in Flanders—known to soldiers as trenches—were dried up. The 24th of April was the first of a sequence of bright sunny days, and so far as the weather prophets were able to forecast, the warmth was more likely to increase than abate.

The majority of the inhabitants of Edinburgh rejoiced in the sunshine, but not so our friend of the previous air-raid,¹ Mr Bruce Gower, who, like the hardy Scot he was, preferred his native city in its more seasonable and bracing condition of keen invigorating breezes.

It was, perhaps, through no fault of his own that Bruce became abnormal in that spring heat-wave; it affected him like a fever; his irritability increased as each succeeding day grew warmer, until the morning of 30th April found him intolerable and ready to seek a quarrel even with his devoted and uncomplaining wife, Jenny.

He who, a week before, had been the cheeriest of men and most complacent of husbands was on the last day of April 1916 hardly fit for any human society.

This curious disorder which had so upset him was, however, about to reach its crisis, and the watchful Jenny was the first—as she naturally would be—to notice the fact. It would hardly be fair to give any further details of his distressful disease, of its symptoms, or of what he did or said; suffice it to say that the man was not himself.

On the evening of 1st May 1916 he arrived home from his office weak and weary, physically worn out; but his mind was clear, and he was ashamed.

He recognised that he was normal again, mentally at any rate, and he was ready, if need be, to go down on his knees before Jenny and

beg her forgiveness. But Jenny anticipated his feelings; she took him in hand at once, and, whilst making him believe that she was really to blame for all his troubles, coaxed a confession from him that he had been a brute and a bully, and was unworthy of her.

Never was woman so womanly as Jenny that evening, and Bruce, fallen away from his man's estate under the spell of her charm, became like a child again in her hands.

She made him say things he did not mean, and knew from experience he ought not to say; she played with the man, now a baby, cooing at him and teasing him, using all the pretty persuasiveness that had been handed down to her sex throughout the ages to enforce her will on his; and at last, when she knew he had finally capitulated, she made him promise to do what she wanted.

He made a vow to her that on the very next morning, by the very first train, he would pay a visit to one of his favourite haunts in Aberdeenshire, and stay there until the weather became cooler.

Bruce was anxious that she should accompany him, but she in her wisdom refused, and he had to put up with her refusal.

It came about, therefore, that Bruce arrived at Rhynie early on the evening of 2nd May 1916. He had chosen the place mainly on account of certain tender memories of a happy stay there with Jenny in their early married life; there was also the attraction—a minor one, perhaps, in his present condition—of a good trout stream in its neighbourhood.

II.

On 15th April 1916 the main fleet of the British navy had reached its stipulated strength, and certain alterations in its dispositions were proposed for the better protection of the east coast-line of the United Kingdom. A German naval raid on Lowestoft took place on 25th April, when that town was shelled from the sea and extensive damage done to property; Yarmouth also suffered, but not so severely. As a result of that raid the Third Battle Squadron and the Third Cruiser Squadron left Rosyth and

OCTOBER 24, 1925.

¹ See *Chambers's Journal* for July 1925.
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proceeded to Sheerness, where they arrived on 2nd May 1916.

It is probable that the German higher command by some means or other obtained information of these changes, and, with a view to discovering complete details of the new positions of the British warships, gave orders for an extended aerial reconnaissance to be made from the Wash to Cromarty.

According to plan, therefore, on the morning of 2nd May 1916 no fewer than ten airships of the German Naval Air Service left their sheds in the neighbourhood of Cuxhaven, and had their rendezvous at Borkum. They were L.7, L.9, L.11, L.13, L.14—which had raided Edinburgh and Leith just a month before—L.16, L.17, L.20, L.21, and L.23. L.7 and L.9 were comparatively old ships, and returned to their sheds about 1.30 p.m., after seeing the other eight well on their way.

So far as is known, seven of those ships were ordered to Scotland, whilst the eighth, the L.23, being the newest and largest of the German air-fleet, was to make southwards along the east coast of England. It was the intention of the Director of Airships that Rosyth, possibly the Clyde, and certainly Cromarty, were to be attacked; but the elements were against him, as those who read this story will learn.

The 2nd of May was the end of the moonless period, and, although everything pointed to a continuance of the anticyclonic conditions that existed, the weather, unknown to the German meteorologist experts, was about to break.

The air-fleet crossed the North Sea in three groups of one, five, and two ships, and the squadrons kept in those formations until the British coast-line was sighted.

A Danish steamer, the s.s. *Hermia*, saw them, and noticed that, when they were about seventy miles east of St Abb's Head, the squadrons broke up, five ships turning southwards, and three, L.11, L.14, and L.20, continuing on their westward course to Scotland.

The instructions of the Director of Airships were therefore carried out by only three vessels, instead of seven, and this default on the part of their commanders was due almost entirely to the weather.

Over the North Sea, north of a line from the Tyne to the Helder, the weather was fine, but southwards by 6 p.m. on 2nd May rain was falling at Spurn and Nottingham, and a depression was rapidly approaching Scotland from the south-east, accompanied by low clouds and a fresh breeze.

III.

The three ships, L.11, L.14, and L.20—the last-mentioned being some distance behind the other two—were now rapidly drawing nearer to the Scottish coast.

The commanders of these craft were amongst

the boldest and most accomplished in the German Naval Airship Service, and were well fitted both in skilfulness and character to deal with the difficult conditions of the raid. The commander of L.14 had previously visited Scotland, and his ship and L.11 were afterwards present at the Battle of Jutland.

When ten miles east of St Abb's Head, at 8.40 p.m., L.11 was engaged by H.M. ships *Portia* and *Semiramis*, and, although the airship was flying low and was broadside on to the attack, it does not appear that she was hit.

The visibility at that hour of the evening was very poor, and no doubt handicapped the gunners of the warships seriously. L.11 was turned to the east on being fired at, and she was not seen for about two hours after her engagement, when she arrived over Beal in Northumberland. Two bombs were dropped, the first at Goswick and the second on the sands between Holy Island and the mainland, but no damage was done. Proceeding in a southerly direction, L.11 was next seen at the mouth of the River Coquet at 11.15 p.m., and the inhabitants of Belford, Seahouses, Alnwick, and Amble caught sight of her as she passed over them. At Alnwick she dropped a reconnaissance flare in a vain endeavour to pick up her bearings. The ship was then headed on a northerly course towards the Firth of Forth, but low clouds, drizzle, and a freshening south-easterly breeze disconcerted her commander, and she was last observed at 6 a.m. on 3rd May half-way across the North Sea on her way back to Nordholz.

The action with H.M. ships evidently made her commander miss his landfall, and, although he eventually found he was too far south, he was never really certain of his position, and so failed to carry out his mission to bomb the Forth district and Rosyth.

The aimless manner in which bombs were dropped by those responsible for this task in the L.11 seems to have affected the other squadrons of the air-fleet that were flying over the north of England on that night. L.23, operating over Yorkshire, let fall an incendiary bomb at haphazard on Danby Moor, setting the heather there alight; the four other ships following her, seeing the flames, dropped no fewer than forty bombs at or near the same spot.

IV.

The second of the three ships in the northern or Scottish group was L.14—the heroine of the raid on Edinburgh and Leith in April 1916.

She made her landfall at Eyemouth, north of Berwick, at 8.25 p.m., but turned eastwards and went out to sea again. Her course was then evidently altered to north-west with the intention of renewing her acquaintance with the Firth of Forth. No allowance was, however, made by her steersman for the change in weather conditions, with the result that she

was driven too far north of her intended destination by the south-easterly wind that had arisen since her departure from Germany. At 9.30 p.m. the ship was seen fifteen miles due east of the mouth of the Tay, and she did not come over the land until Lunan Bay was reached.

L.14 was seen just north of Arbroath at 10.50 p.m. The steersman was obviously very uncertain of his whereabouts, for L.14 here circled in the air for over half-an-hour.

To relieve his feelings the commander gave orders for some bombs to be dropped, and at 11.40 p.m. three fell in a grass field near the farm of Bonhard, and two more in a potato-patch on the farm of Panlathie in the parish of Arbirlot.

The result of this bombardment was that at the first place one horse was slightly injured; at the second place just one single pane of glass was broken.

The airship was then steered in a south-westerly direction along the coast, and flew over the north shore of the Firth of Tay.

It is probable that the north shore of the Tay was mistaken for the north shore of the Forth, and no doubt the steersman expected to find himself in the vicinity of Rosyth.

What the commander of L.14 must have said to his pilot when he found he had lost his way can probably be well imagined, and it is not intended to go further into the matter in case some members of the fair sex may possibly read this story.

The ship then passed hard by Dundee for the first time, and it can scarcely be true that her commander was heard to mutter something about 'Down with the bonnets' as she flew over that town! Perhaps the German official account of the War, when it is published, may have some remarks to make on this important point! The burgh of Carnoustie was then reached, and the Tay crossed in a southerly direction.

At 12.7 a.m. on 3rd May, the ship was seen at Tayport, going towards St Andrews Bay, where several bombs were dropped into the sea, and she was last reported from the Isle of May about 12.30 a.m.

As in the case of L.11, L.14 was greatly hampered by the low rain-clouds and rising wind, but on the other hand her commander showed a lack of enterprise in his battle with the elements that did not tally with the wonderful flights he had previously accomplished.

Perhaps the heat-wave disagreed with him as much as it did with Mr Gower, and weakened his moral courage so that he hesitated and was lost.

V.

His was, indeed, a sorry effort compared with that of the commander of the L.20, who, though he wrecked his ship in the undertaking, per-

formed one of the finest feats of navigation ever recorded in the accounts of the air-raids on these islands.

Regardless of rain or of wind, he flew over nearly three hundred miles of Scotland's mountains, dales and lochs, without faltering, in his endeavour to find the object of his attack—Cromarty.

L.20 made her landfall at Redcastle, Lunan Bay, at 9.55 p.m., and, flying in a north-westerly direction, passed over Inverkeilor, Brechin, and Careston, where she arrived at 10.15 p.m. She was heard at Justinlaugh and Glen Ogil, and the hills of Pinderachy almost trembled with rage at this invasion of their peacefulness. The ship, however, floated by them undismayed, and sailed over Ben Screavie into Aberdeenshire. Braemar Forest then reverberated the hum of her propellers, and it was not until 11.30 p.m. that she was actually seen for the first time, just south of Aviemore, calmly pursuing her north-westerly course. The inhabitants of Errogie, near the north shore of Loch Mhor, were awakened at midnight by a clatter that sounded to them like hundreds of motor cars passing by. At Balmacraan, Milton, and Lennie the beauty sleep of many charming lassies was interrupted by the inconsiderate action of this airship.

The Caledonian Canal now lay beneath her, and no doubt her commander would have pushed on to Cromarty had he not been informed that the supply of petrol left was only barely sufficient to take the craft home again. It is probable he had realised by this time from the drift and speed of the ship that the wind had been aiding him, and that it would have to be faced on his return journey. L.20 was therefore turned about, and after proceeding for a short distance on a southerly course, changed direction to the east, so as to avoid flying against the then prevailing wind. The position of the vessel was verified at Aviemore, and forty minutes later—at 1.50 a.m.—she flew over Rhynie. A mile or two south of Rhynie lies Craig Castle, which, being beyond the restricted lighting area, was lit up. The attention of the commander was drawn to these lights, and the bombing officer, taking a careful aim, launched a salvo of six high explosive bombs on this inoffensive target. These half-dozen all fell within forty feet of the castle, the windows and roof of which were damaged, but luckily there were no casualties.

VI.

Mr Bruce Gower was tired after his journey from Edinburgh, and with all his cares behind him fell into the first really comforting sleep he had had for a week or more. Suddenly a noise that he likened to the buzzing of a million bees awakened him, followed by a curious whistling sound as if some one had sat on a bagpipe; and it was not until the roar of the exploding bombs reached his ears that he realised there was an

air-raid in progress. He was out of his bed in one bound, and in thinking over the whole affair later on could not recall such an agile movement on his part since he jumped the Oxford full-back when playing Rugby football for Edinburgh University nearly thirty years ago. It will be recollected, too, that he had gone to Rhyndie to repair a body that was physically very much below par, so that his effort could not have fallen far short of what is known as championship form.

He thought he caught a glimpse of the airship from his window, and he may possibly have done so, as she was flying low and was very close to him. His heart was almost bursting with excitement, but he was not even nervous. On the contrary, his senses were elated and far keener than he had ever remembered them to be; the flesh of the man had, so to speak, been swallowed up in the spirit, making him unmindful of it and of time or space.

For perhaps a minute he remained in this intensely interested state, experienced only once in a lifetime, and as the noise of the airship grew fainter in the distance, so the man's materiality gradually but reluctantly reasserted itself and dragged his thoughts down again to the grossness of earth.

He was hoping that the airship might possibly return and that he might see her more clearly than he had done, but although he watched for her at his window for half an hour he heard no sounds. She was gone, never to be seen again in Scotland.

Regretfully he got back into bed, and his mind, amongst the many fleeting reflections that passed through it, turned to the question of what news he ought to send to Jenny. After much deliberation he decided to send her no information, realising that he had in reality been only on the fringe of events. His sense of humour again came to his aid, and he fell asleep smiling over the fact that the tables had been turned on him.

VII.

Meanwhile L.20 was rapidly leaving Aberdeenshire behind her. After passing over Kennethmont she dropped five bombs at Knockenbaird and Scotstown, but these fell in open fields and caused no annoyance to man or beast.

Three more bombs were let go when the ship was three miles east of Knockenbaird; these only disturbed the pasture-land near Freefield House in the parish of Rayne. The airship was seen between Rothienorman and Oyne, and also at Old Meldrum, and at 2.40 A.M. the crew of L.20 bade good-bye to the land of mists and winds, after spending five hours over it.

Her commander, with an inadequate supply of fuel, now commenced his struggle with the

south-easter, and, although he made a brave attempt to cope with it, found he was steadily being driven northwards.

At 5 A.M., on the morning of 3rd May, the ship was sighted by a trawler ninety-five miles due east of Aberdeen, and it must then have been evident to all on board her that the attractions of Scotland were likely to cost them dearly.

The anxiety of her commander must have been more tragic to behold than even Euripides pictured in any of his characters. His position appeared to be hopeless, and his fate seemed to be as certain as that of the commander of L.19, who in February 1916, after flying over the Midlands for eleven hours, came down on the North Sea off the Spurn, where he and his crew were drowned. The training of the sailor, however, came to his aid, and the commander of L.20 at once dismissed all thoughts of making the Fatherland. He decided to keep his ship on her eastward bearing and to risk a forced landing in Norway—and, as events turned out, he chose the wisest course, for the petrol supply lasted just long enough for the ship to reach that inhospitable coast.

She was flying very low, and just before she passed over the land the second-in-command and some of the crew jumped into the sea and swam ashore. At 10 A.M., on 3rd May, the L.20 came down at Jaederen, south of Stavanger, but with no assistants at hand to guide or help her she drove on over the ground until she collided with the hill of Jaataaberg near Sandnaes. The impact forced the afterpart of the vessel up almost at a right angle, but in spite of this terrible injury she rose again into the air for the last time and pitched into the water of Hafstrfjord, where she broke in two. She had then been flying for twenty-five consecutive hours. She was destroyed later on by the Norwegian authorities, as her repair was beyond the powers of the inhabitants of that country, and so one more of the great air-fleet, and a very gallant one, passes out of these tales.

The second-in-command and those of the crew who jumped out of the airship and swam ashore were treated as shipwrecked sailors, and were sent back to their homes, but the remainder, including the commander, who is said to have found his way back to Germany at the end of 1916, were interned.

VIII.

Those who remember their history will doubtless recollect that, in 1588, when the mighty Armada set out to destroy the naval forces of this kingdom, it was wrecked by the wrath of God, and that in 1688 when the Prince of Orange was ready with his ships to leave Holland and save England, the crowds in Cheapside were praying for an east wind so that he could set his sails.

So far as Scotland is concerned, the year 1916

should not be forgotten by her historians, for it was the south-easterly wind that then saved her capital and its people from what would inevitably have been great sufferings and tribulations.

The air-raid of 2nd-3rd May was the last that took place over the northern half of Great Britain, and it may truthfully be said that on the whole the damage caused was comparatively very small.

The aeroplane, as compared with the airship, had not been sufficiently developed in 1916 or indeed in 1918, to enable it to reach even

the Midlands of England from Germany. But this is not the case to-day.

In such circumstances it is possible that a Jenny and a Bruce may come to life again in these pages—the Editor, of course, consenting—far sooner than may be thought. Who knows?

Nearly ten years have passed by since Scotland was invaded from the air, and the older members of the Gower family feel—wrongly, perhaps—that when the next invasion occurs they will have gone where the airship and the aeroplane cease from troubling.

GERSON'S SECRET.

By NORMAN WYATT.

I.

‘COURAGE is a peculiar thing—a most peculiar thing.’

These words were uttered by my old friend Lewis, the much-knowing and the far-travelled, as we sat together one night in his quaint little smoke-room, where the spoils of a hundred journeys lay littered around in gorgeous confusion.

We had been chatting away for some time in luxurious indolence while darkness gathered around us, and it was only an idle chance that had led us on to this topic. But from my long acquaintance with Lewis I knew instantly from the way in which he made these observations that a fine yarn was on the tip of his tongue.

Even were Lewis not the best and truest of friends, I am sure I should still have been powerfully drawn to him by his inexhaustible fund of tales and anecdotes.

I became instantly very attentive, and shifted myself into a more wakeful attitude.

‘Yes,’ he repeated, his strange, high, jerky voice sounding very strident in the dim quiet. ‘It is indeed a strange thing. You see, there are so many varieties of it, and it can spring from such an endless diversity of sources.’

He stopped suddenly, as if uncertain what to say, and glanced swiftly round the room, as though it had been filled with people, and he suspected that they were not taking his observations seriously. I perceived that the incipient yarn was passing through a critical stage, and I prepared to give a little tactful assistance.

‘You’ll have seen a good many queer brands in your time, most likely?’ I ventured, trying to speak in a casual manner.

‘Yes, I have,’ he admitted impressively, as he commenced to fill his pipe with his characteristic, quick, uneasy motions. Seeing this, I knew I was now assured of a most absorbing recital.

‘I was thinking,’ he began, ‘of rather a

curious form of pluck I had once encountered. I have never been able to decide whether it was a marvellous example of unconscious heroism or merely a case of baffled cowardice—outwitted funk, if you know what I mean. But I’ll give you the whole story, and you can judge for yourself.

II.

‘I’ll have to take you back a good few years, to the time when I was working for the newspapers, and had shipped aboard the old *Lagos* to procure copy for a series of articles on the lot of a sailor of the merchant marine. I shipped at Liverpool to work my passage. There were three other strangers to the ship besides myself on board. Mrs Maddon, the captain’s wife, her four-year-old daughter, and Robert Gerson, the man with whom my tale will be principally concerned.

‘I never fully ascertained the reason of Gerson’s presence on the *Lagos*. As the captain treated him with scant courtesy I soon guessed he was no friend of his, and surmised he was some influential business man indulging in some whimsical notion of a novel holiday. This I afterwards found to be the correct explanation.

‘He was a queer-looking, stout, bespectacled, owl-like sort of fellow, and, to judge from his appearance, about the last person on this earth from whom one might justifiably expect anything heroic. I do not mean that he was one of those great balloon-like caricatures of men, but his figure possessed just that degree of rotundity necessary to deprive him of any shreds of dignity which his great, ugly, horn-rimmed spectacles left to him.

‘Yet he must have imagined himself quite an imposing personage, for he had a pompous, imperious manner, which soon gained him the entire ship’s company’s hatred. He quietened down considerably under the chilling treatment he received in consequence, and became almost penitent-looking at times. I grew a bit sorry for him as he wandered forlornly about the

deck, his little gray eyes blinking at everything with that queer puzzled expression they had.

'Then it was that he started cultivating my friendship. He astounded me one day by claiming to have known me before. I cannot say whether he really thought so, or was merely saying this in order to get some one to speak to, but at any rate that started a sort of intimacy between us.

'I found out rather a lot about him, for he was basically a simple fellow. Robbed of his bluster, he was only a weak, uncertain, good-natured person. He was a man who seemed to drift through life with aimless bewilderment towards the only ideal he knew worth following—the amassing of a fortune. Not much of the heroic fire in such a character, you would think, eh? Just a narrow-souled little money-grubber; and that was all I learned of him till disaster overtook the *Lagos*.

III.

'We were somewhere off the coast of Labrador when a cry of fire broke out. The fire, however, must have been burning for long before it was detected, and I realised at once we should have a hard task to save the ship.

'I won't weary you with the account of the struggling and slaving we had in vain—there was nothing startling or novel about it all. All I need say here is that in the end the fire beat us, and we were ordered to take to the boats.

'As we pushed off from the blazing ship a stiff northerly breeze sprang up, and long before she sank it had developed into a fairish gale, which drove us farther and farther out of the regular track of ships. Our position was thus made serious. The captain's face grew grave and anxious, and there were sad hearts among us, I fear.

'Gerson, however, seemed absolutely unconcerned. In fact his courage appeared to rise as our position became graver; nothing troubled him at all. Chance had placed Gerson in the same boat as the captain and myself. He leaned back quietly among a heap of stores, and, with his left hand supporting his head and his right thrust into his breast-pocket, gazed away over the heaving gray sea.

'As darkness fell the wind went down a little, but still kept driving us southward.

'“I say, what a fine night for stars,” said Gerson to me, lifting his eyes to the myriads of gleaming points above.

'I stared at him through the gloom, wondering. The man's voice was as calm and as even as the voice of a nun at prayers. Did he fully realise the gravity of the position? Could he be some sort of harmless imbecile?

'“Do you know the name of that big bright one?” he inquired with almost childish eagerness.

'For a moment I hesitated, undecided whether to be irritated at his absurd chatter or pleased at the diversion it afforded. Then I told him, and so started a conversation which lasted till my turn came to keep watch. Gradually the men beside us began to feel the influence of his radiant calmness, and the conversation became general and wandered off on to many topics. Whenever it flagged he put new life into it: he was marvellous.

IV.

'That was the beginning of Gerson in his new rôle of general entertainer and reviver of drooping spirits. As the days passed he became more vivacious and amusing. He seemed to draw energy and inspiration from the knowledge of the responsibilities which thus devolved on him. But there were few who really shared his light-heartedness, though all drew some solace from it. Our plight was fast becoming desperate. Our stock of provisions and water was rapidly becoming depleted, and at any time a squall might spring up which would swamp the boats.

'Days passed and never a ship was sighted. Rations were reduced and yet again reduced. Faces became thin and pinched, and eyes grew strangely bright with suffering, yet Gerson's marvellous tranquillity abated not a jot. Long dreary days succeeded long sleepless nights, with the first pangs of hunger beginning to stir within us and the horrible spectre of death by slow starvation hanging over us all. And still the fellow seemed untroubled. His cheeks were a little sunken, and his laugh maybe was not so sonorously merry, but that was all. Never in word or deed did he display the faintest anxiety for the future. Even when the captain announced a further cutting-down of the rations he did not seem in any way more concerned than if he had just heard some casual remark about the weather.

'What we suffered after that I simply cannot describe. It was fearful sitting there while the flesh faded from our bones and death came slowly and painfully upon us. We were sore and weary too from damp and exposure, for the spray often lashed over us, and our bodies were covered with great sores. We were a ghastly company.

'We seldom spoke now. We were too emaciated and exhausted to find any interest in each other's talk. When we did speak it was only in short, low sentences. All but Gerson—true, indeed, his voice was no longer ringing out merrily, but his spirit was still as care-free as ever; his eyes alone were devoid of that haunted look which told of dark thoughts preying on the mind behind. Whenever he was not on watch he was sitting in his original position—though there was little left to lean against—staring over the heaving billows with his mild, unruffled little eyes. Beyond the fact

that he was considerably thinner, his terrible experience seemed to have had no effect on him, unless it had caused the development of his anxiety for the contents of his breast-pocket. It was a curious fact this, and I can remember having sometimes idly wondered what his pocket might contain which could require such assiduous care, for every now and then he would touch his pocket as if to reassure himself that something was still there; then he would smile and sink back contentedly. As our sufferings became more excruciating I noticed that his hand sought his pocket more frequently. What priceless gem, thought I, must be concealed there that it should claim the attention of a man in his last few tortured moments on this earth? Never a grumble escaped his lips; he was always serenely patient and ready to help.

v.

'Then sickness came amongst us. The captain's daughter died; then his wife and one of the crew became affected. The captain's wife sank—sank rapidly, for she was painfully weak from lack of nourishment.

'One day, just before she died, I noticed Gerson quietly engaged in conveying his scanty allowance of water to her. Glancing up suddenly, he saw me watching him, and instantly he grew more confused and worried-looking than ever I had seen him. He quickly finished decanting the precious fluid, and, coming close up to me, whispered feverishly, "For Heaven's sake don't start thinking me a hero for what you've just seen me doing," he said. "I am not—I am an arrant coward, if you only knew the truth. I could not stand having you think me a hero. My God, man, the mockery of it would drive me mad. For Heaven's sake say you don't think me a hero," he ended frantically.

'Fearing that the long-continued strain of our position had destroyed the plucky little chap's mental balance, I quickly complied with his singular request in order to humour him. He calmed down instantly. The fierce red colour faded from his cheeks, and his eyes regained their calm, steady light.

"That's it, thank you," he said. "I couldn't bear to have anyone thinking me a hero when I know what a funk I am. What you have seen me do might have been heroism if any of the rest of you had done it. You would have been risking death by a most painful process of thirst, but there was no such consideration where I was concerned. You must understand I've always hated the sea, and before I came on this trip I made provisions for such an emergency as this. I'm really a very foolishly nervous man." He thrust his hand suddenly into his mysterious breast-pocket, and relapsed into silence as a soft, easy smile stole over his features.

'The captain's wife died that night, and before morning another member of the crew had taken ill. From that time onwards we were remorselessly thinned by harrowing deaths till only a pathetic, famine-stricken remnant remained.

'What the others thought then I do not know, but it was about this time that I began to give up hope. Nevertheless, if Gerson in any way shared my forebodings, he very effectually concealed his thoughts. He seemed to be actually drawing courage and fortitude from some invisible source; not a forced, determined courage, but a soft, easy bravery. He had all the calmness of utter resignation, with none of its attendant bitter weakness.

vi.

'Then we came into dense mists, and knew no more of our whereabouts till one windy night we heard the crash of breakers on the shore. We tried against fate to pull out, but the wind was dead shoreward, and our united strength was barely sufficient to have made much progress in a dead calm.

'Right onto the coast we were forced, and I had a fleeting impression of an ugly rocky ledge with a white fringe of swirling foam before the boat struck a projecting rock and capsized. I remember struggling desperately for a moment, then something struck me, and a great, sudden darkness descended upon me.

'I awoke to consciousness of cold and wet, and a terrible pain in my head, to find the captain bending over me and Gerson sitting a few feet distant. Everything was white with snow, and snow was falling heavily.

"Rouse yourself, man," said the captain.—"Here, Gerson, lend a hand."

'By their combined effort they dragged me into a sitting position against the rock.

"You've got to rouse yourself," ordered the captain. "If you lie here you will die of cold."

'Slowly the position of matters was brought home to me. We were the only survivors of the boat, and, wet and enfeebled, we were exposed to the fury of a snowstorm in Labrador. As my strength returned, and I was able to struggle to my feet, I perceived that Gerson was indeed in a sorry plight, and seemed on the verge of utter collapse, though he was still as willing and as unruffled as ever.

'A minute or two I leaned against the boulder; then I moved out in obedience to the captain's order. I gasped as the icy wind caught me with a rude foretaste of chill death. The whole world seemed obliterated in a driving cloud of snow. But the captain, being familiar with the coast, recognised the spot, and judged that the nearest village lay some six miles to the northward.

'Our progress was painful and slow, for the

snow was soft and newly-fallen, and greatly impeded our footsteps, and the biting wind was dead in our faces. Then the cold and wet were chilling us; we could feel our limbs grow leaden as we walked.

"Quicker," commanded the captain. "We shall never keep warm at this rate." We made a desperate attempt to obey, floundering along grimly in the snow-drifts. For what seemed an age we plodded on thus; then Gerson sank into the snow and lay still. All our efforts to rouse him were fruitless; he merely groaned and shook his head.

"Here, man, is that a light there?" asked the captain, peering anxiously into the darkness.

"Yes," I answered; "and I think I can hear voices."

Next minute a group of men burst upon us out of the driving snow, and our troubles were ended. Gerson being carried, the captain and I being helped, we were speedily conveyed into the village.

But Gerson could not be revived. He called to me feebly as he was laid upon a bed. When I bent over him he smiled, thrust his hand into his breast-pocket, and nodded to me; then he

closed his eyes and fell into a swoon, from which he never recovered. Thinking he intended me to take charge of some precious package which he had guarded so jealously through all his privations, I put my hand into his breast-pocket, and was surprised to find my fingers encounter a hard, smooth object. I drew it hastily forth into the light, and beheld a small green bottle labelled PRUSSIC ACID—POISON.

Then in a flash I saw it all. Why he had been so solicitous of the contents of his breast-pocket, and what he had meant by saying that he was not a hero! He had carried this poison as a resource against fate, and from it he had drawn his strange, placid courage! By some queer process it had given him a sense of security that had enabled him to endure everything with wonderful fortitude. It had inspired him with courage as well as any glorious cause ever inspired hero or martyr.

'Strange sort of courage, wasn't it? I know he considered himself a dreadful coward, but I've often wondered if he was. You see, there are so many varieties of courage.'

And Lewis bent forward over the fire and began slowly filling his pipe.

THE BASS ROCK.

By D. S. ALLAN, Sen.

I.

IN recent numbers of *Chambers's Journal*¹ there have appeared instructive articles on the locust, which must have been read by lovers of natural history with the greatest interest. They recalled to the writer's mind a long-past day—a day of thrilling experience, laid away in the archives of memory—when he saw, and held in his hand for the first time, a living locust that was found on the Bass Rock, that rock that has stood for ages like a guardian angel at the mouth of the Firth of Forth.

Geologically the Bass is of Trap Tuff formation. It shoots its head more than three hundred feet above sea-level. Three sides of the rock are perpendicular, and as white as the cliffs of Dover. On the south-east side it slopes down to the water's edge, and here is the only landing-stage. (For many days during eastern gales landing is an impossibility.) On this shelving southern side were the fort, the prison, and the chapel, and a good spring of fresh water.

The Bass is a fragment, left all alone, of the prehistoric land that at one time united Scotland to the western end of the European continent, before the cooling crust covering this part of our globe of liquid fire was sucked down, during the great upheaval times, when

our mountains were being made, and our islands formed—down to the level of our coal basin, over part of which flows the Firth of Forth. If the roots of the Bass sank with the crust, it must have stood, like its neighbour, North Berwick Law, five or six hundred feet high.

The classical rock, laden with memories of the past, was a Mecca to some. Hugh Miller, the geologist and historian, was a student of the Bass, and he said there was a halo of glory encircling its hoary head. Few saw the halo as he saw it; they had not his geological eyes, nor his broad historical mind. Miller, by the way, was one of the first contributors to *Chambers's Journal*. He must have been a frequent visitor to Canty Bay, where the writer resided for some time. This is the loveliest, smallest, horseshoe bay on the south side of the Forth, and it was then the gateway to the Bass. Hundreds visited it every summer.

The Bass was accessible nearly all summer to the most timid inlander, and during that season there was a stream of visitors; so much so, that though there were only six families in the bay, the tenant had a licensed house to meet the demands of the visitors. For some months of the year, however, a stranger was never seen within the threshold of the door.

All visitors to the rock had to pass this way. The tenant of the bay was the tenant of the Bass, and he alone had the right of access.

¹ August 1923, May 1924, and August 1925.

Visitors came from all vocations of life, and for every conceivable purpose. No doubt some were just the ordinary globe-trotters, everyday sight-seers, who gloried more in the number of labels on their baggage than in the knowledge they might accumulate in their travel. There came the gentle lover of nature's wonderful works in general, with his quiet inquiring eyes, asking questions of rock and sea and sky; and oft with him the nervous scribbler, with his paper and pencil, looking for some fresh article for his bread-supplying journal, or pertinent thoughts or subjects for his next book. Religious history had a greater place then in the reading community's mind than it has to-day, and the object of some was to see the site of the martyrs' prison and their graves. These were the psychological visitors. But among the companies that came year after year could be seen men with a definite practical purpose. Sentiment was nothing to them; they were Bass Rock materialists. Among them was the geologist with his hammer and his bag, the botanist with his spud and tin, the ornithologist with his glass and wool-padded box, the artist with his palette and brush, the taxidermist with his gun and corpus case. The last-mentioned had to pay toll for every bird he shot; but he often came to the Bass, for he found it one of the finest aviaries in Scotland.

II.

I remember that day vividly. A lovely July day. Everything was shimmering in the hot sunlight; the sea was like molten silver, and the Bass in the glare of light was like a marble column. We scarce had landed when the boat was recalled by signal from the shore, where another party was waiting. While the boatmen were away, Neil and the writer were seated in the Old Fort garden, overrun with nettles three feet high, a rare old rabbit-warren. The young were bobbing out and in among our feet. While watching their spasmodic gambols we saw a curious creature feeding among the green herbage. By casting a light cloth over the plant, it was easily secured; but it was a stranger—a stranger even to Neil, who was guide and encyclopædia to hosts of visitors.

While we were puzzling over our find, an old gentleman had been watching us unobserved. With a merry twinkle in his eye, and smiling as if he had met an old friend, he took it into his hand and said, 'That's a rare find, lads; it is a locust.' Laughing, he addressed the insect itself, 'Are you here, old friend? Whence have you come, and how did you come?' Then he told us he had seen millions of locusts on the wing, darkening the light of midday and laying waste miles of fruitful land. This one must in its flight have got itself entangled in the rigging of some vessel in an eastern sea, homeward bound. As it was passing up the Firth the

locust either had seen the green on the Bass or felt the scent of earth, and, taking to the wing, had found a resting and a feeding place. After the find there was such a searching and hunting by the other visitors. There was racing and chasing on the Bass lea, but the lost bride (if it had one) ne'er did they see. The unusual find was notified in the *Scotsman* a few days after by some of the city party.

The revenue to the tenant from the Bass came from three sources: the monopoly of carrying the visitors, the rabbit-warren, and the young solan geese. There must have been sheep on the rock at one time, for an old writer says that mutton from the Bass was counted a delicacy. If he had said it was a rarity, it could more easily be understood. For a ewe and her lambs would need to work more than forty-four hours a week to keep life going; and more, they would need to be the blackest of black-faced sheep for hardiness, for every wind that blows tousels the hairy herbage of the Bass's scalp.

The gannet has been described as a British bird, and has the honour of having a book of nearly six hundred pages all to its royal self. If the penguin is the aristocrat of the southern isles, the gannet is the aristocrat of the Bass. It is said that in the seventeenth century the gannet was a prized dish on kingly tables, and the birds were worth £200 a year to the owner of the Bass. If so, it is no wonder that Charles II. paid £4000 for possession. The rock belonged for generations to a family of the name of Lauder, and the head was known as Lauder of the Bass. For the first sixty years of the nineteenth century hundreds of young gannet were killed, dressed, and sold in the markets for human food at sixpence each.

On the first favourable day of each week, during the nesting season, a boat went out with four men and a dog. Two mounted the Bass; the others, with the boat, passed round the foot of the cliffs to gather up the dead. One of the men on the Bass, with a rope attached to him, slipped over the edge with a mallet, and every bird that was ready for the market he just tapped on the head, and threw over into the sea to be picked up. They were birds just ready to leave the nest. But this they will not do of their own free will; instinct tells them that there is danger, that their wings cannot carry them, so they cling to the nest for safety. The parent birds know, too, by instinct that their time for nesting is past, and the young geese are hustled over the ledge, a drop of over three hundred feet, screaming, plunging, fluttering down till they reach the welcome sea. But as they cannot fly, they cannot dive for food; they just swim about the shelter of the rock, living on their own fat, till they have reached the normal life weight. Then they take wing and ascend to the great white throng. They do not

reach the white stage themselves till they are two years old.

When the boat returned from the Bass with its load of dead, all hands set to work, men and women plucking, cleaning, and dressing, the offal being boiled down to secure the by-product, dubbing-grease, for the leather currier. Every Friday morning the light van was packed, Donald yoked, and told to go on. The cliff road was so steep that it climbed up the hill-side in a zig-zag, and so twisted that it overlapped itself. Donald marched on, the men walking behind, till he reached the first steep lap and stood still. He would not put his shoulder to his collar again till he found the men's hands on the van to push. So they drew and pushed, sliding and spluttering, till they reached the high main road to Haddington, where the birds were sold at the old market stance. On arrival the bell-man was sent round, proclaiming their advent, but there was such a demand that he had scarce gone his rounds ere they were all sold at sixpence apiece. No doubt they were a big, fat sixpence worth.

III.

The history of the Bass is interwoven with the political and religious history of Scotland since the sixth or seventh century, when St Baldred, the pioneer of Christianity in East Lothian, who built churches from the foothills of the Lammermoors to the shores of the Forth, was imprisoned on the Bass for years, pining away and dying in sight of his beloved church and his people's homes at Auldham. From that time till the eighteenth century the Bass served as a prison—a prison that could accommodate at least one hundred men. Many Covenanters were here kept in durance vile. Finally the prison was removed, and the rock passed into the hands of the Dalrymple family.

This island prison was not for the Macbeths whose hands were incarnadined with the blood of their fellows, who had murdered sleep and themselves could sleep no more. It was for religious and political offenders whose hands were clean, and whose consciences were unstained. These men had a right to a cenotaph, for theirs was a rôle of heroes. However mistaken their faith, or misguided their zeal, they were true to their individual liberty to accept or reject whatsoever they were convinced of was truth or error, for which they suffered or died. It was the sufferings and martyr deaths of men like these that became the seed plot from which grew our liberty of conscience and of thought.

When Tantallon Castle was the glory and the power of the Douglas, many a savoury cooked solan goose graced the dinner-table of that nobleman and his retainers, and often the wild bird's eggs would enrich the breakfast-table. The bay would be their boat-shore, for it is the

nearest deep rockless cove, only a few minutes' walk away. The cragsmen would often pay visits to the rock to keep the castle larder filled; even when besieged they could find their way to the Bass store of winged food.

Sir Walter Scott, who immortalised the Douglas and Tantallon, brought Marmion with his armed band by North Berwick and the Canty Bay road to the castle. We have often wandered among the Fonesse Mounds, and sought in vision to behold the flooded moat and the flying Marmion on the drawbridge, or see the tragic parting at the castle door, and hear the loyal democratic Douglas, as he looked into the blanched face of Marmion, declare :

My castles are my king's alone
From turret to foundation stone,
But the hand of Douglas is his own,
And never shall in friendly grasp
The hand of such as Marmion clasp.

When the artist sees the bay for the first time, his eyes are fixed, his heart is gripped, and down goes his stool. And no wonder! Looking down from the high cliffs, one's mind is filled with an unforgettable vision of calm beauty; its sloping, shelving sides, clothed with living green from the lapping wave to the crowning ridge, and decked and bespangled with the modest primrose or its more gaudy cousin, the cowslip; its narrow belt of crescent golden sand; its low ridge of rock running out to sea on either side, forming the horseshoe sheltered cove; the boats riding at anchor in the calm harbourless bay; the Bass rising out of a silvery sea like a marble column, its green turban crowning its hoary head; in the shadowy distance the Isle of May, lying low like some sea monster stealing up the Firth; and the hills of Fife, blue tinted, creeping up to the sky-line.

While the artist sits dreaming and watching the kaleidoscopic light and shadow playing on the Firth, there may fall on his ear the tuneful voice of 'Lillie of the Bay,' laden with the words of the Boatmen's Song:

When the wind is fair to westward, and the baldie
jowks and sways
To the waves that skelp along the keel,
The fisher's heart is merry as the wind among the
stays
Or Haddie Jenny linton to her creel.

It's fine to clear the harbour in the stillness o' the
nicht,
And glide awa' to meet the comin' day,
To shoot the squirmin' nets into the phosphorescent
licht,
Or jig for muckle herrin' at the May;
Thar's mony a ane wad swap his job wi' me.
But when the nicht comes roarin' doon, an avalanche
o' sleet,
And you're paying oot the gartlens fra the sulls,
Wi' the rinnin' snoods to bait, as they pass you in
the weet,
Thar's few wad change the fireside for the hulls.

ANACHRONISMS.

By I. WANLESS DICKSON.

I.

LIKE a mighty Mahmud on his golden throne sat Cheops, the first Pharaoh of Pharaohs. The scene was in a court of summary jurisdiction, which court had just been brought to its close, and the royal son of Ra had dismissed the acquitted and the condemned. He lay back in the deserted state chamber, gazing on the mighty colonnade, those huge pylons of granite, quarried by countless thousands of slaves, from the vast works at Karnak, down the Nile. The day was hot, and the sheltering palms did but little to cool the arid air that came through the open spaces in fitful puffs. Behind his throne, in blazing hieroglyphs of red, of purple, and of gold, were the words, 'Life, Blood, Power'; and he who sat gazing on this spectacle held in his hand the sceptre, that symbol of awe and majesty, 'wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings.' As he sat musing, like his prototype of ancient Sicily, he fell asleep, or perhaps into a trance, wherein his Ka went on a journey down through the ages, seeking for the answer to the riddle of the universe. Whilst his Ka sojourned, the guards of the court kept watch and ward, that none might intrude on that august presence.

Leaving the throne, Cheops's Ka wandered out, perhaps on the wings of the wind—who knows?—over the desert, and there he stopped and contemplated the almost incomprehensible work in progress on the world's greatest monument. It was the pyramid, the pyramid of Chufu. As he mused, he wondered how he would enjoy the wanderings that he yet must make, whilst his other, his corporeal self, lay asleep in that mighty mausoleum. He stood unseen by the slaves, who laboured under the lash, driven by stern, austere, unmerciful taskmasters, at piling stone upon stone, which task generations of their like had been doing and would do for millenniums.

II.

As the mood took him, so he wandered off to Upper Egypt, unheeding the beauty of the Nile, the glory of its palaces, the solemnity of its temples. It had been given him by the omnipotent Osiris to see into the future for one swift day. At last he came to Thebes, the mighty Thebes, that walled city of mystery, the wonder of whose being, he foresaw, would amaze the ages, yet would ultimately crumble to the dust. Wearied, he gazed off to the east, and, as if transported on wings of thought, he came upon a scene of tremendous activity; he realised that he was in the presence of his descendant,

Rameses II., Rameses the Great, and he marvelled at the changes which had taken place in those four thousand years in his beloved Egypt. How hard it was to understand that these submissive people, under the leadership of one of this world's most outstanding figures, were there being hammered by time and fate into a coherent, thinking whole. He was grateful to the All Wise for this glimpse, and he could enter into that state of mind wherein time and place had no meaning, and thoughts only survived. As he considered what these wild nomadic tribes had been, and then contemplated what they were to be—the keystone of the peoples of Asia, how they were to be the possessors of the richest land then known to man, how they were to build a temple: true, a miniature in size as compared with the incomensurable temples of his own race, yet such a temple as would leave an impression indelible, ineffaceable, indestructible in the minds of countless generations in the millenniums yet to be, when the temples, yea, the very gods themselves, of his own race and creed would be utterly unknown—it was a staggering thought! These slaves, under the control of one, Moses—that they, in the fulfilment of time, would direct the course of thought in a world so much vaster, so much more magnificent than hitherto he, in his wildest dreams, had ever imagined; that they should evolve an idea of deity of sufficient cogency utterly to submerge all and every trace of belief in Osiris, in Esis, in Hathor, in Nemesis, was too vast for that child of time's first dawning to think upon unmoved. He was swept away with emotion and determined to quit the scene.

III.

On turning, he found a white-robed figure, as insubstantial as himself, beckoning him to come away, to leave these unborn realities and visit something yet more glorious, if not indeed more catastrophic to the pride, the dignity, and the power of his immortal Egypt. Reluctantly, yet half willingly, he followed his ethereal guide to the mouth of the unconquerable Nile, and there, on its delta, he saw such a mighty pile of masonry in such new guise that he was bewildered at its glory and its luxury. The sovereignty of Egypt in alien hands! True, in the hands of a barbarian conqueror; and he gained some little satisfaction from the thought that that same conqueror had overthrown and trampled in the dust Assyria the Great, Babylon the Great, and Persia with her limitless satraps. Yes, he could foresee the descendants of Sardanapalus, in all their voluptuous splendour,

dressed in the pomp of power, now servile to a foreign foe. All this, Assyria, Greece, Carthage, Babylon, Persia, welded into one colossal empire of which his beloved Egypt was but a part. No longer the mistress of the world, the 'arbiter of others' fate, a suppliant for her own.' He foresaw the Macedonian raise out of the ruins, which time and the foes of Egypt had laid in the dust, such a city as would make the name of Alexander unforgettable and unforgotten till 'the moments of time were lost in the dawn of Eternity's day.' This Ka of Cheops's bowed his head subdued, dumbfounded; the weight of ages, as a great oppression, pressed down upon his being.

IV.

As he pondered these things in his heart, the white-robed figure returned. Gazing at him with a countenance filled with pathos and commiseration, the white-robed prophet of Osiris spoke to him, saying, 'My Lord Cheops, this is not all. Come with me and behold a mightier yet.' And he who ruled all Egypt turned and followed.

Across the blue Mediterranean they sped, over the glorious isle of Sicily, to a land his Egypt had never known—and with him time sped too. It was in the reign of Vespasian and in the imperial city of Rome that he next found himself. Turning to his companion, the Ka of Cheops asked, 'What may this place be?' 'My Lord Cheops,' he made answer, 'this is Rome, Earth's Eternal City. There lies the palace of Cæsar. Its glory and its majesty are portrayed in a guise new to you. Her legions uphold her power away in far-off Egypt, in North Africa, in Carthage. She dwells in marble halls, and in that new world of Spain and Britain and Gaul her sway is supreme. To be a Roman citizen is the highest honour this world can bestow; but, my lord, I would ask you to dwell here but a short space, consider the magnitude of the splendour that surrounds you, and then to come with me to the distant horizon in the west. At your feet there lies the Circus Maximus, the scene of countless contests of strength and valour; the wild chariot races; the contests of gladiators. There to the south stands the Coliseum, just finished; a theatre so vast that all Thebes, with its seething population, might congregate to witness a contest of gladiators. Yonder lies the Palatine, a hill yet to be world-famous, and on its summit stands the temple dedicated to the worship of Olympian Jupiter, that god which now supplants Osiris, Isis, yes, even the Hawkheaded One, from their places in the kingdom of Heaven. Even you, who are accustomed to power, must feel the weight of humility, which in truth is befitting, when you gaze upon the progress of mankind. From the east unto the west Rome rules the world. Her culture and her laws are imposed

alike upon the Ethiopian; the Jew, whose temple you wondered at, yonder in Jerusalem; in Greece; in Tyre, no longer the proud mistress of the Inland Sea; in Gaul, in Britain, verily in all the world. But it is only a symbol, a forerunner, of such power arising in yonder Britain, as will stagger human minds with the wonder of its greatness for ages yet to be. Come, my lord, let us away to the isles of the sea, and I will show you the capital of an Empire so great, so vast, so far-flung as will dwarf to insignificance all that Egypt, all that Assyria, Greece, Carthage, Rome, Babylon, ever knew.'

V.

Straightway on the wings of Time they sped to the new world of the west. Down through the ages they had come, into the future, seven thousand years, and in their flight they stopped in Britain, the mistress of the world. She who had conquered Egypt and the Sudan, she who held the Mediterranean as in the palm of her hand, she who held whole continents and millions upon millions of people under her sway. 'And there, my lord, stands her capital. You will be amazed when I tell you that all that immeasurable greatness is hers, yet from one end of her dominions to the other there is not one slave; there is no autocratic power; there is no tyranny; there is that which is undreamed of in yonder Egypt—the rule of liberty. And this boon of liberty has been the gift of Britain to the world.

'Yonder lies what seems to you perhaps a great columned temple. It is a museum, in which are housed many of Egypt's secrets, born and unborn. There lies the mummy of Seti I., Pharaoh of Egypt in the early days of Moses; he who sat on his awful throne dispensing justice, as you, my lord, did but this morning; and now he no longer sits beneath that emblem of majesty and greatness, nor does he wield his sceptre, nor is there blazoned above him "Life, Blood, Power," as in your court in Egypt. His two thousand five hundred years of sleep are undisturbed; his Ka waits on. There lies only the dust, his corporeal semblance, in that gray columned edifice, and strange as it may seem to you, that gray columned edifice is not erected to house his dust, as your mysterious pyramid will one day harbour yours! It is a place where all may come—the wise and the foolish; the reverent and the irreverent; the young and the old; the philosopher who tries to understand, and the sightseer who finds food for his amusement in the earthly remains of yonder Seti. That building holds evidences of empire from the sunrise to the sunset; from the banks of the Indus and the Nile to the lands of perpetual ice and snow. It is a symbol of Britain's greatness. There is no nation under Heaven where her greatness and her power are

unknown. Egypt, my lord, in the presence of such might, dwindles away till she has but the power of a simple city state, in comparison. Are you satisfied, O Cheops's Ka, with this vision of the future, or shall I take you over all her realm?' Cheops answered, 'O white-robed prophet, show me no more. I would return, overwhelmed, bowed down. I would return to my ancient kingdom, there to ponder and to contemplate this vast mystery of Time and Life.' 'Your will, my lord. Let us betake ourselves back across the sea to the kingdom of Egypt. It may be that this vision of the future will modify the actions of the years you still may spend as Egypt's Pharaoh. Let us away.'

VI.

Somewhere in the courtyard outside a tumult arose. Perhaps it was but a street brawl—at all events, it woke to consciousness the Pharaoh Cheops on his throne. For some moments he could not collect his thoughts. Murmuring to himself, he said, 'By Esis, what has happened? I have been on a pilgrimage seven thousand years. I have seen unborn to-morrow and dead yesterday, with all its mystery, its wonder and its might; and lo! I stand here in to-day, and my vision tells me I am but a speck of dust. I know not what it means, nor can I comprehend what destiny Osiris has in store for me. The world is great, how much greater than I thought, great Amen only knows. I feel the weight of my old age. I will hurry on the work in that tomb. I will double the number of slaves, for of a truth, I fear me, it will not be ready for me, else.' So,

tinkling a cymbal, he called for his royal chariot to take him back to his palace.

That night he lay awake in a reverie, and he determined that his tomb, at least, would survive; that though all he saw in his daytime trance might indeed come true, yet would he, Cheops, Pharaoh of Egypt, lord of life, blood, power, build such a memorial—not for personal aggrandisement—as would outlive Time itself. And so musing, into his thoughts there crept the substance, though not the words, of Mathilde Blind's 'Where the Mummied Kings of Egypt':

Where the mummied kings of Egypt, wrapped in
linen fold on fold,
Couched for ages in their coffins, crowned with
crowns of dusky gold,

Lie in subterranean chambers, biding to the day of
doom,
Counterfeit life's hollow semblance in each mazy
mountain tomb;

Mured in mighty mausoleums, walled in from the
night and day,
Lo, the mortal kings of Egypt hold immortal death
at bay!

Shall we suffer Death to trample us to nothingness?
and must
We be scattered, as the whirlwind blows about the
desert dust?

On the changing earth unchanging let us bide till
time shall end,
Till, reborn in blest Osiris, mortal with immortal
blend.

And on the sanded wastes of Egypt the
tomb of Cheops has outlived the ravages of those
seven thousand weary years.

Is this the explanation of the pyramids?

THE KING OF THE ISLAND.

PART II.

III.

HURST rose to his feet and pressed forward swiftly, for he felt a longing to finish his self-imposed task and get back to the hut and his familiar boat. As he came nearer to the centre of the island, the trees and undergrowth grew thicker. He found himself constantly ascending little hills, or rather hillocks, their sides covered with vegetation. From these he descended into green valleys, each with a rather higher eminence on the farther side. At last the highest of all seemed to stand before him, and he considered that when he reached its summit he would be at the centre of the island. He began to ascend it, and then halted suddenly, as though nailed to the ground. On the farther side of the hill he heard a human voice.

It was that of a man, apparently singing in a rough, untuneful fashion, but the listener could not make out the words or even the

language. There seemed to be something wild, something eerie in the song; or, again, it reminded the sailor of a child, happy with its play, who croons and murmurs to itself without intelligible speech. For the second time that day Hurst felt his nerves thrill and his skin pringle. He chided himself angrily for his foolishness. 'It's a man, anyhow,' he thought. 'It's a human being, and not a savage, unless he came in a ship. Some poor fellow who was cast away, as I was. He's been here some time, I suppose, and has formed the habit of talking to himself. And of course he does not know a fellow-creature is near and listening to him. That's all there is to it—so what are you worried about? Here goes to introduce myself.'

He ran rapidly up the hill, and gained its summit in a couple of minutes. Below him there lay a little circle-shaped depression, or small valley, with lower hillocks on the farther side. At the foot of one of these was a

V-shaped opening, evidently the entrance of a cave. In front of this there was built out a rough arbour, where one could sit in shelter in the open air. A few logs were scattered about, and at the mouth of the cave two blackened flat stones evidently served as an open-air fireplace.

In front of the cave stood a human figure. It was that of a very tall man, who was cutting at a billet of wood with a sailor's clasp-knife. His aspect was strange and fantastic. He wore no hat, but on his long black hair there was a kind of fillet, or improvised crown, formed of leaves and intertwined twigs. His arms and legs were bare and were burnt brown by the sun, but the rest of his dress consisted of the ragged remains of a suit of blue sea-cloth. On his feet were a pair of what appeared to be sandals of his own manufacture. His dark bearded face had a curiously happy and complacent expression, and again the sailor received the same impression of a child absorbed in its play. Hurst took in this apparition, as it were, at a single glance, and gave a low repressed exclamation. But low as it was the stranger evidently heard it. He raised his head and saw the sailor standing before him on the hillside. Instantly his face changed and became bitter and malignant. He flung down the piece of wood and rushed forward, the clasp-knife in his hand.

'Who are you?' he demanded, in a great roaring voice. 'What do you want on my island? Are you one of those dogs come to life again?'

There was something so daunting and intimidating about the man that Hurst involuntarily gave back a pace or two. Then, realising that the other had spoken in English and was a fellow-countryman, he found his courage and his voice. 'I don't know what you mean,' he said. 'I have been shipwrecked and in an open boat for three days. My name is Hurst, and I am an officer in the merchant service. I only landed on this island yesterday.'

'You are alone?' demanded the other, still frowning.

'Quite alone.'

'Are you a loyal and honest man?'

'I—I hope so,' said Hurst, in an amazed voice. 'But I don't quite understand you?'

The menacing look left the other's face, and it again assumed its first somewhat foolishly complacent expression. 'You do not know who I am?' he asked.

'Naturally not,' said Hurst. 'Except that you are a fellow-countryman.'

The stranger drew himself up haughtily. 'A fellow-countryman!' he repeated disdainfully. 'You are much mistaken. You have the honour to address a king.'

'A what?' cried Hurst, doubting if he had heard right.

'A king,' repeated the other. 'I am King Henry the First of Stoneland. And everyone,

every human being in my kingdom, shall acknowledge me as their ruler. I will suffer no rebels to my authority. So what have you to say—do you acknowledge me?'

IV.

Hurst listened open-mouthed. Thoughts chased each other swiftly through his mind, and he had a sudden feeling that everything was now explained.

'Mad!' he reflected rapidly. 'Mad as a hatter! I was a fool not to see it at first. My stars! What a mess I've landed in! No doubt this blighter was shipwrecked like myself, and his hardships and sufferings turned his brain. Yes, it's all clear now. H. R. means Henry Rex, and that poor chap who was "executed" was one of his companions who wasn't "a loyal subject," and would not acknowledge his authority. I wonder who this fellow is—and I wonder what the deuce I'm to do!'

The king of the island broke in upon his reflections by advancing nearer and raising his clasp-knife threateningly.

'I asked you if you acknowledged me as your rightful ruler?' he thundered.

'I heard you all right,' said Hurst grimly. He eyed the other attentively, noting his great height and sweep of chest, and the muscles which rippled in his bare arms and legs at every movement.

'The beast's a perfect Hercules,' he thought bitterly. 'I shouldn't have a ghost of a chance with him, to say nothing of his confounded knife. I've got to humour him—for the present at all events.'

'I must ask your pardon,' he said aloud. 'You see you took me by surprise, for I was not aware that Stoneland Island had a king. But I am prepared to acknowledge you as its rightful ruler, and to become your loyal subject.'

The other's face cleared once more, and he smiled like a happy child. 'That is well,' he said graciously. 'You have decided wisely; but I saw at once you were a man of sense. Ah! Mr—Mr Hurst, I wish all my subjects had been like you. But you would not imagine how foolish men can be. I came here with three companions six months ago—I may tell you that before I assumed the crown I was the captain of a ship, and was known as Henry Everill. I landed here, I say, with three companions, and none of them was loyal; they all rebelled against me at one time or another. I was compelled to execute them, much against my will.'

Hurst could not repress a shiver. 'I think,' he said hoarsely—'I think I came across the grave of one of these men. John Cavanagh!'

'Ah, yes!' said the other regretfully. 'Yes, I buried him. But he was quite hopeless, Mr Hurst. Just imagine it—not only did he deny that I was his ruler: he actually asserted that

I was mad. Of course, that was the end of him. Come with me; you are now my loyal subject, and you shall enjoy my hospitality—a king's hospitality, Mr Hurst!

The sailor knew that it was dangerous to smile, but he could hardly refrain from doing so, as he followed obediently across the little valley to the entrance of the cave. 'Very jolly, I'm sure,' he reflected grimly. 'I wonder he doesn't speak of this cave as his royal palace. A king's hospitality—good Lord! I suppose he'll offer me roots and raw flesh, and speak of it as a banquet. If only I could see my way out of this mess. A madman and a murderer, and I've got to play up to him and humour him!'

His cheerless reflections were cut short by the other waving him into the cave. 'I bid you welcome,' he said graciously. 'I will light a candle, as you may find it dark. Here is the way, to the right. You have my permission to be seated, Mr Hurst.'

'Thank you, sir,' said Hurst gravely. 'Well, that's about the limit,' he muttered to himself, as he obeyed and looked round. The cave was much larger than he had supposed, opening out wide on either hand, with a lofty arched roof. The floor was of firm dry sand, with a tarpaulin spread over it. Against the side was rigged up a rough plank bed, filled with dried grass and brushwood. At the back of the cave there lay a great heap of tins and cases, and as Hurst examined them more closely he became aware that another mystery of Stoneland Island was now dispelled. These were the stores which he should have found in the hut. There was enough tinned food and biscuit to last one man for a twelve-month or more. The larder of the royal palace at least was well stocked. 'He's been carrying them up here,' he thought. 'No doubt considered they belonged to him—part of his precious kingdom. There's a good deal of method in his madness—and that's the worst of it.'

The king fixed his candle in a niche in the wall and flung himself down on the bed. 'There is food yonder,' he said condescendingly, with a wave of his hand towards the stores. 'And there is fresh water in the wooden bucket. Eat and drink, my friend—a king invites you.'

'I thank your majesty,' said Hurst, as gravely as before. He got up and searched until he found a tin of corned beef and an open case of ship's biscuits. As he ate, the king of the island leaned back on his bed with the same fatuous smile on his bearded lips. Hurst noticed, however, that his black eyes were sharp and alert and that they were fixed on his new subject attentively. 'I must be cautious with him,' he thought. 'He's mad, all right, but at the same time he's not altogether a fool. But only let me get a chance and you'll have another rebel to deal with, my fine fellow.'

Wish to goodness I had brought a revolver in that boat.' He rose to his feet and felt in his pocket. 'I thank you for your royal hospitality, sir,' he said affably. 'Have I your permission to smoke?'

The other's face lit up. 'Surely,' he cried eagerly. 'I will even accept some of your tobacco myself. Unfortunately, there is none growing on my island, and I have used all I brought with me long ago.'

Hurst held out his tobacco-pouch with a bow, and the king filled a great black pipe. His face took on a beatific expression as he puffed at it. 'Good,' he murmured happily. 'This is excellent tobacco, Mr Hurst. I am very pleased with you, very pleased indeed. Your whole attitude is very different from that of my first unhappy subjects—though they, of course, were only ignorant sailors. Yes, whatever may be the future of my kingdom, you will always be my favourite subject in it.'

The favourite subject bowed solemnly once more. 'Good old King Hal!' he muttered under his breath. 'He only wants six wives and then he would be complete. And it seems I am cast for Cardinal Wolsey.'

'I am going to reward you, Mr Hurst,' the other went on. 'No doubt you are not aware that my kingdom, though small, is yet exceedingly rich. Many greater rulers might envy me my fortune. You shall have a share of my treasures.' He felt underneath his bed and produced a small canvas bag. 'Take these jewels,' he said loftily. 'These diamonds. They are yours. A present from your king.'

Hurst opened the bag, and in the semi-darkness saw a number of what appeared to be small, light-coloured pebbles. A kind of bitter laughter welled up in his throat. 'Diamonds, eh?' he thought. 'What's the next foolery, I wonder? Well, he is at least consistent in his idiocy. If I could only forget that he killed those men I might almost see the fun of all this.' He thrust the bag into his pocket. 'Your majesty overwhelms me,' he said, choking down his laughter. 'I hardly know how to thank you.'

The king waved his hand graciously. 'There is no need of thanks,' he said in measured tones. 'I know how to reward loyalty—and how to punish disloyalty. But come, if you are rested; we will take a stroll before it grows dark. I suppose you have not yet seen the whole of my kingdom.'

Hurst rose to his feet with alacrity. He felt a great desire to get into the fresh air again and see the good sane face of nature once more. 'If I have much more of it, I shall go mad myself,' he thought irritably.

v.

They left the cave together, and the king led the way towards a part of the island which

Hurst had not yet explored. It was now late afternoon, but the sun was some way above the horizon, and there were still some hours of daylight. As they walked, Hurst noted afresh the other's amazing physical strength. 'I should be a child in his hands,' he thought with disgust. 'And I notice he has brought his clasp-knife with him. All the same, I'm about sick of all this nonsense.' He noted also that the other's delusions seemed to increase as they walked. The king expatiated on the beauties of his kingdom, and indeed, on this wonderful afternoon, Stoneland Island seemed very fair. But the madman took it all to himself, talking of 'my birds,' 'my trees,' 'my streams,' and 'my valleys.'

'What a chap!' thought the sailor irritably. 'He'll soon be talking of "my sea" and "my sky!"'

As they passed across a little valley the king halted for a moment. He pointed to where a mass of bluish, soapy-looking rock and gravel jutted out from above the soil. The grass was trampled down all around it, and there were signs that the rocks had been dug up and crushed. 'That is where my diamonds come from,' he said.

Hurst gazed indifferently. 'Indeed, sir,' he remarked. 'Very interesting. And has your majesty any gold mines in your kingdom?'

The other glanced at him keenly. 'No, sir, I have not,' he said with dignity. 'To my knowledge, there is no gold here. But all else that one can desire is to be found on Stoneland. And I have many plans, Mr Hurst. I intend that my kingdom shall be a model to the world. I have been considering the question of a national flag. What do you think of one of yellow, with a black border and a white star in the centre?'

Hurst's strained nerves gave way suddenly, and he spluttered with laughter. 'That would be a devilish jolly sight!' he replied incoherently.

The moment he had spoken he recognised his foolishness. The other turned upon him like a flash, his face contorted. 'What do you mean?' he cried fiercely. 'Do you dare to joke with me? Do you understand who I am?'

For a moment Hurst thought of trying to smooth things over with an abject apology, but then a sudden uncontrollable anger seemed to seize hold of him. He clenched his hands and his face flushed. 'I know who you are, all right,' he replied recklessly. 'You're a madman who ought to be in an asylum; or, if not, you're a murderer who ought to be in the dock. In either case I've had about enough of you and your tomfoolery.'

He had more to say, but he was given no time to utter it. With a beast-like roar of rage the king sprang upon him. Hurst stepped back a pace and struck out at the wild bearded face in front of him. It was a beautiful blow, with

all the sailor's thirteen stone of bone and muscle behind it. It caught the king fairly on the point of the chin and whirled him to the ground. Such a stroke might have been decisive with an ordinary man, but this great giant was instantly on his feet again, bellowing out threats and execrations, and feeling for his clasp-knife. Hurst saw that he was lost if he stood his ground. He swerved to one side and flew towards the sea for his life, with the other at his heels.

Long afterwards he remembered that race. It had a strange, dream-like quality, and yet it was real—desperately real. He ran and ran, the wind whistling past his ears and his heart thudding against his ribs. It was his idea to make for the coast, and then to bear away to the left and reach the jetty and his boat. He believed he could outlast and outdistance the madman, despite the latter's height and strength. But he was speedily disabused. Do what he might, he heard those feet behind him, coming nearer and nearer. There was no throwing off such a pursuer.

Hurst spurted frantically, the perspiration streaming from his forehead. He was close to the coast-line now, but to his horror he saw that he was making for a kind of promontory, where cliffs went sheer down to the sea. He had no time to think or change his course before he was close to their edge, with the madman only a yard or two behind, howling exultantly for his blood. Hurst set his teeth and faced round. The king rushed at him furiously, the clasp-knife in his hand. 'The king's justice!' he roared. 'The king's justice on a rebel!' Hurst dropped to his knees, avoided the sweeping stab, and rolled to one side. The impetus of the missed blow carried the other forward to the cliff edge. For a moment he staggered frantically against the skyline, then with a shriek of rage and fear he plunged down the precipice.

Hurst rushed to the edge. He was just in time to see that giant body strike the sea fifty feet below, with a splash which sent the frightened sea-birds whirling up into the air. It vanished—and did not reappear.

Hurst waited, panting. The moments went by, the gulls regained their courage and settled down again, but the first king of Stoneland Island had gone.

'He's done for,' said Hurst aloud in a trembling voice. 'There must be submerged rocks down there, and he's struck one and broken his neck. Yes, he's dead. Well, he'd have done for me all right—and yet—'

He broke off suddenly. A small round object emerged from the sea beneath his eyes and floated on the little waves. It was the absurd crown of leaves and twigs with which the madman had adorned himself. Hurst eyed it for a moment, broke into strange hysterical laughter, and then fainted away.

(Continued on page 762.)

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday*.

IT is a healthy sign, nothing more, perhaps, that a belated accession to the best kind of popularity by John Sebastian Bach, who died in 1750, is coincident with an improved taste in music of such people as ourselves. We cannot fairly regard it as more than a chance of parallel to stir our speculations, for the people's knowledge and strength in great music is still too slender for direct initiatives. As yet it lacks intuition and the trained taste. Yet there is coincidence, and historians at present unborn may make a note of it. This ascension during the present generation to a popularity as fervent and high as that accorded to any of the old masters, from what we may regard as almost a half-obscurity, is one of the most noteworthy facts in the records of fame, for it is not a matter of fashion or caprice, but of an establishment. One can scarcely find a parallel in any of the arts where, especially in literature, the mood and the taste of the people change, and their favourites with them, like the fashions of the intellect. Thus all the dead who are good enough should get their turn in time, and, after sleeping for another century, they may observe the indefatigable mortals, who, meantime, in their funny way, had been picking holes in their eternal genius, allowing them a second turn or yet a third. Hence we mortals feel we are discerning and are just. In music it is like this, except that we do not drop a genius as we would a poet, because we cannot. An old master rises to give us a turn or a season of his music, and then resumes his place in this supreme and heavenly choir. Only Beethoven has seemed exempted from such vicissitudes, so tremendous, terrifying at times, so much the master of the souls who hear him. Yet Bach seems not to have had any period of his own before, though he passed to his immortality twenty years ere Beethoven was born. (I had just written in the careless way that he 'died,' yet how stupid is this expression, when the voice of the genius is heard all over the earth night after night, and always!) Now he is in full and intelligent appreciation. Formerly his genius was recognised solemnly and academically by the organists and the students; they murmured praises of him, as they recognised

his shadow in the distance, and expressed their fear that he might never be understood and valued by the multitude. Bach existed as a mystery.

* * *

Now he draws the people to the concert-halls with the surety of Beethoven, Mozart, and Wagner. If, indeed, the common people have been innocent of a recognition which is good for the credit of the world of to-day, we cannot ignore such a circumstance as this, that choirs from various little Surrey villages gathered one day this year at Dorking and, without rehearsal, gave a good performance of one of Bach's sacred pieces, which they had selected; or, again, that at another small place, Petersfield, a competition festival was held and only Bach was heard, twenty-three competing choirs devoting themselves to him. Yet we can only explain the ascent of Bach at the present time as the fulfilment of simple justice by laggard, yet faithful, time. Certain influences, perhaps, have been against him. He was known as a composer who had written fugues for the organ—marvellous fugues; but the idea of the fugue is not well understood by the people. It is not an enticing name, and it seems to imply something intricate, dissective, complicated, and wearisome. But the fugue was the thing for this great master-builder of music. A steady and faithful recognition, however, has been exercised in certain quarters in our time. Some who had ears to hear sounded their faith and love unceasingly in the grand music of their master. One great organist, as we are assured, has been mainly accountable for an increasing attention to Bach's music among the organists of this country. Student and lover of it, he has imbued his pupils with like understanding, and, succeeding to the seats of the great organs in the cathedrals and the churches, they have set the grandeur of Bach to throb continually. For, though Bach was such a master-composer of organ-music—and his fugues are what have made him—he has not had his true place even among organists until recent times. The judgment of the city of London is strangely good in matters seeming often to be foreign to its main concern of business and finance; and a note is made that at organ recitals given in some city

churches with a certain regularity at noon, for the advantage and relaxation of busy people in that tense throng, Bach has had a constant place of honour, while not long ago, yet before the new vogue of Bach set in, a series of six recitals was given at one of them in Cornhill.

* * *

Yet one is inclined to place at the front of the impulse which has given Bach his proper place, the devoted and splendid effort of Mr Harold Samuel, the pianist, who, once a year in a concert-hall in London, plays Bach for a whole week, afternoon and evening. This he has now done for some years, and the achievement has yielded to him a peculiar fame of his own. It is not only that Mr Samuel exhibited his understanding and affection in this earnest way when he felt them, but he displays intensity by such a demonstration of music-memory as leaves his listeners in bewilderment at the capacity of the human mind. Some who enjoy it in good measure inform the wonderers that really it is an easy thing to memorise exactly many pages of long and intricate compositions, that it is either a trick or an instinct; but yet it is not understood by various others, who, players of some instrument, and perhaps not without fair education in music, labour heavily in committing to playable memory but a score of bars of some piece with whose musical trend and notation they are familiar. One remembers hearing long ago the violinist Ysaye, with Raoul Pugno at the piano, playing in duet for a succession of afternoons at the Queen's Hall some of the great works of Beethoven, and then, as not before, for certain reasons one wondered exceedingly when these performers went through the Kreutzer Sonata without looking upon a printed note, and with that perfect and unified exactness, the least departure from which, before a highly critical audience, must have meant disaster. Now continually we may see at the big orchestral concerts, some young lady playing the violin for half-an-hour in a concerto with an orchestra to increase the tensivity of the test. Nobody can pretend that these things are not amazing in their revelation of a form of human mental capacity; and nothing is explained by saying that the proper rendering of the music could not be made without them, the player needing a mind free from such labour as reading notes, and examining the values, times, and phrases, and the rhythmical variations. At the theatre we sometimes marvel upon the memory of actors in learning by heart so many parts, but this seems infant's work compared to that of the musicians, especially in the London theatres of long runs, and with the travelling companies which have only a small repertory to perform. In some foreign countries where repertory companies have a greater significance than here—as in Spain, for example, where the theatre has

a strong individuality distinct from that in any other country I know—the memories of actors need to be most acutely trained. I recall that one of the chief exponents of the Spanish classics, Enrique Borrás, who in his time has attempted one or two of the plays of Shakespeare also, and has acted Othello for thirty nights, told me that he had been on tour with over sixty plays at once, prepared to present any of them at an hour's notice, and that altogether he had about a hundred parts at his disposal for touring purposes. But I know the part the prompter plays in the Spanish theatre, where his sizeable box looms blackly up among the footlights. At times we can plainly hear the prompter. Borrás, insisting that he himself could do without the prompter, though he knew many who could not, told me that the memorising of so many parts was not a difficult task for him, but that, on the other hand, he could memorise nothing else, and especially, as I remember well, he said he never could memorise a single line of music exactly. Another famous actor of the Spanish classical drama, Ricardo Calvo, told me that in two and a half months at one place he had played as many as sixty-four parts.

* * *

Specialised practice of memory can lead to remarkable results; but yet there is something in all this that none of us can ever understand. Sometimes we are asked to marvel at the magnificence of man, his superb development, and so forth, and now, having some appalling failures much in mind, some hesitate in their admiration as they should or need not do; but to me this thing of memory is the most amazing thing about him. Yet what is entirely unintelligible should, perhaps, not be considered as amazing. We know not how it happens that one single thing can be remembered for one instant only; that is a secret of creation, and as secret as the profoundest of all mysteries of life. If, then, we know nothing of the ways and means of memory, should we be surprised that words and music needing hours and days for repetition should be remembered? It is not more wonderful than that I now should suddenly remember a really trifling detail of something that happened thirty years ago and had never been thought of since. But yet, wondering more upon it, we do surely feel that music is in some special sense a thing divine, and is blessed with some heavenly fostering care. We know that the actors make a slip sometimes, forget a line and leave one out, and it matters little; but the player of music makes or should make no such slips, nor can he think forward for his assistance, the passion of the moment being absorbing and complete. Thus we see that music is far apart from all the other arts, and hardly in any way is to be grouped with them. Contemplation of such a mystery,

divine as it truly is, sometimes leads to a fancy that when this civilisation of ours collapses and is blotted out—when, maybe, the elimination will be completer than that of any other, so much of our material being of paper, gas, and shoddy—our music will be one of few things, perhaps indeed the only one, to be carried forward to the next. Now, think again of the prodigious feat of playing Bach in all his intricacy for one whole week without looking at a single printed note! In such a week Mr Samuel has played sixteen preludes and fugues, ten French suites, partitas and English suites and other things to the number of about a hundred and fifty movements. I know the man; sometimes he plays to us in private company as we chat upon affairs. His round and genial face suggests no mightiness of memory; I believe him able to forget where last he left his missing umbrella. Yet he has been an instrument of Providence to remind us that in our common human carelessness we were overlooking a feature of the majesty of music.

* * *

'Old Bach'—nearly all who comes to understand and appreciate his music refer to him occasionally in this strange familiar way. It seems a trick of instinct and not just imitation. A controversy of a kind was once started upon the reason why, because it seems so odd, and in some respects is not appropriate. We could not say 'old Beethoven,' or 'old Mozart,' or 'old Haydn'; the stupid incongruity of such a style of reference would be repulsive. Nor would we say 'old Shakespeare,' or 'old Velasquez.' It is not a matter of the subject's age, nor that in his own time he was called in such a way, nor that there was any peculiar simplicity or freedom in character such as to invite a familiarity. This style of appellation becomes almost one of the minor mysteries of music, and is worth a consideration. For myself I fancy that two main points have thinly suggested the familiar style, and an admiring public has snapped at it for the rest. First there is a certain euphony, and 'old Bach' makes a sonorous breadth of sound that the music of the master possesses. It is not easy to say 'old Mendelssohn,' without seeming silly and self-conscious when saying it, especially as Mendelssohn in his life was more of the fine gentleman than most other great composers. But the second point of reason is a different thing. Let us recall in searching for analogies and considering others whom we thus call 'old,' that it is, indeed, a term sometimes lightly used in playful reference to the higher gods of mythology. Thus we may understand such a reference as 'old Jupiter' or 'old Jove,' and herein may be the explanation that we seek, in that we are thus familiar when respect and awe are immense indeed, yet in some way

inadequate to the object, who is beyond their scope. Thus we abandon our recognised proportions, our system fails, and we fall back upon the crude familiarity of our beginnings. It is a psychological affair. Bach is always picking up an idea, a theme, the germ of a tune, and elevating it, then adding another, piecing these and many more together, and building them up in a vast and most harmonious structure reaching majestic heights. So in most musical compositions of the grand and longer class, but Bach, as a builder of harmonies, has a magnificence of his own, and as he builds, his harmonies seem to go rolling through the universe, caressing the peaks of mountains and floating among the stars, until an effect of overwhelming power is produced in the mind of the listener, who yet is not saddened or even frightened as when at times he hears Beethoven.

* * *

That may be how representatives of the common people, like ourselves, just gaining, as we think, a glimmer of the truth, would try to describe their emotions on hearing Bach, though it may be far from the way in which the learned critics might consider the essential quality and features of the music of this composer. When I have the privilege of listening to it, those words, 'rolling,' 'sublime,' 'universe,' and 'deep,' somehow begin to move about in me. And mountains are always raised up in the mind for such music to roll around. Every great composer, his business being with souls, his own and others, is treating continually and emotionally of the awful problems of life and the eternal. But it seems even to the most humble, like ourselves, that no other gathers into his sense and meaning the whole universe, and eternity to his harmony, pouring forth his expression of immense and sublime profundity, as does Bach. Here some may see an effect of his early devotion to the organ, for it fascinated him as a boy, and as a young man he had a reputation throughout Germany for playing it and composing also. He made himself the organist's composer; no other will ever draw more from this king of instruments than Bach has done; we dare prophesy that none will ever entice so much. It may be right that the beauty and magnificence of his work should not be revealed to the common people on their entry to this happy and spiritual community of music. One must work some way in understanding before Bach is heard aright, or heard at all. But our amazing generation, having music injected by various scientific and mechanical means, thought once in its humble ignorance that it could never understand what such as Beethoven had composed, being to it then like a strange mixture of senseless sounds, yet it is now as familiar with the Fifth Symphony as once it was with the songs

from the light operas, and finds delightedly that the charm of such music lasts for ever, and does not cloy. The same generation can now appreciate the tremendous descriptive effects of Wagner. So it even approaches Bach, weaving his patterns in the most intricate and varied threads. It takes a key to him in the beautiful Aria in the D Major suite that everybody knows, finding in its breadth and depth that there is here a noble song of music that never tires though he be heard ten thousand times. The organ was Bach's best instrument; but upon others his music in its own way takes supremacy. Thus this Aria as we know is most delicious when played entirely on the sonorous G string of the violin, and he who has not seen Suggia, entrancing combination of nerve, spirit, and emotion, with technical precision and dexterity, seat herself upon a platform in her own imperial way, and then, dismissing earth, pour forth unaccompanied from her 'cello the music of Bach, has yet to perceive another aspect of his grandeur, and one wherein he is well served by his interpreter. He was far more versatile than the newcomers to his admiration sometimes think he was. He never attempted opera, and there need be no regrets for that. Always serious, he is hardly ever really sad. He does not bring to you ideas of gloom and death; life in the eternal universe is always in the spirit of his music. So it was composed in its immensity two hundred years ago, in the period when so much of the great music was composed that will delight the human race as long as it endures. He composed sonatas for instruments now obsolete like the gamba, the lute, and the viola pomposa, the last of which he invented for himself. What if he had had the instrumental resources of to-day? He could have done no more. No, he wrote no opera, and is always serious; yet old Bach could for experiment be light, and once he wrote a 'Peasant Cantata.' Here is a scene and an idea, and music to fill it up. A crowd of village folk assembles to celebrate the arrival of the new squire, singing all manner of simple, sweet, and rustic songs at the revelries outside and as they march off to the tavern.

* * *

Is it because they live tremendously, burn themselves out with the fires of their art, that nature seems so frequently to reserve for great composers the unhappiest of earthly ends? Many of these lives have been hugged by tragedy. It must be true that complete and perpetual content is thin stuff for art to live upon. Give to the genius misery to shake him, to wring him, to make him feel intensely in every little nerve, and he may work his best in the pain of body and soul, and not when he is lulled by any anodynes of bliss. Consider Beethoven, standing for perhaps the

finest conquest art has known of adverse circumstance turned to glorious achievement. Misery filled his world, and torture was carried beyond extremity until it was almost ludicrous when he was turned deaf. No wonder that in his masterpieces he should sometimes lead us down with him to hearken to the dirges of his anguish. Old Bach and Handel were both blind towards the end of their lives. For his last thirty years Bach dwelt at Leipzig, practising a choir, and conducting a sort of life which, except during the time when he was engaged composing, was not splendid like his music. He had a score of children, too many even for a time like that. A majority were sons; but of these only four survived their father, and only one, Carl Philipp Emanuel, went on to musical fame. Old Bach had at one time no more than some forty pounds a year with which to support his family. Yet this was the man of whom Schumann said 'Music owes almost as much to Bach as a religion does to its founder.' He died, but none can lay a wreath upon his undoubted resting-place. For a while his bones lay in a churchyard of Leipzig; but later there was some digging there, and the dust of old Bach was scattered to the winds, to float, as we may think, for evermore among the majestic and eternal harmonies he breathed into the firmament. (A grave supposed to be Bach's was discovered in 1894, and the remains were reinterred in 1900 in a crypt below the altar of St John's Church.) Forty pounds a year for Bach, while composing music for eternity! It is less than would now be paid to a soloist to play one of his concertos. Our world of material immensities and poverty in sense and loveliness shakes out some queer contrasts. Mischa Elman, the violinist, paid £10,000 for a Stradivarius the other day, and the cheapest of such would cost at least thousands, yet Stradivarius himself sold his fiddles as he made them for ten pounds each. Sargent, the recently departed painter, was certainly well paid while living for his work, belonging to the money age, but he was scarcely cold ere his most trifling efforts were making prices that would have bewildered him a year before. And if old Bach could return to-day, and play the organ as he loved to do when young, and compose the sublime music he created when paid forty pounds a year, with what riches might we not reward him! It is true that we could not pay him a small part of what we must give to Mr Dempsey for a little prize-fighting, or to Mr Chaplin for his amusing antics as represented upon the cinema screen. I have been told that one of the greatest and most serious composers of modern times can only live simply in a small house, for his income is minute, and to be reckoned only in a few hundreds. If he would but make what is called a 'stunt' of some description it

might be different; but he likes composing music for cathedrals. Like him, old Bach should have enough to live upon if he were

with us now, remembering always that as there is in music no politics of any sort, he must keep his material ambitions down.

FIFTEEN BERRIES.

By HUGH SHOBRIDGE.

I.

THE agent at Missanaba gazed pensively at a document tacked to the wall of his office. It was nine-fifteen, and a sun, already high in the heavens, shone upon the muskeg and the forest. It gleamed brightly on the twin rails that ran east and west in a swathelike clearing; the gravel road-bed looked dry and dusty; the grasses that clung to the sides of the gravel dump, that grew thickest about the dry ditches, and that covered the right-of-way to the forest edge—these grasses were sere and only faintly tinged with green.

While his key chattered away as different stations muttered in Morse, the agent read again the document which he had only recently affixed to his office wall. It was addressed to Leslie Lorne Wilson, Agent at Missanaba, and the essential part of it read: 'You are assessed fifteen demerit marks¹ for using abusive language to Conductor Thomas Parker, on July 17th.' The notice was signed by the division superintendent.

It was going to be hot. Had it been possible, the agent would have removed more clothes, but since he wore only a soiled shirt, a pair of discoloured khaki pants, and a pair of running-shoes, he had little scope in that direction. Indeed, he recalled with a sigh that before the local passenger-train arrived it would be necessary for him to get into attire more fitting to the representative of a great railway.

When the agent went onto the platform he could see all Missanaba. Eastward stood the tall wooden tank, and beyond, by the river-bank, was the pump-house, from which came the steady throb of a gasoline engine. Westward and across the tracks the section-house stood behind a neat little lawn and two circular flower-beds; at the side of the section-house was a well; for the rest he saw a sky that began to dazzle, two walls of green forest, two shining lines of steel.

He took a pail and went to the well. While he lowered his pail into the dark depths Frieda Muske came running from the section-house with a pail in her hand, and flaxen hair streaming behind her. She rested her pail on the coping, seated herself, swung her feet, and fastened her blue child-like eyes upon him. Frieda was twelve.

¹ Railway discipline involves the infliction and award of 'demerit' or 'merit' marks, which adorn or disfigure a man's record. 'Berries' is a slang term for these.

'Well, Frieda. How's your mom this morning?'

Frieda smiled impishly. She seemed to scent irony in the question. 'Mom's all right. Only she kind of wants hard to know what you got after her being to all the trouble to report you. Mom's kind of shy to ask.'

The agent regarded her grimly. He never knew how Frieda stood in this battle between himself and her mother. It was Frieda who had told him, with what motive he could not fathom, that her mother had written a laborious letter to the superintendent about the abuse and blasphemy that almost daily passed between the way freight conductor and the agent. Then had followed a visit from the assistant superintendent, the taking of statements, the administration of discipline.

II.

It is impossible to get back to first causes, but we can at least trace those fifteen demerit marks back to William Hohenzollern, at one time German Emperor.

Mrs Muske was at heart a true daughter of the Fatherland, and although she had lived fifteen years in Canada there was a lingering tenderness for her old home by the banks of the Rhine. Entirely laudable, perhaps. Her Fritz often told her that now 'we was Canadians,' and he had loyally shaken hands with the pumper and the agent that day news of the armistice came. Ah, that armistice! Mrs Muske had looked upon them from behind her curtains, and her heavy face had set in ominous lines; her pale blue eyes had grown flinty, and a sudden impulse had made her turn to her little Frieda and command her, 'Nefer, nefer, nefer, have to do with that agent.'

The agent was new at that time. He had lately returned from France, and he walked with a little limp; but that was nothing, had he not been so—so—so—flip. That was the word. He talked a lot with the pumper, who was a cockney. Mrs Muske heard them; they derided her people; they called names; they told incredible, senseless, foolish stories. Their ignorant talk made Mrs Muske shake with wrath. How she would have loved to open upon them a barrage of scorn. But that might not be; her Fritz was a section foreman, and a section foreman on a Canadian railway could not have a pro-German wife. So she locked her lips and her eyes grew flinty, and she urged

upon Frieda, 'Nefer, nefer, nefer, have to do with that agent.'

This had gone on for more than five years since the armistice. Always it had gone on when talk turned upon the war. In the summer evenings when the men lounged upon the station platform, and Mrs Muske sat in the porch of her house, their voices carried across the tracks and took her attention from the hum of mosquitoes and the biting of black flies.

Then the great swearing championship gave Mrs Muske a just complaint. It had long been claimed on the Kamleau division that Joseph Pelletier, an old extra gang foreman, had the finest flow of abuse for many hundred of miles. Then Conductor Tom Parker had eclipsed the old man, and when men gossiped around the shops or the yard office in Kamleau someone was sure to say, 'Did you hear what Tom Parker called the agent at Missanaba yesterday?' The agent at Missanaba was possibly his only rival, and one of his great points was his originality. There was always some new flower in his speech. Matters had come to a point where Conductor Parker preserved his best things for Missanaba, but he always found the agent ready for him.

'Mine Frieda is a young thing,' wrote Mrs Muske to the superintendent, 'and such it is not right she hear.'

III.

Now the agent would not satisfy the curiosity of Frieda. He took her pail and lowered it, filled it, hauled it up, and carried it for her to the porch of the house. 'That's not for your mom, Frieda,' he said; 'that's for you.'

She thanked him gravely, and watched him take his own pail to the station. The way freight was coming now; the front brakeman threw a switch.

When Conductor Parker strode along the platform, Mrs Muske was on her porch, looking steadily at the station. The agent did not regard her.

'Good morning, Mr Parker,' he said evenly. 'It is to be hoped the state of your health is of the best. The despatcher would be charmed if you would be kind enough to meet Number Eight Five Six at Kenemos. If you will be so good you will take the hole.'

'Indeed, Mr Wilson. Will you give the despatcher my compliments and say that nothing would please me more? I sign here, I think? Yes. Thank you so much. By the way, who is that beautiful lady standing on the porch over there?'

'Surely you know. I understand she got you fifteen berries just as she got me. That is the lady we are going to crown Missanaba's Queen of Beauty. Observe the stately lines—something like a battleship, don't you think?'

'Well, by the crying out loud. Isn't she a

daisy? The grace of a submarine. Does she ever submerge?'

'I wouldn't say I've ever seen her submerged,' averred the agent; 'still and all I wouldn't be surprised if she was sometimes half-seas over.'

'Angel face,' said the conductor, not now referring to the fuming Mrs Muske, but speaking directly to the agent—'angel face, would you do me the favour of receipting this small consignment of food stuffs from Kamleau? Sausages—one case. Bacon, tea, two bags potatoes, sugar. Does that check right, darling? Then if you would sign here and that half-witted engineer has finished getting water we'll be toddling along. But I'll miss you. And I'll pine for another sight of Venus there.'

'You'll be with us again to-morrow, sweetness,' assured the agent, 'and you have fifteen berries to remember her by.'

A lesser woman would have gone within and closed her door on their foolery. Not so Mrs Muske. Her grim lips may have tightened, her heavy chin may have bulged, but she still stared sternly over their heads.

IV.

Frieda got into the habit of coming into the station on hot afternoons and sitting on the table beside the clicking instruments. She swung her feet and gravely regarded the perspiring agent as he tilted back his arm-chair and smoked his dirty old pipe. Frieda did not talk to him much. Sometimes she asked a question, sometimes she gave him a little news of what mom said to pop and what pop said in reply. More than once she quietly watched him fall into a light afternoon snooze, while the station smelt of hot pine and blistering paint.

He came to like having her there, and missed her when the visits ceased quite suddenly. There was something soothing about the quiet, pretty child with her baby-blue eyes and flaxen hair.

The visits ceased because Mrs Muske found where Frieda spent so much of her time. 'I told you nefer to have to do with that agent,' she scolded. 'Now, mind you. The next time I see you there, next time I hear you been there, I take the strap. You see it. Well, you feel it too. Mind what I say.'

Frieda minded. Her mother had taken the strap before, and the times had not faded from Frieda's memory. Nevertheless, she spoke up and revealed her feelings on the subject. 'I like that agent,' she said; 'he's nice. I tell him things and I ask him things, and he don't get mad.' She paused and left her parting shot for her exit. 'One time I marry that agent,' she said, as she sped up to her attic to try to sleep under the scorching roof.

This time Mrs Muske had really got beneath the agent's skin. Demerit marks are, after all, things to be regarded as part of the day's work.

You get them or you don't get them—like measles. It was different robbing him of a companionship he had come to value; he was vain enough to think it cruel to little Frieda. Worse than that, one of the sectionmen said that the woman sometimes took a strap to her. That made the agent's blood boil. The pretty, fragile child, the great, heavy woman, the strap—pah! He began to wonder what he could do about it.

v.

One day a weapon seemed forged and placed in his hands. He saw Mike Muscovitch and Pete Muscovitch, sectionmen both, start cutting wood at Muske's wood-pile. It was only two o'clock in the afternoon when they came in from work on a hand-car, and went with the slowness of their race to the great pile of wood which the section foreman had accumulated. After the agent had watched them for a while he sauntered across, sat down on a log, and idly interrogated them. 'No work track to-day, Mike?' he asked.

Mike shrugged his shoulders. 'Work chop wood,' he asserted—'just same work.'

'You no get time for this,' suggested the agent. 'Boss pay you, maybe?'

Pete became alarmed. 'No get time? What you mean? Sure get time. Gospodi Pomloui. All the time hard work.'

'Oh, all right, Pete,' soothed the agent, 'don't get alarmed. I'll bet you get paid for it some way.' He chatted a while about indifferent subjects, and then the shrill ringing of the despatcher's telephone took him across the track in long strides.

Four days later he held in his hand the sectionmen's time-book. It was in a sealed envelope, addressed to the roadmaster at Kam-leau, and was merely entrusted to him for the mailing. Nevertheless he slit the envelope, and, drawing forth the book, studied the entries closely. As he had suspected, the Muscovitch brothers had both been credited with full time for every day.

The agent smiled, and then grew troubled. He drummed with his fingers on his table, frowned, whistled dolefully. It was a heavy afternoon, and for some days the sun had been veiled by the smoke of a hundred bush fires. To-day there was an acrid tang in the air, and, sniffing hard, the agent could feel the smoke in his nostrils.

The agent put the time-book in his pocket as the local passenger-train whistled at the yard limits. The rest of the mail he tied together, and sauntered out to put it on the baggage-car. As usual, all Missanaba was on hand for the daily train. He cast a swift glance at Frieda, but her mother was beside her, and the child was not looking his way. The pumper was always on hand to get his daily newspaper, and the agent passed the time of day with him.

vi.

When the train had gone, and all the people had disappeared, the agent summoned his resolution and walked to the section-house. His knock brought Frieda to the door. 'Oh, you,' she said, and, an effort to smile conflicting with curiosity, her mouth was wide open.

'I want to see your mom, Frieda,' he said.

'Mom!' called Frieda, dancing down the passage-way. 'Oh, mom, here's Mister Agent wants to see you.'

A severe voice came from upper regions. 'Send him away, Frieda. I don't want to see him. And don't you stand talking to him. Now mind me.'

The agent walked into the hall. 'This is pretty important, Mrs Muske,' he called. 'I'll wait for you down here in the front room.' He made his way within and seated himself.

Frieda tip-toed into the room, and stood in the middle of the carpet. 'You'll make her awful mad,' she conveyed to him in a muffled whisper. When she spoke she leaned over to him and put a finger to her lips; her fair hair framed her face and fell over her shoulders. 'She won't come down for a while yet; she ain't properly dressed.'

'Hush, Frieda,' he said, smiling at her. 'You may get in trouble if you wait and talk to me. You'd better run along.'

She tip-toed out of the room with a backward glance. 'I like you awful well, though,' she confessed.

When Mrs Muske came she was an impressive figure. Someone must have told her once that a gaudy red kimono was befitting. At all events, her flushed and wrathful face topped that garment, and her mouth and chin were set in unpromising lines. She did not sit, but stood looking down upon the agent. 'Now, what?' she asked shortly.

'See, Mrs Muske. This is the time-book for your husband's gang. If this goes in this way the company will pay these men for working the time that is shown. But you know, Mrs Muske, and your husband knows, and it happens that I know, that the men named in this book did not work for the company all the time that the book says.'

'You would be clever, Mr Agent—eh? And how do you know what time these men work—you who sleep in your office 'most every day?'

The agent emphasised his shot with a lunging forefinger. 'I know, because I see Mike Muscovitch and Pete Muscovitch cutting your wood all the afternoon the other day. The book gives them full time that day. You told your husband you wanted that wood cut, and because Fritz likes peace in his home he sent in two men to do it.'

'So you sneak, Mr Agent—eh? Maybe the superintendent not take much notice what you

say. Maybe he just shake his head and say, "Ah, well, that agent not much good, and this lady stop him swearing, so he mad."

'If I report this,' replied the agent, 'the truth will come out, you bet. Mike and Pete will have to say about it. But to tell you the truth, I don't want to report it. I ought to report it. That's my duty. But Fritz is not a bad chap, and I know he has trouble enough on his hands. Only it rests with you, Mrs Muske. If I don't report this, things have got to be more friendly around here. Come, there's not many of us living at Missanaba; we can't afford to be cranky with each other. Now, you let your little girl—'

'Oh!' said Mrs Muske, gasping wrathfully; 'so id's the liddle girl, is id? Ach, I thought so. You crawling, creeping worm, you. Ach!' In her anger she became more and more German. 'You go make your damn report,' she told him. 'Mine Frieda you leaf alone, understand? I let her haf to do with such a liar, und boaster, und lazy loafer! You that sleeps and crawls around der station all day with the shirt of last month; und you that shafes maybe twice a week! Ged oudt, and ged oudt quick!'

The agent took the last half of this tirade as he descended the steps and crossed the lawn to the tracks. Mrs Muske followed him and delivered the last sentences from the veranda. As he crossed the tracks a velocipede was speeding down from the west switch. The fire-ranger reached the platform almost at the same time as the agent.

VII.

Next morning Missanaba was thick with smoke. On all sides it rose, obscuring the sky, and flecks of ash came floating lazily down. There was only a sluggish breeze, but in the muskeg the fires were creeping along. The despatcher told the agent briefly that the situation was worse at other points, where fires had reached the track and were being fought by extra gangs.

The breeze freshened about ten o'clock, and by ten-thirty a strong wind was driving the smoke streaming before it. The agent went along the track to a point from which he could see flames growing before the wind. As he watched, a pine-tree suddenly flamed with a hiss; it flared, and the fire leaped to a companion tree, which blazed like a torch. A perturbed agent hastened back along the track. It was evident that the strong wind was driving a growing fire towards Missanaba. Near the west switch he saw Muske. The section foreman with his two men was trying to make a firebreak; he was digging a deep, wide trench, and flinging the excavated earth in front of the ditch. The heat where they worked was growing as much as they could bear.

Frieda, with an apron round her head, was standing in the station door. The agent thought

it was time children left Missanaba; and he asked her curtly if her mother was taking her away on the local. 'I don't know,' she said. 'Mom said for me to ask you if the fires was bad everywhere, and if you wanted to give pop back his time-book, because she said he'd made a mistake.'

The time-book. The agent had no thought of it for the present. 'I don't know, Frieda,' he said; 'I'm too busy now. You tell your mom to let you go out of here on the local, and to pack her own things to get out. And say, Frieda, did she ever hit you with a strap?'

'Sometimes,' confessed Frieda. 'She did the other day when you made her mad. Guess she heard me talkin' to you.' The child made a woe-begone mouth, but in doing so took a breath mixed with smoke. She coughed, and ran for her home.

VIII.

'Despatcher, Missanaba,' said the agent, curtly speaking into his telephone.

'Yes, Missanaba?'

'Bad fires and strong wind. Can you get a gang down here with a tank-car? Looks bad. I'm afraid of the section-house and the station.'

The voice from Kamleau sounded weary, as though tales of fire were being continually heard. 'Fraid all the tank-cars on the pike are busy. It's across the track in some places. The local may be a little late in your city. If necessary, tell everyone to get in on her. Better not miss her either, because ties are burning west of you, and Number Two may not get through to-night.'

The agent had heard enough. He was out to find Muske. It was a little easier now, for the wind had risen further, and the smoke was driven along in rolling clouds above his head. The north-west was fiery now. The daylight hardly seemed to exist, for a roof of smoke pressed down all over Missanaba. Sparks came sailing through the air; he watched several of them settle on the station-roof and expire. Fortunately he had drenched it well with the hose from the tank.

He met Muske and his men trudging down the track, carrying their shovels over their shoulders. The little German foreman broke into speech at the sight of him. 'Too damn 'ot,' he explained; 'she goes—woosh,' and he gave gestures suggesting the sudden flaming into fire of the pine-trees that flared and were burnt in an instant, to the accompaniment of a loud hiss as the sap bubbled. Pete and Mike Muscovitch shrugged their shoulders helplessly. 'No good,' muttered Mike. 'Train soon coming—eh?' They hastened on to the bunk-house to gather their bundles of worldly goods.

The agent looked around him, but the section-house only loomed dimly through the swirling smoke. 'See here, Fritz,' he suggested, 'we'll

get the hose out of the tank, and we'll keep it playing on your house and the station as long as there's an inch of water left. If the wind shifts just a point or two it looks to me she may drive right past. Your firebreak may check her a little. Then I've got some dynamite that the gang left here after the culvert work was finished. They thought they'd use it for the bridge work at 97-6, but by the time they get around to that they'll have another think coming. Come on, Fritz, I believe we can turn her round Missanaba.'

Fritz gazed uneasily at him. 'I'm getting out,' he asserted stubbornly.

'Nonsense. Get the woman out and the girl. I'll get Collins to stop and keep pumping, so the tank will keep us going with water. He'll be able to give us a hand with the hose.'

Fritz was not to be convinced or coerced. The agent himself could not have told what impulse swayed him. Perhaps it was the unexcited voice of the despatcher, which had seemed to consign Missanaba to perdition with the advice to him to get everybody away and not bother busy men. The agent, who had spent so many years at Missanaba, had come without reason to the determination to stay there; his life had, after all, been an ineffectual thing. He had fought a while in France without distinction; he had been agent at Missanaba a long while without distinction; but then, what distinction could ever come to an agent at Missanaba? Even more ineffectual was his obvious inability to save Frieda from her mother's strap. Why not—so he must have subconsciously reasoned—have one crowded hour of glorious life, and fight one fight to a finish?

He could not persuade Fritz. That sensible man was gathering things together even as the agent addressed his last arguments to him. Yet the general intention to go seemed to stiffen the agent's determination to stay.

IX.

The local passenger-train was heard long before it loomed through the driving smoke. When it pulled up at the platform all Missanaba awaited it with bundles and grips.

'Hurry up there,' shouted the conductor. 'There's bad fires ahead too—we ain't got all day.'

Muske and his wife came stumbling through the haze. The woman was dragging at his arm and talking. In the medley of noise, compounded of the panting of the engine, the clang of its bell, the crackling and roaring of the fire, and the shuffling of feet, the agent caught a few words as they passed him. 'Und we just finish the payments on the furniture,' she was insisting. 'Und the piano—sure, Fritz, you forget the piano we haf to save?' They passed on towards the train, and the agent stood calmly watching it start and gather speed. He was alone in

Missanaba—foolishly, fatuously, uselessly alone, but yet the agent was still feeling a thrill from the impulse which had made him stay.

When the tail of the train had vanished he sprang to action. The dynamite was in the tool-house, and he had taken several steps in that direction before he started in surprise at the sound of a voice hailing him.

'Hey, Mister Agent.'

He knew the voice, and presently he knew the heavy figure which seemed to wobble out of the drifting smoke. In his surprise he spoke aloud as he always thought of the woman. 'Mother Muske!' exclaimed the agent.

'Eferyting is in that house we haf got,' asserted Mrs Muske. 'Things we brought from home; efery furniture we buy; and now just three months Fritz and me we get a piano for Frieda so that kid learn to play. You tell Fritz how we save them. Just once I take this chance on you, Mister Agent. I stay und help.'

'Bully for you,' shouted the agent in a great joyous reaction from the dreary disgust which had left him in this desperate position. 'You and me, mother—we'll show the world.'

Then he took command. 'There's hose over on the platform,' he said. 'You'll have to turn on the water at the tank and let the nozzle kick till you get hold of it. Then souse the station again well. Then come over here and play on your house for all you're worth. Hold still a moment; let me fix that thing over your head better. Now I'll get the dynamite. I'll plant it over that ridge just north of the house—about three different shots will do it. That'll make a big firebreak, and if it gets us it will have something to leap. All right, mother, get along.'

X.

As these ill-assorted comrades turned to their tasks the heat had grown more intense, and sparks were showering down upon the threatened buildings. With smarting eyes and throat the agent forced himself towards the fire; he gathered strength from a vision—caught through a clearing in the swirling smoke—of Mother Muske stolidly playing the hose on the roof and walls of her house. He drew smoke-laden breaths, and pushed on to the limit of his endurance.

Then he planted his first charge, and a few moments later he exploded it. A piece of hummocky soil and rock leapt into the air, leaving a chasm of freshly upturned earth clear of wood or dried grasses. The agent was black by this time; his clothes were torn; he felt like a salamander.

Mother Muske turned the hose on him. He had almost fallen, and, staggering, clutched at the house. The rush of cold water revived him, and then she had him on the ground, while quite calmly she held him out of the smoke until he felt a man again.

The afternoon passed without waning light, for there had been no light to wane. Only as the evening fell the fire seemed to grow brighter and fiercer, more menacing, more grim. It threw a great redness into all overhead, and seemed to drift over their heads in lurid clouds.

But the wind had fallen. The agent's fire-breaks and Mrs Muske's hose had apparently prevented the red demon from approaching the buildings of Missanaba, or flying sparks from setting them ablaze. The two defenders, utterly spent, sat on the moist soil in front of the section-house; the lawn was still damp with the water that the valiant Mrs Muske had steadily played upon the house and its surroundings. Apathetically, wearily, almost indifferently, they now gazed upon the red glare that flickered and leapt in stabbing flame through the streaming smoke.

It seemed to the agent that the air was getting clearer. Dimly he sensed that delicious smokeless airs—fresh, cool, beautiful—were playing about his blackened face. With an effort he roused himself and saw, with amazed relief, the gentle Venus—that bright and early evening star—placidly shining in the sky. He turned his head and saw behind him great volumes of smoke that still ascended in a cloud to the heavens—only, it was a cloud that seemed to waver and lean *away* from him. He took a deep breath of the glorious tingling air, and shook Mother Muske with awakened vigour.

'Mother, wake up! The wind has changed. It's blowing the fire back on itself. It's putting it out.'

Then they both slept.

XI.

'Well, Frieda,' asked the agent, 'glad to get home?'

Frieda wriggled herself more securely onto the table in the agent's office. She liked to hear the chattering telegraph instruments. She smiled gravely at the agent as he tilted back his chair and read solemnly a document he had just taken from an envelope.

'I'm not sorry,' said Frieda. 'You bet we was worried about mom. You bet I was worried about you too, Mr Agent.'

'That was real kind of you, Frieda,' replied the agent. He rose and tacked the document to the wall beside another of the same shape and hue. Then he carefully re-read the new one. It was addressed to Leslie Lorne Wilson, Agent at Missanaba; and it said in part: 'You are awarded thirty merit marks for outstanding courage and devotion to duty in protecting the company's property during severe danger from fire on the twenty-fifth of August.'

'The company's property,' said the agent comically, and laughed in a short, sharp manner. Frieda did not quite see the joke, but she laughed too. When Frieda laughed, all kinds of lights seemed to twinkle in her blue eyes; her whole face became amazingly jolly and friendly.

Mrs Muske put her head in at the door. 'Now, Frieda,' she said, 'you come along now. Mine gracious, all the dishes from supper yet—'

'All right, mom.—Good-night, Mr Agent.'

'Good-night, Frieda.'

Mrs Muske watched, hands on hips, an exchange of frank kisses. Frieda stood on the table and offered her lips provokingly. The agent swung her to the floor.

'You be careful, Mr Agent,' warned Mother Muske; 'that small one, she tell me, "one time I marry that agent."'

'By the holy Doodlebug,' said the agent, 'I wouldn't be surprised if she did.'

THE KING OF THE ISLAND.

PART III.

VI.

FOUR days later Hurst stood on the rough stone jetty near the supply depot, watching a boat which was rowing towards him. Farther out the British surveying ship *Emerald* was lying at anchor. She had arrived for her annual inspection of the depot. Hurst had seen her hours ago, and had lighted his watch-fire, which he had prepared in readiness for such a visit. It was his good fortune that the visit had been almost due when he landed.

He had half-expected to see the body of his would-be murderer cast ashore somewhere, but there had been no sign of it. The deep sea had swallowed up that distraught being, and his giant frame would stalk about his little

kingdom no more. That same day of his death, Hurst had taken some of the stores from the cave and moved back to the empty hut, for the former place was now hateful to him. All the next four days he had spent pacing along the coast, eagerly seeking for a ship. And now one had come to him—the very one which he had hoped for.

The *Emerald's* boat came alongside the jetty and hooked on, whilst a young officer sprang ashore. Hurst ran eagerly to meet him, babbling out greetings and thanks.

'Shipwrecked, eh?' said the newcomer cheerily. 'Glad we turned up so opportunely. We saw your smoke soon after dawn. Well, you don't look much the worse for it, sir, at all events. That old depot seems to have justified its existence.'

'Yes,' said Hurst, with a queer laugh. 'Yes, it has. But you won't find many stores there now.'

'Indeed,' said the other. 'Been here long, then?'

Hurst gave him an outline of his experiences as a reply, and the naval man's eyes opened wider and wider.

'The devil!' he exclaimed. 'You seem to have had a moving time. A madman, eh? Well, you'd better get on board and see the skipper. He'll be wanting to know all about it. I'll stay and have a look round till the boat comes back.'

Half-an-hour later Hurst was sitting in the captain's cabin of the *Emerald*, with a whisky-and-soda in front of him, telling his tale anew to that ship's commander. Captain Corbin was no less interested than his subordinate.

'Extraordinary,' he said. 'You've had a narrow escape, Mr Hurst. As for that unfortunate fellow—it's as well he's dead. It meant an asylum for the rest of his life, or else the gallows. But what an amazing time he must have had of it here, with his dreams and his loneliness. Did you say he was called Everill—Henry Everill?'

'He told me that *had* been his name, sir,' said Hurst; 'before he assumed the crown and became King Henry.'

'Yes, he seemed very consistent,' said Captain Corbin, smiling. 'But I think I know the name as the commander of a steamer called the *Lancaster*. She was supposed to have been lost with all hands some six months ago. Yes—that was the man. Exposure and suffering did it all, one must suppose—poor devil. He was quite mad, you think?'

'No doubt of that, sir!' exclaimed Hurst emphatically. 'And consistent with it all, as you say. He even gave me some diamonds, as he called them, from his royal treasury. By Jove! I've got them here in my pocket, a lot of worthless pebbles.—I'd forgotten all about them.'

'You should keep them as a memento,' said the captain, laughing. 'Let us see them.'

Hurst took out the little bag and poured the stones on the cabin table. Now that he saw them in a good light, he was a little surprised at their appearance. They were dull-looking crystals apparently, regular in shape, unlike any pebbles he had seen.

But his surprise was as nothing to that of his companion. Captain Corbin stared in a bewildered fashion, then snatched up one of the stones and examined it closely. He took it to the porthole, still gazing at it fixedly.

'Good Heavens!' he muttered. 'It's not possible, and yet— Mr Hurst, do you know where he got these—these things from?'

Hurst had looked at the other's agitation in astonishment. 'Yes,' he replied wonderingly.

'He showed me the place, a sort of outcrop of bluish soapy-looking rock.'

The captain's excitement seemed to increase. 'That's it!' he cried. 'That's where you find them. Mr Hurst, my brother is a manager of one of the big diamond mines at Kimberley. I've been there, and I know what I'm talking about. And these are diamonds.'

Hurst sprang to his feet. 'What, sir!' he shouted. 'You're joking! They can't be diamonds.'

'That's what they are,' replied the other firmly. 'I'll stake my life on it. Magnificent stones, too. I know some diamond merchants in London, and you can go to one of them when we get home, if you want their opinion. But I don't need anyone to tell *me*.'

Hurst put a hand to his forehead. 'I feel as though I was off my head myself, sir,' he said feebly. 'Do you mean they are really valuable?'

The other laughed. 'Somewhat,' he said dryly. 'So much so that if I had twenty thousand pounds to spare I'd offer it you for that bagful, and think I had made a good stroke of business.'

The sailor fell into his seat again. 'Great Scott!' he gasped. 'It's incredible. Then there was some method in that blighter's madness . . . after all. He was a pretty smart king in his way.'

Three months later Hurst sailed from Plymouth on the steam-yacht *Enterprise*, together with his friend Captain Corbin, who had retired from the service. The sailor had disposed of his diamonds for thirty-one thousand pounds. And the pair were bound for Stoneland Island to see if the king's treasury was still unexhausted.

THE END.

TOUSSAINT.

THE door is open, and the feast is spread

With meats for those who know such needs no more;

Still, that they may not go discomforted,

The feast is whitely laid—and wide the door.

And with the midnight hour, at some far call

Familiar forms all faintly seem to flit

Across the sombre silence of the hall,

To that fair board where they were wont to sit.

And once again—as in the long ago—

Dear voices whisper through the yearning years;

Loved faces shine within the leaping glow

Upon the hearth, across a mist of tears.

Thus, at that board so white and strangely spread,

Love that grim Death did vainly importune

Leaps o'er the bar to her beloved dead,

And spirit deep with spirit doth commune.

MARY M. CURCHOD.

Algiers.

DARKENED WINDOWS.

By A. W. THOMSON.

A BRAVE human relationship is an extraordinarily clever thing to bring about: to get the utmost practical truth into the mixture is infinitely worse than a problem in physics. Mutual recognition is inextricably involved in something like an endless game of nap, for goods, love, money, power, everything else, or nothing at all; and the situation twines mankind into a seething evil of interminable mysteries. Circumspect though it be to hide your hand in much of the affairs and business of the Art of Living, the point can be overdone. In fact, many of the troubles of mankind are due to the difficulty of not overdoing it. To boggle with your neighbour over letting him see an occasional two of hearts is scarcely a healthy state of affairs. Yet the deplorable position of society is that quite a number of decent, pleasant folk are unlucky enough not to know their next-door neighbours, while others live cheek by jowl for twenty long years in a funereal silence punctuated by erratic Good-mornings.

There are people so deluded by themselves that their tempers are touchy as a snake's. Others are so sensitive and stubborn that they take offence where none is intended. From these temperish folk arise strange quarrels and distressing feuds, yet a few wise words rightly directed and generously accepted would dazzle both their windows like diamonds. Again, there are human bundles whose countenances are repellent, and whose manners are unattractive. The windows that cover their souls are most difficult to brighten. These are to be pitied because, in proportion as the exterior is hard, so very often is the core warm and soft. At those windows you can neither smile nor rage, but feel an infinite sadness. Again, some of us are bags of chronic suspicion, unceasingly poised in an attitude of self-defence, the rigidity of which only an earthquake can lessen. Alas! we are all so bemused by jealousies of self-interest and self-preservation as to render frank relationship a rose buried deeply in thorns. The gods alone witness all this ploy, and by much laughter while away the lamentable loneliness of their superiority. You and I do, indeed, witness a pilgrimage of sorry figures and capering antics of folly on the long, long road; but, curiously enough, we fail to see ourselves in the procession.

You will perceive that the difficulties of acquiring knowledge of and sympathy with one's neighbours, with a view to felicity rather than hob-nobbing like sentries in boxes, are not easily overcome. A quaint stupidity darkens the pageantry of life. Yet you are brave to rashness, and the amount of kindly feeling

that you use prodigally by giving, where it is neither asked for nor is of much real utility, is amazing. You love as you understand, but frequently you delude yourself that you understand, and cajole yourself into believing that you love. Or you err in the opposite direction, and deal out your heart as carefully as you do your money. And that is most pitiful, since to beget love we must give it, and to be miserly in human affections is to end in living death. The art of calculating how dark or how clear to keep our windows to suit varied occasions and different folk is troublesome and compromising, but you will be assisted in the matter if you will but keep in the forefront of your mind that the quality of mercy is not strained. Above all, you must guard against assuming that all the world is beautiful, and only man is vile.

According to King Solomon no man can understand the whole world, because the whole world is hidden within his own heart. Certainly the imperfections of man are thus largely accounted for, and the chief function of a liberal education appears to be to point the impossibility of carrying out the biblical injunction to man to know himself and his neighbours. You would say that we come to a bag's end. Happily mankind never recognises bags' ends of any kind, and so we tilt at the problem with courage and adroitness. We balance the conflicts of self-preservation as best we can. The more courageous and full-blooded still believe that two is good company, but there is a distinct inclination to fancy that ten or fifty may be safer company.

A good idea is the bridge party. Unfortunately no one attends these delightful functions to rub souls; you are expected to have thoughts for nothing but the game, and you may easily come away understanding others less than before. Receptions and at-homes make up other methods of attacking the problem, but these also leave something to be desired, being supported on the weaker fibres of the heart. At debating societies and psychological meetings you amuse yourself a good deal by tilting at the moon rather than by embracing each other. Dances are good, since much useful exercise of the heart has been born at these gatherings, but it is of a local rather than of a broad and practical character. Tea-parties are gossip-closets. Schools and colleges instil academic lore, but are apt to detract from human knowledge, since a box cannot be fuller than overflowing. Business conversaciones, social clubs, and cafés tend to present branch roads, one towards forgetting money by a strained

oblivion, the other towards ways and means of acquiring more.

An undertaking requiring wonderful skill is to gather gear and affection simultaneously. As a rule you lose the one in proportion as you gain the other. The job of keeping the Commandment that tells us not to covet our neighbours' goods would at times tax the gods themselves. Man's inhumanity to man, as Burns puts it, has some plausible excuses for itself, for, to speak truth is sometimes as difficult as speaking a lie may be easy. To live truthfully is often much more difficult than to speak truthfully. To live portending a possible lie knocks a lot of the heart out of things, and to have a reputation of being impossible to fathom is almost as bad as being told one portrays an eternal falsehood. To keep your windows continually dark is anything but truthful, and he who regards his tenure of living as a pondering over a mysterious card-table against sinister foes allows a lot of happiness to pass by without seeing it. If you will study the point you will perceive that the charm vaguely known as personality is an investment that should not be overlooked amongst the work of life. You can live so much to yourself as to become forgotten, and once you fall out of the race you are done for.

True relationship of feeling shines brightly in the young, and again in the aged. At dawn of manhood you face the world in roving bands cemented by the great adventure of a common endeavour to make good. When you are old you are once more care-free, for you have but one rampart left to scale, over which lies a place called Death. Nothing matters, and you feel you can lay all your cards on the table, you need scarcely hold up the meanest trump. Yet, strangely enough, you will at times still play the game of closing your blinds, while, alas! sitting at your window calling with quavering voice on the passers-by to come and love you. But at all periods of your life you know in your heart that there are heaps of love, for you know that what man really wants is not money, but his own way, and that his greatest needs are sympathy and the pageantry of life. You are but one of millions in a long march; the ability to keep your place in the ranks is the only justification for your existence; and the greater your love the more will be the delight of your fellows to lift you when you stumble. You realise that only the weak fail to peer through darkened windows, to be crowded back to the nothingness from which they emerged. They alone meet the swirling fog that takes them to its bosom.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE LARGEST BRITISH LOCOMOTIVE.

AMERICAN railway engines that are of interest owing to their size and power have been described in these notes from time to time. A locomotive has been recently built for an English railway which, although it does not compare with these leviathans, is by far the largest and most powerful in this country. One might reasonably suppose such an engine to have been built for hauling important expresses. This, however, is not the case, the locomotive in question being intended for pushing heavy coal trains up the steep incline between Wath and Penistone, which has for over two miles a gradient of 1 in 40. Hitherto these trains have been hauled by two engines in front with two or three more pushing behind. The new locomotive is to do the work of the rear engines. It is of what is known as the 'Garratt' articulated type, articulated meaning that there are two separate bogies or chassis with their own cylinders and driving wheels, which are connected through swivelling joints. The boiler is carried on a cradle suspended between the two engine bogies, thus forming the connecting link. The actual joints are similar to those on ordinary railway coaches and wagons. Being free to turn, all connections are provided with

flexible joints. The steam-pipes, for instance, have ball and socket joints. The most important feature of this new type of locomotive is the great increase of power made possible by the two engines and the much larger boiler. Before its advent British locomotives may be said to have reached their limits of power, which were dictated by the width between the wheels as regards the boiler, and the number of cylinders for the engine. With a fire grate having the unprecedented area of 56 square feet, the boiler has a barrel 7 feet in diameter, and measures 40 feet 8 inches between pivot centres, while it has 275 small and 45 large tubes through which the hot gases from the firebox pass on their way to the chimney. The working pressure is 180 pounds per square inch. Each chassis has ten wheels; two small ones in front in the case of the leading chassis and two behind in the trailer, and four pairs of driving wheels 56 inches in diameter coupled together on each side. This locomotive is also unique, so far as British railways are concerned, in having six cylinders, three to each set of driving wheels, the bore being $18\frac{1}{2}$ inches, while the stroke is 26 inches. The part of each chassis projecting beyond the boiler at each end serves the purpose of a tender, that at the rear carrying 2200 gallons of water and 7 tons of coal,

while a tank on the front chassis holds 2800 gallons of water. The total weight is 178 tons, of which $143\frac{1}{2}$ tons come on the driving wheels. With only 85 per cent. of the full working pressure the locomotive can pull or push with a force of 72,940 lb. The length over the buffers is not far short of 90 feet. This locomotive has been developed and built by Messrs Beyer, Peacock & Co., Limited, the sole licensees of the patent, to the designs of Mr H. N. Gresley, C.B.E., chief mechanical engineer of the London and North-Eastern Railway.

A RUSTLESS METAL WALL-CLIP FOR FRUIT-TREES.

For the amateur, and even for the professional gardener, nailing a fruit-tree or a creeper to a wall often leads to damaged fingers or thumbs. At the best it is a tedious operation, and the preparation of the cloth or leather strips takes an appreciable amount of time. These disadvantages are entirely eliminated by an ingenious wall-clip that has recently been brought out. Closely resembling a fish-hook in form, but without the barb, the clip is made of aluminium wire having an oval cross-section, so that there are no sharp edges to damage the branches. The nail passes through what would be the eye if the clip were a fish-hook. An important advantage of these clips is that the nails can be held in position for being hammered, the finger and thumb being well clear of the danger zone. When the clip is nailed to the wall in the correct position, the branch is placed in it, and one leg is bent inwards so as to hold it. Being of aluminium, the clips bend easily and do not rust, while the nails are galvanised. These clips and nails are made in two styles, one for walls and the other for wood fences, and each style is made in three sizes.

AN IMPROVED WINDMILL.

It must be admitted that windmills for the generation of electricity in any considerable quantity have not been very successful in this country up to the present, although many are used for this purpose in Denmark. But there was exhibited at this year's Royal Agricultural Show an example with important improvements on previous windmills which promises better results. This windmill is not of the disc type, but has five separate sails. These are made on the principle of an aeroplane wing, i.e. they have thickness and are hollow, while the surfaces are of the correct form to give the best results in the light of aeroplane propeller practice. Another important feature is the method of controlling the speed. This is done automatically by turning the sails on the arms that carry them. Each sail is built up on a tube which turns on a solid radial arm. At the root each sail tube is fitted with a toothed pinion which engages with one of five racks. These are mounted in a drum which slides endwise on the windmill shaft.

By moving this drum the sails can be turned edgewise to the wind, when the windmill will stop. If turned at an angle the mill will rotate at a speed varying with the wind velocity and the angle. Now we come to another important point, the position of the spindle in each sail. This does not pass through the middle, but nearer to the forward edge of the sail. The result is that the sails have a tendency to turn edgewise to the wind, because the surfaces to the rear of the spindles are bigger than those in front. This tendency is partially balanced by weights which are hung on a lever at the bottom of the tower, the lever being connected to the sliding drum by a rod with a bellcrank forked lever at the top which acts through a sliding collar. By adjusting the weight at the bottom of the tower the windmill can be regulated within sufficiently narrow limits of speed to charge the battery continuously when there is enough wind. A vertical shaft down the middle of the tower is driven by the windmill through bevel gear at the top, and drives the dynamo at the bottom through a similar gear, together with a belt or a chain for increasing the speed. The dynamo is wound to give the correct voltage for charging between 600 and 1300 revolutions per minute, within which limits the control gear already described easily regulates the speed. There is a platform about two-thirds of the way up the tower with a ladder up to it. Here, again, is a novel feature in the form of a ladder up to the mill mechanism, which goes round with it. This arrangement allows of adjusting and lubricating the gear while the mill is working. Two small, five-sailed mills at the rear operate the veering gear, which keeps the main windmill facing the wind. These windmills are made in six sizes, from 16 feet to 41 feet in diameter, which give powers varying from 1 h.p. for the smallest in a wind of 10 m.p.h. to 60 h.p. for the largest with a 25-mile-an-hour breeze. They can, of course, be used for pumping or for driving other machinery, as well as for generating electricity. On Danish farms and estates it is quite common to find all the machinery driven by windmills.

PASSENGER-PROPELLED, OARLESS LIFEBOATS.

In spite of the best life-saving equipment that can be devised, the sinking of a ship is always liable to be accompanied by the drowning of passengers or members of the crew. Bad weather may render the launching of the lifeboats an extremely hazardous operation notwithstanding periodical boat-drills. Among other difficulties is that of propelling the boats after they have been lowered into the water. Very few trained seamen are carried in a modern passenger liner. At the most two are available for each lifeboat, while few passengers have either the experience or the strength to handle the heavy

oars provided for ships' boats even in a smooth sea, let alone among big waves. A recently-devised hand-propelling gear that can be worked by men or by women without any practice goes a long way towards meeting this difficulty. With this apparatus one skilled seaman can handle a loaded boat. The essential feature of the mechanism is a number of vertical levers, usually eight in a full-sized lifeboat, which take the place of the oars. These are worked to and fro in a fore-and-aft direction by the occupants. Half the levers are arranged at each side of the boat, being fulcrumed on the vertical sides of the air-boxes under the side seats. The short lower ends of the levers on each side are pivoted to a horizontal bar. All the levers on each side, therefore, work in unison, and swing one bar to and fro. At its after end each bar is connected by a rod to a crank on a cross shaft, which works the propeller-shaft through bevel-toothed gear. The cranks are set at ninety degrees to each other, so that when one is on the dead centre, the other is in the best position for movement. Reversing for going astern is effected by a ratchet wheel with two opposite pawls, one of which is engaged while the other is free. By moving a control lever, which releases one and engages the other, the steersman can make the propeller turn in either direction. The mechanism is cased in, and the levers are hinged to fold down alongside the seats when out of use. One great advantage of this gear is that a loaded boat can proceed away from the ship's side the moment she reaches the water. Getting out oars to push off is a dangerous operation in a crowded boat, even when performed by skilled seamen. Again, if it be desired to manœuvre two boats alongside each other, this is much more easily done with the lever-propelling gear than with oars, which project from the sides of both boats. Finally, the apparatus is practically unbreakable, and no parts can be lost even if the boat capsizes. A speed of about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour can be maintained by relays of passengers in a full lifeboat, while something like 7 miles an hour can be made to get away quickly from the ship's side. The Board of Trade have not only approved of this hand-propelling gear, but they have agreed to allow lifeboats fitted with it to count instead of the motor-lifeboats demanded under the new rules for the safety of life at sea.

A SIMPLE ELECTRIC HOOTER FOR FACTORIES.

For notifying factory workers when to begin work, and when to 'knock off,' some form of sound signal is indispensable. Where steam is available a steam whistle is used. If the machinery is driven by electricity electric gongs or electric horns can be employed. The advantages for small factories of a recently brought-out horn are its low price and the fact that it can be sounded by either low-voltage current

from a battery or by current from D.C. or A.C. lighting mains having voltages up to 250. A loud note is produced by the usual electro-magnet, trembler, and sound disc. The mechanism is enclosed in a cast metal case with water-tight joints, while glands are provided for sealing the holes for the cables, thus rendering the whole of the apparatus incombustible. With the horn pointing downwards, therefore, the device is absolutely weather-proof. The case measures $6\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins., and the horn projects $9\frac{3}{4}$ ins. Accumulators, Leclanché cells, or dry cells give full power, even if electric current from supply mains is not available.

MAKING THE BEST USE OF COAL.

Every reader of *Chambers's Journal* must have heard of the low-temperature carbonisation of coal for abstracting the gas and the tar before it is burned in factory furnaces, in locomotives, in ships, or in domestic fires. It has been urged for years that instead of burning the raw coal, this carbonisation ought to be carried on at the coal pits, and the products distributed, the resulting coke and gas being used for fuel. But many difficulties have had to be overcome, such as the friability of the coke and the caking of the coal in the retorts. The chief problem, however, has been to bring down the cost to less than the difference in value between the coal before treatment and that of the products, which may be roughly stated as 13s. per ton. Two important developments towards the solution of these problems have taken place recently. One is the pulverising of the coal into fine powder before treatment, which allows of even coal-dust being used: the other, the perfection of devices for burning pulverised fuel under steam boilers and for other industrial purposes. It is easy to understand that the subjection of powdered coal to heat by dropping it through hot air liberates the gas and the tar much more quickly than if the coal were treated in lumps in retorts. The demonstration of the practicability of using the powdered coke which results overcomes the final difficulty so far as factories are concerned. No doubt devices for using this fuel for domestic fires will eventually be invented. The new method of low-temperature treatment, which is known as the 'McEwen-Runge' process, consists of pulverising the coal and delivering it to the top of a tower, whence it falls through an upward current of air heated to a temperature of 700 degrees F. when the air enters at the bottom. In a second tower, below the first, the temperature of the entering air is 1500 degrees F. In the upper tower the moisture is driven off, together with the CO₂ and other gases of no heating value, these being thrown away. It is in the lower tower that the valuable heating gas and the tar are driven off, while the powdered coal is converted into coke dust. This falls into a chamber where

its heat is transferred to the air supplied to the upper tower. An important effect of the first heating, even if the coal is of the caking variety, is to remove any tendency to cake and stick to the sides of the second tower when subjected to the carbonising temperature. In other processes caking has been a serious difficulty, to prevent which moving trays have been employed. There are no moving parts subjected to heat in the new process, but its outstanding feature is speed, the work being completed in six minutes. The cooling and the cleaning of the gas and the abstraction of the tar are carried out by well-known devices which are used in gasworks, while the tar is converted into valuable oils and spirits. Finally, the new process effects substantial savings where any considerable amount of power is generated, and this will ensure its extensive adoption in the near future. It may be added that another plant has been perfected to deal with small coal as delivered from the mines in such a way as to yield lumpy coke as the residual. This plant has been in operation commercially for the last eighteen months. It also appears sure of an extensive future, for the carbonised fuel is essentially a product suitable for household use.

AN ALL-METAL FLYING BOAT.

A remarkable flying boat, the manufacture of which is being carried on in this country by Messrs Wm. Beardmore & Co., the noted Scottish builders of warships, is of very unusual design, in addition to being of large size. The outstanding feature is the employment throughout, including the wing coverings, of an aluminium alloy known as 'duralumin,' which is nearly as light as aluminium, is incorrodible, and is comparable to steel for toughness and strength. The machine is a monoplane, and the wings are cantilevers without any stays to the boat body. Set at a big dihedral angle, they are of unusual construction, being lattice girders built up of angle sections and plated with thin sheets of duralumin. So well supported is the duralumin by the ribs and stringers that men can walk about on the wings without doing any damage. The leading and trailing edges of the wings are made separately and bolted on. Mounted on struts above the inner end of each wing is a Napier Lion engine with a propeller in the front of it. Each is enclosed in a barrel-shaped case with a streamlined tail. A large fuel tank is carried under each wing near the inner end, the petrol being pumped up to the engines by windmill pumps. There is no petrol inside the boat. The boat is plated with duralumin, which is stiffened by ribs and bulkheads. The joints are riveted, being made watertight by strips of treated fabric between the edges of the plates. The deck, sides, and bottom of the boat are flat, while a tapered nose, of a form which

enables the boat to ride safely over big waves, extends well in front of the wings. The rear end of the boat, of course, tapers towards the tail. Two steps are made in the bottom to enable the boat to plane over the water before rising. A float is fitted under each wing, well out from the body. Dimensions of this huge flying boat are not obtainable, but illustrations show that the head of an average man is about level with the top of one of the engines when he is standing on the wing beside it. With a weight when loaded of 14,000 lb., a speed of 120 miles an hour is obtained, and the machine can land at 65 miles an hour. In a calm it will rise off the water in less than half a minute. An important feature from the point of view of safety is provision for setting the tail to counteract the side pull of one engine running by itself if the other fails. Designed by a German, Dr Rohrbach, who was closely connected with the manufacture of Zeppelin airships during the War, this remarkable all-metal flying boat is already being made in Denmark. A new departure is a sailing-rig with masts and sails, which is said to have given the boat a speed of four knots, while the inventor claims that she will 'tack' to windward like a yacht. Being unaffected by the weather or the action of salt water, these flying boats should have a long life apart from accidents, while the permanent water-tightness of the hulls and their immunity from increased weight by the absorption of water are valuable advantages.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, Chambers's Journal, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

THE LOST LAND.

JUST as hard wakefulness grows dim, it seems
I'm slowly drawn into the net of dreams.
Softly, as though held in some master-hand,
It slips beneath to lift me gently, and
I am my own no longer. In that net
Of dreams I lie: drowsy, I half-forget
Loud things of day which loomed so large before.
Then, breathless—sudden, on a silent shore—
The net still glistening with opal rain—
I find myself in my lost land again.

And until dreams themselves in turn grow dim,
There may I stay in blissful interim.

ETHEL TALBOT.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, Chambers's Journal, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

For its return in case of ineligibility, a stamped and directed envelope (or postage-stamps) should accompany every manuscript.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

OTHER PEOPLE'S WINDOWS.

By J. FREDERICK TILSLEY, Author of *Cheerio*.

PART I.

I.

GEORGE HENRY BERKLEY took up a firm position on the hearth-rug, squared his broad shoulders, and drew a deep breath. 'It's like this, Anne,' he began hoarsely, and then stopped, overcome with confusion.

Anne Carfax, with a perplexed smile, looked up from the jumper she was knitting. Her face, in repose, was grave and thoughtful, but her slightest smile startled dimples into her cheeks and made her blue eyes dance with fun. 'Yes, George,' she encouraged in a soft voice, and, lowering her eyes to the jumper again, waited for him to proceed.

George gasped a little, and then made another and more successful attempt to voice the subject which had been nearest his heart for some considerable time. 'I—I've been thinking,' he went on, very red in the face, 'that it wouldn't be a bad idea for us, you and me, I mean, to—to, well to—er—get married.'

It was done! He had proposed! Everything became very still. It seemed to George that the whole of the universe had been shocked into silence by his presumption. The idea had appeared rather a good one when it first occurred to him. George was not conceited, but Anne and he had known each other for so long that he had rather taken her for granted. Only now that the words were spoken did he realise their full import. He had asked this girl, this wonderful living, breathing, separate human being, to give herself to him, to put her happiness, her very life, into his hands. What a serious business was marriage! He was overcome with the sense of his own unworthiness. George Henry Berkley stood six feet two inches in his socks. He had a good square chin, and steady, rather stubborn blue eyes, but at that moment he felt that he could easily have left the room by crawling beneath the door, boots and all.

Anne Carfax laughed up at him. 'Do please take a seat, George,' she urged. 'You look frightfully uncomfortable standing there in that rigid attitude.'

The young man, secretly relieved that the

girl had taken so lenient a view of his impertinence, shook his head with a determined smile. 'My next movement depends on your answer,' he announced solemnly.

'Well, the answer is No,' she said calmly. 'Now will you sit down?'

In the event of the answer being in the negative, George had previously decided that he would stride proudly from the room and make an end of himself, or something of that sort. Now, however, he changed his plans—such plans usually are changed. Instead, he collapsed into the nearest chair and stared gloomily at the cat. 'Why not, Anne?' he grumbled. 'I know I'm a bit of an ass in many ways, but I'm not such a bad sort really. Easy tempered, easy going, and easy to get on with.'

'You see, George,' she answered, with an air of being very friendly and reasonable, 'you are such a boy, and much too young even to think of marriage at present.'

'I'm twenty-five,' he pointed out with dignity.

'I meant your age, not your years,' she said with a curious smile.

This fine distinction was incomprehensible to the simple George. He grappled with it in silence for a few moments, and then gave it up in despair.

'Besides,' she went on, 'you have no occupation, no profession, apart from driving your father's cars and playing rough games. Your life is wasted. You can do nothing useful—at least you carefully refrain from doing anything useful, which amounts to the same thing. A girl wants a husband who has made a place for himself, one she can trust to look after her if things go wrong.'

George stared at her in amazement. He was accustomed to hearing this sort of lecture from his father at frequent and regular intervals, but that such eccentric views should be held by a pretty girl like Anne Carfax rather shocked him. 'I thought I'd known Anne all my life,' he reflected, 'but I don't know her at all.'

'But why should I spend my life in a beastly

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office when it's absolutely unnecessary?' he asked resentfully.

Anne shook her head sadly. 'The fact that your father is very rich does not excuse you from doing your share of the world's work. A man should stand on his own feet, George.'

Another aspect of this question of work occurred to George. 'But look here, Anne,' he began eagerly, 'there isn't enough work to go round. Thousands of poor chaps are——'

'All the more reason you should be doing something, George—something big that will create employment. You ought to succeed; you have had the benefit of a first-class education.'

George smiled ruefully. 'I'm not exactly a brainy sort of chap,' he admitted frankly. 'I—I didn't do very well at school.'

Miss Carfax bent low over her knitting. 'I can quite believe that,' she answered in a low voice; 'but many a man has become famous after being given up in despair by his masters.'

II.

The one thing in all life that George took seriously was sport. He believed that if a man 'played the game,' little else mattered. He had not yet realised that work is the greatest game of all. At the approach of winter the various local amateur football clubs vied with each other to obtain George's services, and it was rumoured that more than one professional football team would be glad to enlist his support. Up to the time that his feelings for Anne Carfax developed into something deeper and more disturbing than ordinary friendship, the deepest shadow on George's pleasant life was the fact that there is only one Saturday afternoon in each week.

His father was rapidly losing patience with him. Old Mitchell Berkley believed that the possession of a rich parent did not necessarily entitle an able-bodied young man to fritter away his life uselessly. He pointed out frequently, and with increasing emphasis, that expensive and picturesque folly was but a poor substitute for honest toil.

From repairing bicycles Mitchell Berkley had, by sheer hard work and sacrifice, acquired a little shop of his own, where he not only repaired bicycles but also sold them and let them out for hire. Soon he became the recognised agent for all the best makes. A peculiar rumour, which began to go the round of North-towers soon after the little shop was opened, gave Mitchell's business a great deal of publicity. It was said that Mitchell Berkley, the young man who probably knew more about bicycles than anyone in the town, who lived and worked and ate and (quite possibly) slept amongst bicycles, could not ride one. The story may or may not have been true, but Mitchell was quick to see the value of the free

advertisement. When questioned by customers who permitted curiosity to get the better of good manners, he would wink solemnly and declare that he was kept too busy repairing and selling bicycles to learn to ride. Mitchell was still a young and energetic man when the automobile made its appearance. He was the owner of the first car in Northtowers, and builder of the first garage.

George, motherless from the tender age of two, was badly spoiled by the doting father, and lacking any real restraint, the boy grew into careless manhood. Useless at anything but games, generous to a fault, thoughtless and selfish without knowing it, he was lazy too, but his was the sort of laziness which requires a greater expenditure of energy than most forms of useful work.

George had inherited some of his father's genius for mechanics. Although this natural ability had never been trained to a definite end, he could, to use his father's expression, do wonders with anything that went on wheels, from a Rolls Royce to a roller-skate. Hoping that one day George would find his particular groove in life, old Mitchell had given him a free hand, but the spur of necessity was lacking, and George seemed more bent on stirring things up than on settling down. The recklessness of his driving, while endangering his own neck rather than the safety of the public, had made him the hero of every sporting male in Northtowers.

That streak of stubbornness in George's composition, which, combined with his unusual physical strength, enabled him to excel in most forms of sport, now asserted itself. He did everything in his power to make Anne change her mind, arguing, promising, and flattering with a glib fluency that amazed the girl almost as much as it amazed him. In once refusing a young man of George's type a girl more than doubles her original value in his eyes. There is nothing quite so desirable as that which seems just beyond our reach. Almost overwhelmed by this impassioned flood of oratory, Anne Carfax suggested a compromise.

'Very well,' she promised at last, 'I give you the answer you prefer, on one condition.'

George trembled. 'Name it,' he said eagerly—'any condition you like!'

She smiled at him with grave lips but mocking eyes. 'You must first get father's consent.'

'But I should have had to do that in any case, surely?'

Anne nodded, still smiling.

'Is your father in the house, Anne?'

'Yes, in the study. He always brings home one or two of the books from the office on Wednesday, and spends the afternoon checking them.'

George nodded, and went resolutely to the door.

III.

Alderman Carfax was the proprietor of the largest and most select drapery stores in Northtowers, and George secretly despised him for a sordid old money-grubber, who had never played a game in his life. The alderman was a small dried-up little man, with tiny black eyes which gleamed from either side of a large hooked nose. This nose was the explanation of the alderman's success in business. George, who was not at this period capable of seeing very far below the surface of things, always thought of Anne's father as a timid but hungry bird looking for worms, therefore he rapped briskly at the study door without misgivings. There was nothing diffident about George Henry Berkley when dealing with his own sex.

'What is it?' called an irritable voice. 'What d'you want?'

'I'd like a few words with you, Mr Carfax, if it's convenient,' explained George, raising his voice a little.

'Well, it isn't,' answered the occupant of the room, raising his voice a great deal. 'Never is on Wednesdays.—Good afternoon.'

George applied his knuckles again with great vigour. There was a miniature explosion on the other side of the door.

'Who is it this time?' shouted the alderman, now thoroughly angry.

'Still me,' answered George calmly.

'Oh, come in,' snarled the other.

George entered the study and discovered Alderman Carfax seated behind a large oak writing-table with an open ledger before him. George shuddered involuntarily; he hated figures. The room smelled strongly of tobacco smoke, and a fine gray layer of cigar ash powdered the table. The alderman was an inveterate and careless smoker. Match sticks and three cigar stumps, having missed the brass ash-tray by inches, disfigured a very fine piece of furniture.

George shut the door with careless violence and marched up to the desk. Although good-natured and anything but a bully, he was quite incapable of respecting a physical weakling. The insignificant he treated with good-humoured toleration. George settled himself negligently on the edge of the table and smiled at the alderman in a friendly manner.

Mr Carfax eyed his visitor suspiciously from under bushy brows. 'Well,' he demanded ungraciously, 'what d'you want? I can't imagine you having any very urgent business.'

The note of contempt in the harsh voice rather startled George. The hero of a hundred hard-fought games of the field, he was more accustomed to adulation than scorn. His blue eyes began to glint. 'I want to marry Anne,

Mr Carfax,' he declared bluntly. George was the reverse of tongue-tied when dealing with men.

The other laughed shortly. Keeping his eyes fixed on the young man's face, he fumbled blindly about the table for his half-smoked cigar. Failing to find it, he lighted a fresh one with great deliberation. 'Why disturb me during the busiest afternoon of the week to tell me something I've known for months?'

'Life's short,' explained George, keeping his temper with difficulty. 'I couldn't rest until I knew your views.'

'Well, it's Anne's business, but if she takes notice of me, she'll refuse absolutely to have anything whatever to do with you. Now that you know my views, I hope that you'll be able to rest in peace and leave me to get on with my work.'

It now occurred to George that the bird Alderman Carfax most resembled was a particularly aggressive eagle. 'What is it that you dislike about me?' he demanded.

'All of you,' answered the other without hesitation. 'Every single thing,' he went on, his voice becoming louder with every word. 'You're an idler. A young man of your physical strength ought to be doing his share of the world's work, not wasting his time chasing a silly ball about a muddy field.'

George stared at his accuser speechlessly.

'I had a talk with your father about you down at the club the other evening,' continued the alderman more calmly. 'He seems to have given you up in despair. He says that although you have marked ability in certain directions, you absolutely refuse to settle down to anything useful.'

'He wanted me to be a lawyer,' said George with some bitterness; 'as if there aren't enough of 'em already.'

The other shrugged. 'Make your own career, young man,' he snapped. 'Everything is in your favour. You are well educated; you are strong—in the arm at all events; and the fact that you want to marry my daughter argues a glimmering of intelligence somewhere. Anyhow, I shall never consent to Anne's marrying a man who is incapable of supporting her by his own efforts. I think you'll find she agrees with me too. Anne has her fair share of common-sense.'

George slid off the table and faced the alderman. He was very pale. 'I'm going out to look for a job,' he said quickly.

'When you've found it, you can come and see us again.'

George strode to the door. 'If ever I enter this house again, it will be at your request,' he answered grimly.

Alderman Carfax waved his cigar at the closing door. 'Then good-bye for ever!'

(Continued on page 795.)

A NIGHT AT ABBOTSFORD, 1830.

By Sir GEORGE DOUGLAS, Bart.

I.

BY the kindness of Miss Fergusson, a relative of the writer, I am permitted to print an abridgement of a hitherto unpublished account by John Elliot Shortreed of a visit paid by him to Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford on 27th November 1830.

Arriving at Abbotsford at about half-past three, John Shortreed and his brother-in-law, David Brown, who accompanied him, found Sir Walter writing in his study, and, after being kindly welcomed, were pressed to stay and take a 'bachelor's dinner' with him, his daughter, Anne Scott, being absent in Edinburgh, and also to spend the night under his roof; to both of which hospitable proposals they readily consented. At the time of their arrival, Scott had been occupied in 'brushing up' the Chartulary of Melrose Abbey, or, in other words, revising it for publication as the Duke of Buccleuch's contribution to the Bannatyne Club: a presentation which, however, did not take place until seven years later. The documents composing it had, as would appear, been disposed of by the widow of the last Earl of Morton upon her husband's death; but Sir Walter produced a letter showing that in his present publication he had the entire concurrence of the Earl's successor.

Being unwilling to interrupt their host's labours, the visitors tactfully withdrew to the pleasure-grounds, where they spent an hour in examining various objects of interest, including the newly-installed gas-works. On returning to the house at about a quarter to five o'clock, they found the great man still writing, but he at once ceased work and entertained them until dinner was announced. Whether out of consideration for luggageless guests, or because such was his usual practice, Scott had not changed his dress, which consisted of a short single-breasted green jacket with metal buttons, a striped winter waistcoat, a pair of 'priest's gray' trousers, a black neck-cloth, a pair of much-worn black gaiters, and thick walking-shoes. 'I was sorry to observe,' continues Shortreed, 'that his lameness seems to have increased a good deal since I saw him last August. He is likewise less bulk than he used to be, and is paler and less healthy-like. His spirits, however, were excellent. He is almost constantly attended by three or four dogs: two large fellows, one a deerhound (a noble creature), the other a rough greyhound, and two little things, of what he considers, but I believe erroneously, the Dinmont breed.' But though himself a lover of the canine race, and though acknowledging that the two so-called Dandies were entitled

to some respect as having been mentioned in one of Scott's recent prefaces, Mr Shortreed found these quadrupeds as a body rather a nuisance, as over-indulged dogs always are to visitors. Not so Scott, however, who allowed them to follow him to study and dining-room, frequently caressing them, and even kissing Nimrod the deerhound.

The newspaper arriving about this time, and being placed in Shortreed's hands, he read out an account of the new Lord Chancellor's taking his seat in the Chancery Court, on which Scott exclaimed, 'Well, one lives to see strange things! Brougham Chancellor of England! I remember, Mr Shortreed, of his being as mad as a March Hare at a Jedburgh Circuit, when he drank nearly a bottle of your mother's cherry-brandy in the forenoon, to prime himself, as he said, for old Justice-Clerk Rae, against whom he had taken some spite in the Court. It was on the same occasion he cut the most eccentric figure you can well conceive, parading up and down Jedburgh streets dressed in a huge box-coat, with God knows how many capes, on a warm autumn day, cracking a gig-whip which he carried in his hand. And to think that that *outré* being is now Lord Chancellor of England—Good God!'

France and the disturbed state of the Continent generally were spoken of, Shortreed remarking that tranquillity in France was scarcely to be expected after 'so recent and extraordinary a change in her political state,' referring, of course, to the Revolution of July and the deposition and flight of Charles X. 'Oh!' said Sir Walter, 'that with them is out of the question! When an entire nation has been spun round like a tee-totum, as they have, we are not to expect that they will stand still all at once. 'Tis a thousand pities that there should have been such a sweeping change in our own Cabinet at a crisis like the present' (alluding to the fall of the Wellington Ministry, on 16th November, and the accession to office of Lord Grey). 'But the Duke of Wellington is unbending, and carries matters too much *militaire*, and in place of conciliating the High Tory party, seems always to have been making the breach between them and him wider. God knows what will be the end of all these changes! I wish they may be for our good.'

Shortreed goes on to say that Scott expressed over and over again great alarm at the state of the country, and seemed to think the recent change of Ministry the very worst thing that could have happened. 'It is quite clear,' he adds, 'from the whole tenor of his conversation, that Sir Walter is much inclined to maintain

the existing order of things, which, though doubtless faulty in many points, he considers better than anything we are likely to get by an alteration. Though ready to admit faults in a general way, I could not help observing how he combated any particular objection which is made by our modern reformers.' Well, there might be, and no doubt there was, something grievously amiss in the state of the country at this time. But it is no less apparent that the great man's powers were failing him, or that he was losing the faculty of reacting against current events!

Referring to a portrait that hung in the apartment, Scott remarked, 'Ay, that is Claverhouse! He is a handsome gentle creature to look at, but he was a devil in the inside, and was deaf to the call of mercy. By the way, I think the spirit of the Covenant never got into Liddesdale—even in my remembrance there was a wonderful indifference about these matters in that district.' In illustration of which, he narrated a story of a well-known local farmer crawling on hands and knees direct from the Communion Table to the ale-house.

II.

The friends dined together at a little after five o'clock, the dinner—which had been announced as a pot-luck affair—proving lavish to a degree which would be considered ridiculous nowadays, for it consisted of hare soup, roast mutton, a fillet of roast veal, sheep's kidneys, vegetables, and 'game, etc. for a remove.' During the soup Miss Scott made her appearance from Edinburgh, and after being affectionately saluted by her father, took her place at the table. The conversation was gay and unrestrained, and several glasses of Scott's excellent wine were drunk; but Shortreed remarks that his host was often absent-minded at table, and after inviting a guest to take wine with him, and filling his glass, would forget all about it until his memory was jogged.

Anne Scott was full of Edinburgh chit-chat, and displayed such unbounded faith in the newspapers that her father felt constrained to caution her by asking repeatedly, 'How did you learn *that*, Anne? Who told you such a thing?' 'I saw it in the papers, papa.' 'Ay, and like a wise person you always believe everything you read there! Now the newspapers are full of lies and all manner of falsehoods and misrepresentations.' He then inquired if she had seen anything of the French refugees in Edinburgh, to which she answered that she had seen the Duke of Bordeaux—better known as the Comte de Chambord, son of Charles X.'s assassinated son, the Duc de Berri—in Miller, the bookseller's shop, and might have seen the ex-king himself had she not felt a delicacy in lingering to gaze on him. 'Ay,' said Sir Walter, 'the last time we saw

him was in very different circumstances: at the head of a splendid Court going to mass, when he recognised us, and stopped and talked with us for a little in the most condescending way imaginable.' He then went on warmly to condemn the ex-king's conduct as 'worse than foolish—particularly in him, after all the misfortune of his early life, which seems to have taught him anything but wisdom,' thus either quoting or anticipating the first half of Talleyrand's epigram on the restored Bourbon dynasty; adding that he believed the obnoxious measures which had led to the king's deposition were his own, and that his Minister, Polignac, was decidedly opposed to them. That the young Duke of Bordeaux might yet be king of France, he thought by no means impossible.

Upon Miss Scott's mentioning a report that King William IV. was about to remove the Scottish regalia to London, 'It's not in his power!' cried Sir Walter. 'By the Articles of Union they must remain in Scotland.' Shortreed then asked if the late king had not expressed a similar intention to himself; to which Scott replied, 'He did; but, like the Archangel Michael with Satan, I withstood him to his face, telling him that, as the mountain could not come to see Mahomet, Mahomet would just have to come and see the mountain.'

Theodore Hook's novel *Maxwell* was spoken of, Miss Scott remarking that she, for her part, thought it vulgar, but that Lockhart had a high opinion of it, which brought the incisive answer, 'I don't always go by Lockhart's opinion!' Shortreed assures us that Scott seldom spoke of literature, seeming rather to avoid the subject and to turn the conversation to general topics. To-night, however, he spoke a good deal about Washington Irving and his writings, praising the beauty and elegance of his style, and describing his humour as 'chaste and engaging.' The *History of New York*, in particular, he characterised as one of the funniest and most delightful productions of our time. He also expressed satisfaction at having been able to be of use to Irving when he first visited this country, to which he had been sent by his father on a mere pleasure-trip. On landing in England, however, Irving received news of the failure of the business-house in which his father was a partner, by which means he was all at once thrown on his own resources for a subsistence. In these circumstances, Scott, who knew his value as an author, and had long ere this laughed over his *Knickerbocker*, befriended him by introducing him to Murray, and thus saved him from publishing his *Sketch Book* with an inferior house. Irving soon became a great favourite with the British public.

III.

Over the chimney-piece of the dining-room hung a striking portrait of Charles XII. of

Sweden, representing that fire-eating monarch nearly at full length, his head uncovered, his left hand grasping the hilt of his sword, in a manner so entirely in keeping with the resolute, but at the same time mad, expression of the contracted forehead and little peering, piercing eyes and compressed lips, that Shortreed was led to comment on its artistic propriety. Scott strongly agreed with him, and gave the following account of his purchase of the portrait, which was one by which he set great store. It had been brought to him by an old picture-dealer from Aberdeen, who at first asked £40 for it. Scott had heard of the painting before, but stoutly refused to give more than £10, and, after a keen bout at bargaining, which he seems to have enjoyed, beat the dealer down step by step to his own price—notwithstanding that he believed that price to be a 'mere trifle,' the picture being in his estimation 'very valuable.' He went on to tell the following characteristic anecdote of the person represented in the portrait. Charles had become separated from his train one day while hunting, and his horse had broken down. Putting the saddle on his own back, he arrived by-and-by at the stable of a gentleman of the neighbourhood; this he entered, and finding a horse standing ready, proceeded to saddle it. Whilst he was so engaged the owner made his appearance, and at once resented the audacity of the king, whom he failed to recognise, by striking him. Charles drew his sword, and a spirited encounter was in progress when the courtiers came upon the scene and revealed the king's identity. The owner of the steed was horrified at the thought of having assaulted his sovereign. But it was characteristic of Charles, who might have explained matters in a word, that he had deliberately risked his life rather than put himself to this trouble! Other portraits in the dining-room which came in for comment were one of Cromwell, taken early in life and lacking the harsh, careworn, and anxious expression which characterised him later in life; and one of the Duke of Monmouth, which, as being distinguished by softness and grace, unaccompanied by any trace of high intellect, energy, or resolution, was pronounced to be probably 'true to the original.'

Whilst the evening wore away over a few glasses of wine and two tumblers of whisky-punch, the conversation turned to the subject of sylviculture, of which Scott showed a knowledge as varied as that of Solomon, who spake of all manner of trees, 'from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth on the wall.' This led on to learned discussions on draining, top-dressing and bottom-dressing, 'runts,' stots and kye, on which subjects Shortreed's companion, Brown, was an expert, and in the course of which Scott informed his guests that he had got back into his service his old

overseer, William Laidlaw, who was no less valuable to him as a companion than as an estate-manager. 'We have just one bargain,' he added, 'that I am not to interfere in the farming department, nor he in the management of the woods; and, simple though this may seem, we have, nevertheless, considerable difficulty in keeping compact!'

Adjourning to Miss Scott's parlour at eight o'clock, the visitors had tea there, and enjoyed the frank and unaffected conversation of their hostess, whilst, at their suggestion, Scott returned to his interrupted literary labours. When he rejoined them, and until supper was served, conversation turned mainly upon the various beautiful little engravings and sketches with which the walls of the small and elegant room were hung. Speaking of Turner, whose work was well represented, Scott praised him highly as an artist; adding, however, that he was 'almost the only person of true genius he had ever known who was altogether unamiable.' From Turner they passed on to Hogarth, whom Scott also greatly admired, and this afforded him an opportunity of amusing his guests by the description of a ludicrous picture of Hogarth's, in which a seaman of high rank is represented seated in his cabin, where he is being sung to by a bawling street-singer, though giving all his attention to a monkey, on whose head he has placed his own wig. Meanwhile the monkey imitates the facial play of the vocalist; whilst a servant, who is bringing in a dish, is so diverted by the spectacle that he allows the gravy to drip down the neck of a lean and hungry individual who looks on unconcerned. This Scott described as an 'exquisite thing,' expressing surprise that it had never been engraved. And he also told how his father had regretfully denied himself the pleasure of possessing a copy of the engravings after Hogarth's works, priced at £30, which he deemed an extravagance, though the same volumes now fetched as much as £120. In further talk upon Hogarth's vein of satire, and his wonderful knowledge of life and character, the time then passed pleasantly away until supper was ready, at which meal Scott, in accordance with his usual practice, declined hot dishes, contenting himself with a bit of loaf and a tumbler of porter. At half-past ten o'clock, the usual hour for so doing at Abbotsford, the little company retired to rest. 'Although not the first time I had had the happiness,' writes Shortreed, 'to sleep under the roof of Sir Walter Scott, a tumult of pleasurable and exulting emotions hindered me of slumber for some hours after I lay down in my comfortable French bed in a neat gas-lit chamber.'

IV.

Breakfast next morning was at about ten o'clock, Scott having spent already more than

an hour in his study. His talk during the meal was of various subjects, but chiefly of foxes and field sports. It was characteristic of his feudal tastes to take a pride in such articles of household use as were produced either at home or in the neighbourhood, and this led to his praising some very sour and dingy bread which had been made at the neighbouring village of Darnick. He added, however, that he had found it a great disadvantage to sell wheat to a party from whom one bought bread, having on one occasion sold twelve bolls to a neighbouring baker, with the result that any fault found with the bread for twelve months after was invariably imputed to his own wheat!

Breakfast being finished, Scott conducted his visitors to the library, where, having a packet to despatch to his publishers, he left them for a while to their own devices, though not until he had impressed upon them as a 'Law of the Medes and Persians,' that every book taken from the shelves must be returned to its own particular place. Left to themselves, Shortreed and his friend sought out such books as they thought would be most likely to contain annotations by the owner, lighting, among others, on a collection of broadsides relating to the '15 and the '45, and on a copy of Lord Berners's *Froissart*, bearing the inscription, in the handwriting of Scott's early days, 'Gualteri Scott, liber carissimus.' A beautifully wrought silver urn, which stood in the library, contained the bones of some noble Athenians, which had been found in the Long Walk at Athens. This was the gift of Byron to Scott, but unfortunately the letter which had accompanied it had been abstracted, presumably by one of the innumerable visitors to Abbotsford; a theft which not unnaturally roused the indignation of host and guests.

A reference to the recent *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft* turned the conversation to the subject of ghosts, Scott remarking that certain ladies of his acquaintance had professed their inability to sleep in their beds at night after reading it, and going on to observe that such a thing seemed almost incredible nowadays, though he well remembered when the belief in ghosts and goblins was quite common even among the educated classes. 'My mother,' he added, 'who was otherwise a person of very strong good sense, believed most devoutly in them. But it was the fashion of the age she lived in. For my own part, I am quite of opinion that no such thing as a ghost exists but in the disturbed brain of those who are inclined to see them.' The survival of the belief in ghosts he attributed largely to the precipitancy with which those who fancied they saw them took to their heels, when a slight further investigation would have served the purpose of dispelling or explaining the phantom. And he cited as an example the story of a most mis-

chievous and unruly ghost, which, in his own early days, had taken up its quarters in a deserted farmhouse near the Braid Hills, and kept the entire neighbourhood in alarm, until its capture exposed it as a masquerade on the part of a gamesome young countryman of the district.

The time had, however, now arrived when the best of friends must part. As Shortreed came out of the house to enter his gig, he found Sir Walter on the doorstep, singing at the top of his voice a verse of an old song ending with the line,

To a' good fellows remember me.

Then, with a chuckle at his own unmusical vocalisation and a hearty shake of his large hand, he bade his guests farewell, and they drove off, highly gratified with their visit. Shortreed concludes his rough notes with these words: 'To find this wonderful man so affable, so condescending, modest, and unassuming, one can hardly more admire at the greatness of his intellectual character than at the grace with which he bears himself under all the fame and honours which it has won him, or forbear from exclaiming, Is *this* the man with whose name the whole world is full?'

This aspect of Scott's character has often been portrayed before, and the real value of these notes consists rather in their helping to bridge the interval from 5th September to 20th December, during which there are no entries in his Diary. Scott was at this time only a few months over fifty-nine. In the previous July he had received a proposal of marriage from a 'woman of rank,' which he had very wisely and frankly declined (Diary, 13th July); in November he had obtained his release from the Court of Session, and, whilst struggling with the uncongenial task of his *Demonology*, there is no doubt whatever that he was greatly cheered by the excellent progress he was making in working himself clear of liabilities. So much for the credit side of the account. On the other hand, his health was seriously affected. For not only did he walk with pain and ride with difficulty, but his utterance was liable to be obstructed, and his writing exhibited errors which surprised himself. Worse than all, certain premonitory symptoms had filled him with anxiety as to his own condition, and with dread of a decline into imbecility such as he had read of in the case of Swift. Yet, in spite of these disabilities and haunting fears, he continues to perform his daily task with fair regularity, and to sacrifice his time and convenience to entertaining, I do not say an old and valued family friend such as Mr Shortreed was, but even an easy-going and inconsiderate stranger such as the American, Mr Daveis, or, indeed, almost anyone who might choose to ring his door-bell. For Abbots-

ford was in the strictest sense an open house, and I have yet to discover an instance when Sir Walter was 'not at home.' This was one phase of the large-heartedness which made the Waverley Novels possible, and it would be interesting to know whether Shakespeare's comprehensiveness also took this particular form.

Nor must we forget that Scott was a true patriot, and that the political discussions which racked his country at this period, together with his gloomy though mistaken anticipations for the future, were probably more directly responsible for his frequent dejection than any other single cause.

THIS WORLD OF OURS.

By H. C. CURWEN, F.R.G.S., M.R.G.S.

HOW many of us ever give a thought to this world on which we live? How was it formed, and of what is it composed?

These questions should be of absorbing interest to any thoughtful person, since it is inherent in nearly all types of people to inquire into the why and wherefore of things.

Let us take the first of the above questions.

All know that the earth rotates round the sun and that it also spins on its own axis, whilst a mysterious force, which we call gravity, keeps it to its path round the sun.

Supposing this force, or attraction, between the earth and the sun were to cease, then this planet would fly off into space at a tangent to its orbit, and in a few minutes at the most life would become extinct.

This is a startling idea, and may induce many to think a great deal more in the future than they have done in the past about the earth, its formation, and the powers governing its movements.

The second of the above two questions follows automatically. In order to view this in its proper light it is necessary to imagine: (a) that you are outside our solar system, and from some remote spot can watch its most intimate workings; and (b) that you are endowed with immortality.

Dim ages ago, in times that are beyond the comprehension of man, the earth began in the form of a spiral nebula, consisting of gases whirling round a centre spot, or nucleus.

As these gases contracted they became hotter, until at last the whole mass, which at first had been only luminous, became incandescent, and finally a flaming inferno.

The spiral nebula is something like a watch spring in shape. This body would be a centre of attraction for other bodies, such as those we now call meteorites, which are really the wreckage and refuse of other worlds long since dead and disintegrated; as these were absorbed in the main body of the nebula, the terrific heat would vaporise and resolve them into their simplest component parts.

By this means the earth would, during this hot period, gain a considerable proportion of its bulk, the heat being sufficient to vaporise any solid matter in space that came within the

radius of attraction of the earth and was drawn into the main body of it.

In the course of many thousands of years the earth, or rather the gaseous body from which the earth was to be formed, had cooled to a degree such that many of the metals having high melting points, as tungsten and platinum, would condense as liquids.

It was at this period, in all probability, that the moon was evolved from the earth, possibly by the attraction of some other planet or body which passed near the earth at that time.

The moon, being smaller than the earth, condensed very much more speedily, and lost its heat so rapidly that to-day it is a frozen body, devoid of animal life, though it is not improbable that some extremely low forms of vegetable life may exist.

After the first period of the liquefaction of the metals, as they cooled still further, compounds with nitrogen, carbon, and oxygen formed, and in addition the atmosphere consisted of water-vapour together with some metals of very low melting-point.

At a still later date all the metals would have been deposited in the form of compounds or in a pure state, the atmosphere consisting of water-vapour and air, the latter being a mechanical mixture of nitrogen four parts, and oxygen one part, and the former a compound produced by the union of hydrogen and oxygen.

The earth would now be covered with a thin crust, under which would exist a molten interior. This crust, at its thickest part, in those days might have been from twelve to fifty or sixty miles thick. To-day there is a skin forty miles thick; a first shell about a thousand miles deep and of basic composition; a second shell about a thousand miles deep, a mixture of ultra-basic minerals and metals; and lastly, a core of metal in composition nickel-iron.

In the first twelve miles exist all the metals of present-day commerce, and none of them is mined to greater depths than from seven thousand to nine thousand feet, the majority being found between the surface and two thousand to three thousand feet.

To-day the earth is as we know it. What changes will 500,000 or 1,000,000 years bring?

THE TRUE COURSE.

By L. G. W. WHITE.

I.

A BLACK wall-sided tramp steamer lay alongside the dock at Kidderpore awaiting the tug which was to tow her into the Hughli. In the brilliant afternoon sunshine she presented a depressing appearance, for she was an old ship, and, therefore, not in great demand. Owing to the state of the freight market she had been rusting at her Calcutta moorings for over ten months, but now, having secured a cargo and her certificate of sea-worthiness, she was about to sail for the West Indies. Ugly marks of neglect were evident from stem to stern; not an ounce of paint had been splashed on her upperworks since the last crew was paid off, neither had the sound of the chipping-hammer been heard along her decks. Everything aboard her was obsolete, and the glib-tongued cargo-wallahs had expressed their opinion of her deck-gear in lurid language.

Certainly the s.s. *Meronda* was not a ship to be proud of, yet Abdul Rehman, the quartermaster, leaned with folded arms on her lower bridge and surveyed her with appreciation. This was his ship, and he had never sailed in any other. Far away in the dim past which he could scarcely remember, Abdul had been plucked from the slums of Calcutta, on the death of his father, by his uncle, who was then bo'sun of the *Meronda*, and had been taken to sea as a deck-boy. That serang had died of beriberi between Havana and New York, and since then Abdul had made many trips as seaman and signed articles with many different crews, but always with the same ship. His character was regularly described as 'sober' on his discharge paper, and by making the most of occasional opportunities at the wheel he had learned to steer, and had now succeeded in obtaining a berth as quartermaster. Abdul was not, by any means, an ambitious man, but he was keenly alive to the dignities of his new position—would he not be on the bridge with the sahibs?

He carefully drew his discharge-book from the pocket of his new drill jacket and admired the cover, for although he could not read he knew the letters of his name by heart. If the *Meronda's* wheel were examined, the letters A B D U L might be found scratched in block capitals between two of the spokes. The shape of the letters would not pass muster at a mission school, but then mission scholars do not have to form their letters on hard teak with an iron nail.

The secuny replaced the discharge-book, and regarded his new white canvas shoes with pride. Only that morning they had been purchased

from Judu, who sold slops, together with a jacket and a sailor tam with s.s. *Kinross-shire* emblazoned in letters of gold upon the ribbon. Of course Abdul had never seen or even heard of the *Kinross-shire*, but as he could not read, the tam seemed much more appropriate to his new rank than the little red and white cap he had always affected.

It was a good thing for the new secuny that his ship had not remained longer in port, or hard necessity would have forced him to seek service in some other steamer. Ten months ashore and the aforementioned additions to his wardrobe had reduced Abdul's stock of pice almost to zero. But now, as he watched the hatches being battened down and the boats swung out, his sailor's heart was full of joy.

The tug fussed up, and Abdul went up to the wheel. The captain emerged from the chart-room and also ascended to the bridge. He ignored Abdul's polite 'Salam, Sahib.' Evidently this new captain sahib did not understand Hindustani.

The *Meronda* had always been a British ship, registered at Calcutta, but she had been purchased recently by a foreign combine, which had supplied her with a captain and officers who obviously were not British.

The captain wore his shore-going suit on the bridge, but he had exchanged his topi for a peaked cap with much gilt cord about the front. His cheeks were flabby and he had a heavy straw-coloured moustache. Quite a different type, this, from the keen-eyed, clean-shaven British officers to whom Abdul had always been accustomed. The Asiatic behind the wheel regarded his captain out of the corner of his eye, and instantly decided that he did not like him. He could not have told the reason why, but then, Abdul was not prone to self-analysis, and he liked and disliked without reason.

II.

It invariably happens that when a vessel carries three secunies their watches are divided so that each is on duty at the wheel for two hours and then enjoys four hours below. The watches from four o'clock till six, and again from ten till twelve, are the most fatiguing, and usually, therefore, these are relegated to the junior secuny. This was so aboard the *Meronda*, and by the time Abdul was relieved from his first watch at four bells (six o'clock), the ship was steaming down the river in charge of the pilot.

Already the nauseating Calcutta river-smell had drifted away astern, and the salt-laden breeze that draws men down to the sea from all

ports of the world, wafted along the *Meronda's* decks, crept in through the open port-holes and stirred the flimsy brown curtains of the bunks.

Abdul sniffed it gratefully as he went forward to the fo'c'sle, and having finished his curry and rice on the hatch, proceeded to make himself at home in the cabin which he now shared with the other secunies. Squatting on his heels on the deck, he carefully unpacked his belongings. They were not numerous and, with the exception of his straw mattress and umbrella, were all contained in a canvas bag, which was highly ornamented with coloured wools. This bag seemed to contain numerous empty cigarette tins, which were soon consigned to the corners of the bunk, but the chief treasures were hid at the bottom of the bag, and these demanded more careful handling.

First there emerged a patent cigar-lighter, of which Abdul did not know the use. It was years since it had contained any petrol, but it still made a pleasing spark when one pressed the catch. There followed a cardboard frame, advertising somebody's cigarettes, which portrayed the head and shoulders of a smiling lady under an ostrich feather hat. Her features could be altered in an alluring manner by the simple means of pressing the edges of the frame with thumb and finger.

After a British mercantile marine war medal had been produced and admired, there still remained one small object wrapped in a piece of blue check cloth—this was the most cherished possession. Abdul untied the cloth and gazed reverently at the fetish it contained. There was revealed a small metal image, about three inches high, which shone like copper. It was interesting and grotesque enough even to the European mind, for it was graven in the likeness of an eastern goddess, kneeling and with arms outstretched. The eyes were formed by two small red stones, which sometimes caught the light and glinted strangely. The outstretched arms were of iron. How he came by it its owner could not remember, but he knew that he had acquired it in the far-off days of his childhood, and it had been the only thing he had brought aboard the *Meronda* when he first joined, besides the cotton rags that had served to clothe him. Since then it had been his constant companion, and it provided for him a tangible emblem of Eternal Providence. He attributed everything for which he could not account to its agency. And there had been many things in the life of Abdul for which he could not account—especially during the war.

Mystery and awe surrounded the little goddess, and the years had given an added reverence. Neither was its power entirely of an abstract nature, for its iron arms were magnetised, and this caused them to attract small flakes of metal, needles, &c. A profound wonder, which, when demonstrated on the

forward hatch, had once inspired small coal-boys with admiration and respect. But lately the idol had grown too sacred for public exhibition.

The heart of Abdul Rehman, secuny, was full of thankfulness for his recent promotion as he reverently covered the goddess with the check cloth and laid it beneath his pillow.

III.

All went well. After dropping the pilot at Sandheads the *Meronda* was headed southwards. There was some delay at Durban, where she bunkered, owing to trouble with the main engines, but after being tinkered up the old ship succeeded in making slow passage to the West Indies, where she discharged at various ports, and was then ordered up to the States to load coal for Genoa.

The Atlantic Ocean does not always justify its bad reputation, and after leaving Hampton Roads the *Meronda* was fortunate in encountering no rough weather. Although well down to her load-marks, her engines gave no more trouble and, in spite of a slight list, she steered remarkably well. She was within a few days' run of Gibraltar when circumstances arose which caused an eruption in the peaceful monotony of Abdul's existence.

On a certain calm afternoon Abdul left his cabin to go on watch as usual. After strolling along the for'ard well-deck and ascending to the main deck he found it still required a few minutes to four o'clock, and he loitered under the bridge-deck until the stroke of eight bells should summon him up to the wheel. Abdul was always punctual. On this particular afternoon he stood watching the smoke curl lazily away from the funnel, when he gradually became aware of the sound of voices drifting through the open port-hole of the captain's cabin. He listened. Drawing nearer, he recognised the low tones of the chief engineer. Evidently a discussion of some importance was going on between him and the captain.

The two men were of different nationalities, and spoke English, not because it was the native tongue of either of them, but because it was common ground for conversation. The oriental had no qualms about eavesdropping, but it is doubtful whether he would have strained his ears to listen had not the following unusual question arrested his attention—

'You have all the boats quite ready?'

'Trust me,' answered the captain's voice. 'I looked to them myself this morning, even to the rope-ladders. Everything is correct. The wind's light, there's no current, and you have only to stand by—that's all.'

There was a pause, and then the chief's voice dropped yet lower.

'You are certain of the time we bump?'

'Eleven o'clock or very shortly after, certainly not a moment before,' answered the captain;

and then rather impatiently, 'Of course, you're an engineer, chief, and can't be expected to appreciate the niceties of navigation, but you may take it from me that I've left nothing to chance—I've checked the position many times to-day, and shall do so again by the stars. Have you settled about your fourth?'

The chief's reply was just audible. 'Yes, I shall be near the bilge-cocks, and as soon as we bump I'll send him on deck. He'll not return, as we shall be settling down within a few minutes of opening the bilges.'

Abdul strained his ears to catch the words as the chief's voice went on, 'Everything depends on our bumping the reef, for we dare not open the bilges otherwise—that trick is played out. As it is now, every man will feel the bump, and be prepared to witness that we sank after striking this uncharted reef. You are sure of it, though? Then it's certainly well thought out, captain.'

'Certainly,' agreed the other. 'And the glass stands high. After a short time in the boats—'

Eight bells clanged out above, and the secuny ascended the ladder to the bridge-deck.

IV.

Now Abdul had never been called upon to use his brain to any extent, and his thoughts came slowly. Furthermore, he was mentally staggered by the conclusions which were slowly forcing themselves upon his mind. He knew nothing of insurance money or underwriters, but while at the wheel on earlier voyages he had often listened to the conversation of the sahibs on the bridge, and one cannot listen to the unhurried yarning of ships' officers without learning many tales of the sea and picking up a certain amount of nautical lore. Abdul knew that under some circumstances bad captains had been known to sink their ships, and from the conversation he had heard he could not doubt but that his ship—the *Meronda*—would be sunk by that agency that very evening.

By the end of the watch this fact had impressed itself on him with awful intensity. He went for'ard and ate his curry and rice as one in a dream. About eight o'clock he turned in as usual—not to sleep, but to think.

What could he do? Besides the captain and the chief he was the only one who possessed the hideous knowledge, and yet he could think of no way to frustrate the plot. He explored several possibilities without success. In some circumstances he might have told his chief officer, but he dismissed the thought as soon as it entered his head, for obvious reasons.

Eleven o'clock, the captain had said! That would be during his watch, and his—Abdul Rehman's—would be the hands which would steer the ship—his ship, the *Meronda*—to destruction. Abdul regarded his hands with horror.

He could not, would not, do this thing. But, reason reminded him, if he disobeyed orders he would be sent for'ard in disgrace and one of the other secunies fetched up.

The light in the secunies' cabin faded and the curtain of night drew across the sea, very beautiful and still, but it brought no peace to Abdul. He lay with heavy heart and cold wet brows while the familiar noises of the fo'c'sle seemed dear to him, now that their continuance was threatened. The swish of the water sounded very distinctly as it purled away from the iron bow, and every now and then the raucous laugh of the serang from the direction of the carpenter's cabin broke in upon the dreary monotone in which a pious fireman was invoking Allah.

By the time Abdul was preparing to go on watch the position seemed as hopeless as ever. His thought turned to his goddess. He brought the treasure out into the light and stared at it, while his whole frightened soul went out towards it. He would rely on it as he had always done, even though the *Meronda* was steaming full ahead to destruction. The little red eyes glinted, and the outstretched hands seemed sympathetic. Certainly it understood.

Abdul slipped the idol in his pocket, for he had decided to take it up to the wheel with him. If the worst should happen—faithless thought!—he would at least have it with him.

As Abdul entered the wheel-house at four bells, the captain was on the bridge 'taking a star.' How Abdul hated the man with his sextant and cool calculations. The captain was still outside, and the officer of the watch was standing by the chronometers in the chart-room, when Abdul took the idol from his pocket and slipped it into the shadow of one of the flag lockers, which surrounded the wheel-house above his head, where he could just see it.

The officer of the watch came up, and paced up and down on the port side of the bridge, while the lights in the fo'c'sle died out, except for the wan halo cast on the iron deck by the shaded lamp in the alley-way. Abdul glanced at the clock. Quarter-past ten—he had been on watch only fifteen minutes, yet it seemed many hours. The captain had mentioned eleven o'clock—forty-five minutes more.

V.

The course was N. 72° E., and at half-past ten the captain ordered the helm to be put over to port and steadied at N. 89° E. Now fear nearly gripped Abdul, for he guessed, and guessed rightly, that the course was shaped directly toward the reef. Five minutes dragged by. The captain came and peered into the compass. The ship was dead on her course, and the face of the Asiatic at her wheel showed no sign of emotion, although, as his captain bent over the compass, a madness almost seized him, and his fingers tightened on the spokes of the

wheel—as they would have liked to fasten on the captain's throat. But that could do no good; he must keep control of himself.

The captain left the wheel-house and paced the starboard side of the bridge. Abdul felt sick and shivered, though the night was mild. Yet he braced himself up, for was he not a secuny? He would keep cool, and, when the fo'c'sle crowd came rushing aft, as he knew they would do when she bumped, he would behave like a sahib. But, he thought, his goddess would not let the *Meronda* finish. The Gates of Doom seemed to be opening just ahead, and Abdul's faith was sorely tried as he lifted the little idol down and gazed at it. The captain's step outside sounded nearer, and Abdul placed his treasure in the shadow of one of the big iron balls, close to the compass.

It was now twenty minutes to eleven, and the ship was moving steadily. The secuny peered out over the fo'c'sle. Ahead all was blackness. The sky was overcast and no stars were visible now.

His gaze returned to the compass and he started visibly. Could he believe his eyes? He looked for'ard again. The ship was steering directly ahead, and yet the compass card was swinging round. The tell-tale was slowly turning away from the set course. A phenomenon! Abdul sought no explanation, but slowly and gently he put the wheel over so that the captain should not hear the clank of the steering

gear. Five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty degrees the bow came round, until the tell-tale mark was once more over the course as indicated by the compass card.

After an interval that seemed like many watches the hands of the clock pointed to eleven and Abdul struck six bells. Two minutes later the captain entered the wheel-house and peered again into the compass.

His hand rested on the iron ball and his fingers almost touched the idol. As before, the ship appeared steady on the course he had chalked on the slate—N. 89° E. Great drops of sweat glistened on the captain's forehead by the light of the binnacle.

Down below in the engine-room, where the heavy atmosphere reeked of hot oil and the worn machinery thumped and clanged, an irritable chief engineer paced feverishly up and down within reach of his bilge-cocks—awaiting the bump which never came.

When the secuny of the second's watch came up to relieve the wheel at midnight the *Meronda* was still steady on her course and the reef lay safely astern.

Abdul did not know that the magnetism of the arms of the idol had deflected the sensitive compass needle—he only knew that in the hour of his greatest need his goddess had not failed him. He went for'ard, a supremely happy man, and drew the check cloth around his treasure with reverent brown hands.

MAINLY ABOUT ELEPHANTS.

By Major W. R. FORAN, F.R.G.S., F.Z.S., &c.

I.

ALTHOUGH most people in the world are familiar with the elephant, yet it is astonishing how little is really known about this pachyderm. Of all wild animals it is the best known, and at the same time the least known. Paradoxical as this may sound, nevertheless it is perfectly true. Most people have seen an elephant either in some zoological gardens or else in a circus—or, failing that, in pictures. And if you were to ask anyone at random what an African elephant looks like, he or she would imagine that it was a very simple question to answer. This wide-spread and popular impression, however, is erroneous except in its broadest aspect; so are most of the beliefs entertained about this huge animal of the forests and jungles.

In the first place, the elephants that we see in captivity in Europe are Asiatic specimens, and all are undersized—even the very largest of them. The two varieties—the African and the Asiatic—differ as much from each other as they do from the mammoth and similar extinct forms

that existed in the 'Stone Age.' A full-grown African elephant is nearly twice the size of any Asiatic elephant ever brought to Europe. I have shot several in Central Africa that must have weighed at least twice as much as any Indian elephant—possibly more; and they stood close upon thirteen feet in height. It was certainly very little short of that, and I am almost certain it was even more.

To anyone who is familiar at first hand with both varieties, the difference will at once become apparent. Those who have shot elephants in Africa, as well as in Asia, will be the very first to agree that those of the African species are both larger and more savage. In point of intelligence alone are they identical. But of this similarity more anon.

II.

Strangely enough, there exists a wide divergence of opinion amongst experts in big-game hunting as to the relative dangerous qualities possessed by the larger wild game. Few can be found to agree upon the correct order of precedence. I have known a number of past and

present eminent big-game hunters personally, and have often discussed this question with them; but I have seldom found any two who would agree upon the order of danger in regard to hunting the wildest and most ferocious of game. Each man has judged them in the light of his own personal experience—which, after all, is the only correct basis upon which to form any definite opinion. However, the majority of them appear to be agreed that the African elephant is the most dangerous of all big game to hunt; and, of the others, only a few have failed to class it as second on the list. The choice seems to lie between the elephant and the lion for the premier place. Personally—and my opinion is given only for what it is worth—I place them in the following order: the African elephant, the African buffalo, the tiger, the lion, the rhinoceros. There are, I feel sure, many big-game hunters who will not agree with me; but who can say that anyone else is wrong?

This wide divergence of opinion is interesting, but it does not settle the argument. It is just one of those problems which can never be decided with any degree of certainty. I have heard many hunters assert that the lion is by far the most dangerous animal to hunt; yet, in common with quite a number of others, I have ridden lions down on horseback and shot them with revolvers. The late Paul J. Rainey, the American millionaire, became world-famous by hunting down lions with a pack of hounds. It may also be stressed that the death-toll from lions is ever so much greater than from any other species of wild animals in the world; but this fact is attributable to acts of negligence committed by the hunters in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred. There are men who have been so foolhardy as to follow a wounded lion into long grass, when the chances were all against the hunters; but this fact does not tend to prove that the lion is the most dangerous. The late Colonel Theodore Roosevelt told me, when I accompanied him on his African expedition in 1909 to 1910, that his experience had forced him to the conclusion that the lion was normally more dangerous than any other animal. He placed them in the following order: lion, elephant, buffalo, rhinoceros. His two expert guides—the late R. J. Cunninghame and Leslie J. Tarlton—ranked elephant-hunting, in point of danger, as nearly on a level with lion-hunting. 'Jim' Sutherland, Africa's most famous elephant hunter, told me some years ago that the premier place belonged to the lion, and that the elephant ranked only third. He placed the buffalo in the second place. He has shot many hundreds of elephants, and so his views are worth careful consideration. The late Frederick Courteney Selous—the 'Grand Old Man' of African hunting—placed wild animals in still another order of precedence

as regards danger; and so the tale goes on. But this controversy is beyond all powers of settlement, so it may well be left where it is. Every one is correct in the light of his own experience. My object is neither to prove nor to disprove any known theory, but simply to place on record some very surprising facts about the African species of elephant—facts which are known to a very limited few.

III.

The ancient civilisation of India boasts as one of its many great achievements the taming of the Asiatic variety of elephant. In the ancient lore of that early form of civilisation this fact plays a very distinguished rôle. But the African variety has never yet been tamed, and it does not seem that this task will ever be accomplished. It has been attempted, but without any degree of success. No experiments in animal training have ever failed so signally as those practised on elephants in Central Africa. This failure is in no way due to lack of intelligence on the part of the elephant family who roam the forests of the 'Dark Continent.' They are not one whit less brainy than their cousins in Asia.

Next, perhaps, to the highest type of apes, the elephant is the wisest and most intelligent of all animals. This remark applies with equal force to all elephants, of no matter which variety. In many respects they surpass even the great intelligence of the higher apes or monkeys, which most nearly approximates to that enjoyed by human beings. For this reason we may claim quite justly that the elephant possesses the highest type of intelligence. Those who have seen the domesticated Asian elephants at work in the timber depots of Burma, India, and Siam will readily grant that they are most amazingly intelligent. Their wisdom is almost incredible, and certainly uncanny at times.

Another interesting feature about the two types of elephant is that they stand unique among the beasts of great bulk for the fact that with growth in size there has been a marked growth in brain power. In order to demonstrate this fact, we may draw comparisons between the elephant and the rhinoceros—for the latter is the nearest animal in point of size. The rhinoceros is found in the same regions as the African elephant, and in bulk is second only to the elephant among all terrestrial animals; but the elephant is the wisest and the rhinoceros the most stupid of all big mammals. Both animals wandered freely over the plains of East Africa less than fifty years ago; but such is not the case to-day. The elephant learns and profits by experience infinitely more readily than the rhinoceros. As a rule, therefore, it will be found that the former no longer lives in the open country; but the rhinoceros continues to dwell there and to risk being ex-

terminated. An elephant will generally cross the plains only at night-time, for he knows quite well that danger lies there during the hours of daylight. No elephant, in regions where they are being hunted regularly, would be so foolish as habitually to spend his days in the open plains; yet that is exactly what the stupid rhinoceros does. The former is wisdom personified; the latter an utterly brainless fathead.

Then again, the sight of both these animals is very indifferent; but the elephant has quickly learned to take refuge in those regions where sound and scent count for more than sight. Both animals depend almost entirely upon their noses and ears for protection against danger; and both sadly need a visit to the oculist. In many respects the African elephant surpasses the rhinoceros in powers of vision; but neither of them can boast of even fairly good eyesight. It is well for the hunter that they do not wear spectacles, though their powers of scent and hearing are so well developed as to compensate to a large extent for their disability in the matter of effective vision.

IV.

It is not widely realised that, in Africa, the bull elephants are rarely the fighters. They are more generally—the big fellows, I mean—to be found singly or in small parties by themselves. In the breeding season I have seen the cows and calves travelling in herds at some distance behind the bulls; and the latter were then to be found either alone or in small groups. However, one may occasionally see—especially in large herds—the big bulls mingling with the cows. On one occasion four bulls charged out from a herd of cows at a friend and myself, whilst the rest of the big herd of several hundred crashed away from us. It was a very awkward moment for both of us—but the four bulls met a gallant death with their faces to the enemy. On still another occasion I had a very nasty experience whilst trying to cut out a big bull from amongst a herd of cows, and had to crawl away to safety between the legs of several female elephants—all of whom were ready to stampede if they could only get my wind. However, I finally managed to shoot the old fellow a few days later, and his immense tusks—one of them weighed a hundred and sixty-nine pounds and stood over eleven feet high—were ample reward and compensation for my earlier terrors.

Carl Akeley, of the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, who has made a close and comprehensive study of African elephants in their native environment, discovered many new and interesting facts about them some years ago. He asserts that there is very little danger from a bull elephant. That, however, is far from being the experience of myself or of many

other hunters. I am of the opinion that you must judge the bull elephant just as you find him. He is a contrary fellow. Sometimes he is good, but more often he is bad—very bad indeed! The cows are, however, always more vicious than the bulls. Some years ago there was a large herd of elephants in the vicinity of Gondokoro on the Nile, which numbered several hundred. The herd consisted, for the most part, of cows and calves, with a sprinkling of small bulls. They were so dangerous that no one had the temerity to attack them in real earnest, despite the popular belief that there was one very big bull in the middle of the herd. They were quick to charge; and, on the only occasion I ever ventured near them, gave me a most unpleasant hour. Once was quite enough for me, and thereafter I left them severely alone.

The generally accepted theory that big bulls are not to be found in big herds is a fallacy, for they most certainly are. The bull elephants one may meet roaming about alone are almost invariably senile old gentlemen who have been cast off by a herd, or who have developed such a tropical liver as to make their company intolerable. I met one such old fellow in the forests below Kenya Mountain one morning some years ago. He charged me directly he got my wind or heard me; it all happened so suddenly that I was unable to say definitely what had really caused him to charge. I am only positive that he did charge, and it was with great difficulty that I ended his lonely life. He had been wounded on several occasions before we met without being formally introduced, and was what might be classed as a 'rogue.' There could be no mistake that he was very old, although his tusks—one of which was broken off at the base—did not weigh unusually high. The unbroken tusk was only one hundred pounds, and the stump weighed thirty pounds. On still another occasion—in the district which was formally the Lado Enclave of the Congo, but is now part of the Mongalla district of the Sudan—I was after a big bull reported to me by the natives. I had to abandon the chase; for the old fellow was in the middle of a herd of at least six hundred cows, and they would not let me approach near enough to get a head shot at him. I tried a number of times to do so, but could never get nearer to him than the outer fringe of cows guarding him—then they stampeded, and so did I.

V.

The cows normally guard the bulls from attack. The bulls found with the herds are generally in the prime of life, and usually have smallish tusks. All of these large herds of elephants have cow-leaders—or queen elephants—with extremely ugly dispositions. They are

mostly very old cows, these leaders of the herds. The moment they scent danger they crowd round the bulls in order to protect them; and it is next to impossible to get at them. If they can see, hear, or smell the hunters, they will charge at them, leaving enough of their number to safeguard the bulls from attack. Their sense of smell and hearing is very highly developed and incredibly acute. They can detect the presence of a human being from a distance of a thousand yards, if the wind is favourable for them; but unless he is moving they cannot see him, even if he is within a distance of a hundred yards. When they catch a whiff of wind tainted with man, the cows charge in that direction, and it is a hundred to one chance that they will succeed in locating the sportsman. Most hunters endeavour to get within twenty yards of their quarry, and so it can be imagined how exciting a sport elephant hunting is! I have not infrequently killed elephants in the midst of a herd from a distance of twenty yards or even less; and the going and coming have been *full* of excitement! On one occasion a cow elephant stood almost on top of me, with its massive stern within my reach. I was, at that time, endeavouring to get a big bull in the herd; but I could not resist the temptation of clouting it with a spear-shaft across the rump. The cow gave a shrill scream of mingled anger, amazement, and mortification at the indignity, and then departed hurriedly; and so did I! It was a most ungentlemanly act on my part; and I was well served, for I failed to get my big bull.

Some years ago there was a fair-sized herd of elephants on the German East African border, mostly cows but with a few good bulls. I told a soldier friend of mine about them, but advised him to leave them alone, as the grass was very tall—ten or more feet high—and it would be difficult to run in case of being charged. He had never shot an elephant before, and was eager to get the two bulls allowed on his license for shooting big game. Some days later I received a letter from him telling me he had gone after the herd and had been charged. 'I thought you said I couldn't run,' he ended his letter. I afterwards learned that he had beaten the world's record for the mile, despite the tall grass and the bad going.

A friend of mine once shot a bull elephant in a herd and only succeeded in wounding it very severely. Immediately some cows came to the assistance of the wounded mate; and, supporting him on either side, they helped him into the forest and safety. Some days later, after following up the herd without resting, my friend found the old bull lying dead, and the cows had departed. He was lucky! I once lost a fine bull in the same manner, and was never able to get it, despite some strenuous tracking for days on end.

VI.

Another amazing fact about African elephants is that they have many signals amongst themselves. For instance, when the cow gets the 'wind' of a hunter she signals to the herd 'on guard,' and immediately every elephant in the herd stops grazing and listens, with trunk to the ground. They remain as silent as the grave until the 'all clear' signal is given. Even when a shot among them causes a stampede and the forest resounds with the first crash of their moving, they can disappear from sight without making the slightest noise. I have met a whole herd moving through tall elephant-grass—sometimes six to ten feet high—and small acacia trees in Uganda, and yet never heard a sound more than what appeared to be a faint breeze stirring the grass, a sort of faint swish, swish noise. On a number of occasions, I have almost caught up with a herd on the move and then lost them, for they have disappeared so silently that I could not hear them. When one considers the immense bulk of an elephant, and remembers that there may be anything from fifty to three hundred or more in a herd, this is an astounding fact.

However, when an elephant desires to do so, he can make more noise than any known animal in the world. A herd of two to three hundred will trample down the entire farmlands of a native village with such noises as can only be compared to an earthquake. Elephants are inordinately fond of raiding the crops of the African villagers at night-time, and their inroads do terrible damage. So bad did this become in South Africa that the order went forth to exterminate every wild elephant.

The natives dig cunning traps for elephants, and sometimes drop loaded spears upon them as they pass under trees. When they have wounded an elephant by the latter means they follow it up until it drops dead, for the spear points are mostly poisoned. Their acute sense of smell and hearing makes it difficult to catch elephants in a hidden trap, and it is rare to find one captured by such means. I do not suppose that one elephant-pit in a hundred ever accomplishes its object. When elephants go through the forests they hold their trunks close to the ground; and, by tapping every few paces, they can detect any pit, no matter how ingeniously concealed, before stepping onto it. You may catch an elephant with a trick once—but *only* once. The moment they strike any ground that is the least bit suspicious they tap it carefully with their trunks, and then make a wide detour to avoid the danger. It is generally when they are stampeded that they are liable to fall into a pit, because then ordinary forms of caution are abandoned.

There is another fallacy that is commonly

believed, and it is that the calves are only to be found with the cows. As I have already said, the cows are the guards and fighters with a herd, so the bull elephants act as the nursemaids. Some hunters have actually seen bull elephants playing with the calves, while no cow was anywhere in sight. The late Colonel Roosevelt and his son Kermit, whilst in East Africa, managed to shoot a complete family group—bull, cow, and calf—for the Smithsonian Institute in America. But this was an exception—and exceptions are said to prove all rules.

It has been my experience that elephants, where generally undisturbed, rest and wander about at all times of the day and night; and they feed without much regard for fixed meal hours. Morning or evening, noon or midnight, the herds may be met on the move or else simply resting in the shade of the giant trees; yet during the hottest hours of the tropical noon I have never seen an elephant feeding—generally they were standing still and resting. In all my years of wandering about the African Continent I have never come across an elephant lying down to rest; but other hunters have told me that elephants do so when they are sick. In the Congo I noticed that the elephant herds generally moved on to new feeding grounds in the early hours of dawn; and this was the best time to choose for hunting, for one could then get close up when they stopped to rest or feed.

VII.

It would be a veritable and most tragic calamity if the lordly African elephant should be permitted to vanish from the face of the 'Dark Continent'; but I must admit, regretfully, that its ultimate doom appears to be sealed. Now that it is suspected of being a Sleeping Sickness carrier, that day cannot be so very far distant. Civilisation, on its relentless march forward, is driving elephants from their accustomed haunts, and they are becoming less easy to obtain. The big tuskers have nearly all gone the way of all flesh; and their smaller brothers are quickly following them. All lovers of the fauna of the British Empire must deeply regret that such is the case.

Those who have carefully followed this brief discourse on the African elephant will have discovered six somewhat surprising facts—if not more—about them and their habits that most people do not know. Firstly, a cow elephant is always the leader of a herd; secondly, bull elephants are always the nursemaids and mind the babies; thirdly, an elephant is one of the most intelligent of all living creatures; fourthly, elephant herds have a regular system of signals; fifthly, it is the cow and not the bull elephant that is the fighter of the family; and, lastly, it seems certain that the days of the elephant in Africa are numbered.

Unlike his Indian kinsman, he has never been tamed and trained to man's use. There are still some optimists who cherish the hope that the feat may yet be performed; but it receives little or no encouragement from those who know the African elephant. I am not a sceptic or a pessimist by nature, but I cannot join hopes with the optimists. Some years ago there was an elephant training-camp in the Congo, but all experiments made there proved utterly useless. They proved one fact, however, and that is, an African elephant of seven years of age is more tractable than at any other age; but as he grows old he becomes unmanageable.

Some years ago, I remember, the Government of Uganda sent to India for an elephant to use in capturing and training wild African elephants. He duly arrived at Entebbe with his *mahout*, and was installed, after much trouble and expense, in a stable near Government House. Unfortunately it was soon discovered that the elephant was a *shikar* elephant, and not a labour machine. He did perform one task—but only one—during all his period of stay as the guest of the Government of Uganda. He pulled a grand piano from the docks to Government House on a trolley. This effort proved none to his liking, and thenceforward nothing would induce him to work again.

For months and months, this elephant and his Indian *mahout* did nothing but eat, bathe in the Victoria Nyanza, and take gentle walking exercise. The Government of Uganda tried to sell him; but no one wanted him. One day a travelling circus arrived in Entebbe, and the elephant was offered to the proprietor of the show at cost price. The circus proprietor made inquiries and quickly discovered the real situation. He refused to buy. Then the Government of Uganda gave him the elephant. It was far cheaper to do this, for the elephant and his *mahout* had big and costly appetites.

He was an intelligent animal that elephant; but, then, so was the circus proprietor!

WINDS AND MEN.

I CLIMB again the wind-encircled hill,

Where he and I together looked on fields
Blessed by the sun. But now the day is chill,
And winter's bitter cold no comfort yields.
For he is dead; and I am here alone.

And under this wild sky and Heaven's space
I cannot grieve for him, but am as stone!

Yet, in the genial glow of summer's grace,
The world rejoiced, nor heeded that, above,

The blasts of everlasting cold blow keen.
Dull are the sons of men! We weep and love,

Because the skies are blue, and forests green!
Here, in the grasp of winds, I feel the slave

Of circumstance. Yet such I have not been!

C. H. F. B.-L.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

MEMORIES OF A SCOTTISH SALMON-RIVER.

By GEORGE SOUTHCOTE.

PART I.

I.

EUSTON STATION, London. Early morning. The station itself nearly empty, but echoing the sounds of the awakening city; the braying of motor-horns, a babel of human voices, and the roar of distant traffic. Those are the impressions that steal gradually upon my brain after a long journey from the extreme North of Scotland, the last few hours of it spent in restless sleep. Upon the brain only. In the heart, and in the inner consciousness, there still lingers the soothing trilling note of a nesting curlew, and the mournful pipe of an oyster-catcher disturbed a few days ago from her nest amongst the pebbles near the bank of a salmon-river which flows amongst the heather and birch-woods of a beautiful Scottish strath, known and loved, but seldom visited, during the quarter of a century which has passed since my first experience of such surroundings. Last year I saw it in March, frost-bound in a bitter blizzard, with deep snow on the hill-sides and deeper snow-drifts on the roads; the river itself below summer level, its streams filled with particles of floating ice; the best pools frozen over, some of them covered with snow and not distinguishable from the low-lying meadows. The only being taking the situation cheerily was a 'dipper,' quite undefeated and constantly breaking into song. In other years I have known it in April and in June. Never before had I had the good fortune to fish for salmon in Scotland in May. It is an experience not to be forgotten, partly on account of the magnificent sport itself, and partly on account of the surroundings.

'Feelings of delight,' according to the best writer on fly-fishing of my acquaintance, 'come unsought and without effort—when they are present they are everywhere about and in us like an atmosphere; when they are past it is almost as impossible to give an account of them as it is of "last year's clouds," and the attempt to analyse and reconstruct the sense of joy that has been and may be again, seems to result in rows of dead words.' And again: 'It may be that language lends itself more easily to forms of argument and thought than of feeling. An

argument is something which can be caught and held down and strapped into sentences, but, after reading an account of a day's fishing, it is continually borne in upon one that, when all has been said, the half has not been told.' And yet one more quotation, before embarking upon the almost hopeless task of putting feelings (as distinguished from thoughts) into adequate words: 'To any one who does share it' (a hobby), 'even a little imperfectly told becomes interesting, and weak words begin to stir kindred memories.' Let us then, in the hope of so doing, get back from the arrival at Euston station, refreshed by a holiday on a salmon-river in the North of Scotland, and ready for any amount of strenuous work, to the journey northward from the same station, worn out and wearied by a long spell of monotonous toil.

II.

Owing to the attentions of ticket-collectors I did not sleep until three-thirty. I was aroused once more before five, after which hour I did not sleep again. No traveller entered or left the coach in which I travelled from Euston to Perth, only those ticket-collectors, but northward of Perth the mountain scenery is so glorious that wakefulness is even more restful than sleep, and the new restaurant-cars provide compensation for those who miss those appetising Scottish breakfast-baskets which used to be obtainable at Kingussie. Then comes that wonderful journey northward of Inverness, with its coast scenery and view of the outlets to the sea of the best spring rivers in Scotland, sometimes (as with the Shin) of some of their best pools, and sometimes (as with the Helmsdale) of nearly the whole river, from sea to source.

'If we are to enter into the moods of Nature'—I quote again from the same author—'we must bring with us some vigour and elasticity of spirit. A feeble mind looking upon scenes with a languid eye will not feel the joy of them, and it is with Nature as with friendship—we cannot take all and bring nothing.' On my way to the taking of May salmon, I was fortunate in spending a blissful and restful week-end with friends of many years standing, whose dwelling

is perched on cliffs overlooking the sea. Impressions remain of a true Scottish welcome, as if the intervening years had never been; of green sheep-nibbled turf and blazing yellow whins crowning the cliffs; of clusters of primroses showing where the sun shone upon the clefts and grassy dells, the whole under a dappled sky throwing soft gray shadows on the sea-surface; of stillness in the night broken only by the occasional scream of a gull. That preparation gave the 'vigour and elasticity of spirit,' required for the full enjoyment of experiences to follow, and I now give them, as described in my diary:

- May 4 (Monday).* Fished one hour. 1 (14½ lb.). No. 2 size 'Jock Scott.' No. 2 Beat.
- May 5 (Tuesday).* 1 (13 lb.). No. 4 size 'Lady Caroline.' No. 1 Beat.
- May 6 (Wednesday).* 2 (10 lb., 7 lb.). No. 2 size 'Silver Doctor.' No. 6 Beat. Cuckoo. Curlew. Fished till 2 P.M.
- May 7 (Thursday).* Blank. Broken by big fish after ten minutes' play. Blue hare. Herd of deer. Grouse. Curlew. Plover. No. 5 Beat.
- May 8 (Friday).* Blank. Lovely wild country. No. 4 Beat.
- May 9 (Saturday).* Blank. Two rises. I think gut too stout. No. 3 Beat.
- May 10 (Sunday).* Watched the river (rising).
- May 11 (Monday).* Spate. No Fishing. Saw young plover. No. 2 Beat.
- May 12 (Tuesday).* 1 (12½ lb.). No. 2 'Black Doctor.' No. 1 Beat. Too high.
- May 13 (Wednesday).* 1 (11½ lbs.), early. No. 2 'Jock Scott.' No. 6 Beat. Played deep.
- May 14 (Thursday).* Blank. Hot sun. Hard sky. No. 5 Beat. Oyster-catcher, 3 eggs. Green Plover, 4 eggs. Ringed Plover, 4 eggs.
- May 15 (Friday).* Eight fish (of which I had three of 16 lb., 11 lb., 10½ lb.). Similar flies. Lost one—fly came away after long play. No. 4 Beat.
- May 16 (Saturday).* Blank. Tremendous battle with very big fish. Broke me after ten minutes' play. Small 'Jennie,' double hook. No. 3 Beat.

My total, nine fish landed and three lost in ten days' and one hour's fishing. Other rod, thirteen in same time. Total, twenty-two fish.

Those extracts can certainly be described with fairness as 'rows of dead words,' also of weak ones, not at all adequate to 'stir kindred memories,' so I will endeavour, however inadequately, to amplify and to improve upon them.

III.

On the afternoon of arrival I sat quietly in the Lodge, writing letters and awaiting the return of the rods from the river. They returned early, soon after four o'clock, and one of them—most unselfish of mortals—impressed upon me

that people do not write letters within sight of a salmon river, and urged me to change out of travelling clothing and repair to certain pools not yet fished upon that day. I did so, after some show of (imaginary) reluctance, without wasting valuable time in changing my garments. Let us then proceed (as fast as I did, by aid of motor-car) to the first pool that I fished, and to our immediate subject, spring salmon.

Leaving the road, we pass down a steep grassy slope, through a wood of stunted birch-trees with gnarled stems and with twigs just assuming that reddish-purple tint that foreshadows the delicate green to come. We cross an expanse of purple heather, not the 'bonny purple' of heather in bloom, but the purple of leafless heather which I infinitely prefer, as seen on wide sweeps on Scottish moorland when I have been in quest of fresh-river salmon on a spring day. And soon we come to 'it,' by which I mean the first glorious salmon-pool to be fished this year—the subject of thoughts and of dreams for many long weeks. Also, we hope, to 'him,' the first salmon. Will 'he' come, and, if so, where?

Surroundings are all forgotten. Thoughts and feelings are concentrated upon the surface of the current, and upon the question of where that pluck or gentle tug will be felt, when the line will tauten, and the raised rod will bend to the butt and thrill with vigorous life in a great combat between man and fish. 'Where do you think that he will come?' 'He may come anywhere in this water,' replies the gillie, a friend of long standing, who was with me nearly a quarter of a century ago when 'he' first took my fly in a pool not far away. 'I should begin with quite a short line at the top.' I do so, but let me here interpose a short description of the pool. It is narrow at the top, and rocky, the stream turbulent in the narrowed channel between the rocks. I swim the fly in it, easing the line down just enough to prevent the fly 'cutting,' or leaving a wake in the swift water. No result. Then the pool broadens, with still water beyond the main current, but a deep stream with a good 'pull' in it under the near bank to straighten the line well before its recovery after a cast—a great boon to the unpractised angler for salmon. The river-side rocky and difficult to negotiate. Above the rocks, bushes, their tops clipped off to help the angler. Above the bushes, grass and heather, and an easy foothold for the whole length of the pool, and away to the next.

The wind blows strongly up-stream (it generally does in these parts—of that more anon) and the gillie has advised the heaviest line that a light 14-foot rod enables me to lift from the water without undue strain. He knows my limitations when the wind blows strongly in my face. I get out more line gradually, the fly at each cast making a very little plop in the

still water just beyond the turbulence and then swinging round, like a pendulum, at the end of a straight line and cast, until it has approached the near bank, been 'hung' there for a while, and then withdrawn for the next cast; each little plop a foot or two farther down-stream than the last, until as much line was out as I could manage with comfort, and the process continued by walking down the bank a short step for each cast.

Then it happened. 'He' had come. The rod was bending double and I was seeking a firm foothold for the battle. Several better fishers than I can ever hope to become have written that the supreme moment in salmon-fishing is when the fly is taken. I have written the same myself. Never will I do so again, as applied to May salmon. The playing of this one I should compare, on a greatly magnified scale, with the playing of a lively 3-lb. trout in chalk-stream fishing, using 4 X gut. I was using the finest of salmon-gut. I suppose that the battle lasted for about ten or twelve minutes in that strong water. It seemed like an hour. I never felt sure of success for a single moment until the fish (a silver beauty) was in the net. That, not the hooking, was to me the supreme moment, and so it was for each of the May salmon which I landed, with one exception, which just pulled steadily until I got him into a backwater, where he swam into the net. To certain supreme disasters during the playing I shall refer later. They taught me never again, with May salmon, to imagine that the excitement concluded with the hooking. One more word about netting, instead of following the practice, universal on some rivers, of gaffing. As that first fish lay on the short green turf between the dark heather, the memory occurred to me of a remark by one of the truest sportsmen of my acquaintance. 'I would as soon gaff a beautiful girl as I would a spring salmon.' I agreed with his views.

That, then, is an expansion—I hope not too great a length—of the entry 'May 4 (Monday). Fished one hour. 1 (14½ lb.) &c.' from my diary. Lest it should sound un-English, I have not mentioned having broken into song from sheer joy of life during the exhilaration of that fishing battle, a joy which has been conspicuously absent from real battles in which it has been my lot to take part. Of the other incidents connected therewith I remember best having instructed the chauffeur to hide away my fish, which he was displaying prominently by the roadside, so as not to flaunt my wholly undeserved success before the other rod—a far better fisherman than myself—to whom fate had decreed a succession of about twenty-one blank days of salmon-fishing (a good example of the amazing differences of luck, the main factor in success in the sport), and the influence which this early

success had upon myself. It enabled me to face 'blanks' and to get full value in enjoyment out of my surroundings during several days and hours of hard work with no tangible result.

IV.

Let us, before expanding more of the diary, try to recall some features of those surroundings, which go so far towards making salmon-fishing in Scottish air and amongst Scottish scenery the grand sport that it is. To those who hold that the taking of salmon is the only, or even (under certain conditions) the chief, attraction of the sport, I suggest the taking of them, with a prawn, if numbers are wanted, from a river in the South of England. That also is sport, but the monotonous meadow-land and less invigorating air cannot be compared with the wild surroundings and fine atmosphere of a Scottish strath. What, then, are these surroundings, as I found them, for the first time, in the month of May? I will take out of the diary a sample blank day. Or rather let us, in order to economise in space and to compensate us for getting no fish, take several blank days and roll them into one. It is fair to do so, as the experiences, so tersely recorded in the diary, were repeated in most, if not in all, of them. Let us take May 7 (Thursday) to May 11 (Monday) inclusive, remembering that on May 6, early in the morning, I heard the first note of the cuckoo, that sounded within ear-shot of the Lodge as I hung out of my bedroom window, taking in the beauties of the scene: the soft outline of the red-purple birch-woods clothing the slopes on one side of the valley, and dark-purple of the grouse-moor on the other side; between them the gleam of water marking, here and there, the curve of the river, of streams and pools of infinite variety.

The beats which did not 'give a fish' at all on those blank days varied much, both in their surroundings and in their accessibility. Let us take one that involved a long drive by car and then a longish walk across the heather to the nearest pool. I once saw a wonderful cinematograph film of salmon-fishing, and since then I have taken every possible opportunity of seeing it again. It does not, I hope, smack of advertisement—the bane of the age—to mention that its name is 'Battles with Salmon,' and that the New Era Films Company control it. One of the earliest 'captions' (I think that is the right word) is 'Spring-time in Scotland,' and the picture shown is one of a sheep and a lamb. The producer was right. Sheep with lambs are the form of life most in evidence during our drive along the road to the beat, and careful driving is needed, as the lambs seem always, like the hens of England, to be on a different side of the road from that which they prefer when a motor-car comes on the scene.

Of other forms of life the green plovers are the most active, screaming and wheeling about as we pass. 'Their young ones have hatched out,' says one of the gillies, and sure enough they have. We succeed in spotting two of them, jolly little fluff-balls on stilts, and we stop the car to inspect and handle them, the parents violently protesting and apparently giving contradictory advice, as one little fluff-ball sprinted away on his long legs, tumbling constantly as he went. The other crouched and camouflaged, melting into its surroundings. When we leave the road a cock grouse explodes himself out of the heather close to our feet. 'The world's coming to an end!' says he (as Charles Kingsley tells us). 'Kuk! kuk! go and catch spiders! Kuk! kuk!' says his mate, busy with the cares of housekeeping for the little brood. Then a blue hare, still retaining parts of his white winter coat, lollops slowly away from us, occasionally stopping to examine the intruders. We come upon wide stretches of heather and moorland, and note a fine herd of deer afar off. Beyond again, miles away, are great mountains—'Bens'—with snow upon their summits. The whole air is trilling with the curlew's nesting-note—'The clear air vibrates with the most wonderful of all the notes of birds, the prolonged spring notes of curlews, the most healing sound that ever was, full of rest and joy.' Such words, used by Sir Edward Grey (as he then was) in his *Fly-fishing*, cannot fail to stir kindred memories; they form anything but a 'row of dead words.'

These are samples of the bird-notes to be heard on that wild moor, and to them I would add the mournful piping of oyster-catchers, disturbed from their nest (?) on a bank of smooth pebbles, on which (on another beat) we found also (within five yards) a green plover's and a ringed plover's nest, each with four eggs, the last-named nest a perfect specimen, both of camouflage and of beauty. The eggs were invisible amongst their surroundings, and the nest beneath them a cup-shaped declivity lined with sparkling little crystals, apparently collected for their beauty. The cock bird, quite tame, walked about within a few yards of us. Terns, the graceful sea-swallows, were also nesting on that beat, as were sandpipers, redshanks, ring-ouzel, and snipe; but I must really leave the birds and get to our subject of salmon, though I cannot do so without mentioning the opportunities that offered of studying the grace of bird-flight as you see it with white birds, like terns and oyster-catchers, against a background of dark heather. We are inclined to miss this beauty, when we are on the seashore, for want of a dark background.

v.

Salmon were 'jumping' everywhere on those blank days. There must have been thousands

of them in the river, wherein the mystery of their life and habits has never yet been solved. 'Jumping' is a word that can suitably be applied to a few, but not to the majority of them, as seen in May. Then they come out of the water and curve in again, full of purpose, moving fast in pursuance of that purpose, whatever it is—'running,' it may be, to the pools above. When they are doing that around you, and your fly is in the water, you can take the phenomenon in two ways, according to your temperament and to the degree of your exhaustion by much casting without result. You can view these 'jumping' fish with exasperation or with admiration. The success with which my holiday began enabled me to choose the latter course, and I thought again of Charles Kingsley, sitting on his old screw in the pinewoods near Sandhurst and rhapsodising about the grace of fox and hound, when he was unable to follow the chase. Then of his going home and writing the best of his prose idylls, *The Winter Garden*. There is nothing, to my mind, in the grace of movement of fox or of hound that comes near to the beauty and appearance of well-balanced strength of a May salmon speeding up-stream, sometimes showing the silver gleam of his side in a leap clear of the surface. And even if fish which show do not take (I believe that they seldom do), you fish on expectantly, in the hope that there are others in the pool that will. A blank day in May offers more impetus and encouragement to persistence (a better word than patience, a virtue constantly but erroneously applied to fly-fishers by their friends) than a blank day in March, when no fish are showing, and, exhausted beyond endurance, you are given to wondering whether salmon really do come into fresh water at all at that time of the year.

Even if one avoids exasperation at visible salmon that refuse to take a fly, on the plea that it destroys pleasure and contravenes Izaak Walton's (and St Paul's) great maxim, 'study to be quiet,' there is no avoiding speculation about better methods, if any, to induce them to do so, and so to improve one's sport. Having been out of touch with brother fly-fishers for a long time, it was not until I was just on the point of leaving for my holiday that I heard from one of them that fly-fishing for salmon had been revolutionised by new methods of casting. A skilled fisher on the Dee, he told me, had recently taken fifty spring fish, while the other rods had taken seven fish among them. This man used a 12-foot rod and very small flies (No. 9 size, I was told), even in Spring. He greased his line and part of his cast of gut. Instead of the traditional method of casting down-stream, he cast across and slightly up-stream, letting the fly come round without a trace of drag, lifting his floating line off the surface and switching it up-stream occasionally

to keep the line straight, without dragging the fly. He had enough mastery of rod and line to enable him to do this effectively. He proved the soundness of his method by his great successes. I soon found, in conversation with other rods and with gillies, that his fame had spread to various salmon-rivers, and that others had adopted the greased line, but not, so far as I could gather, with quite the same success. Maybe, with more practice, the method will

become universal, and revolution will be effected. Although I have not tested the new way personally, it is, I think, worth mentioning. I have not yet read about it anywhere, though I have read much about dry-fly fishing, in the usual way (up-stream), for salmon. The exponent of the new art to whom I have referred sinks his fly a few inches below the surface.

(Continued on page 811.)

THE CHRISTMAS GIFT.

By ELLA S. BOSWELL.

I.

THE motor drew up in front of Dechindarg House. Dr Brent stepped out, and then paused to let his town-tired eyes feast on the beauty that surrounded him. It was a typically Christmas scene, that glowed and sparkled in the clear sunshine. White snow, with its holy purity unsmirched. What a contrast to the mud and slush he had left behind! Forget-me-not-blue sky touched by the orange and crimson of coming sunset. A holly tree, on the lawn, covered with scarlet berries. It was just like a huge Christmas card. He loved the conventional appropriateness of it all. But though he drew in a breath of rapture he exhaled it as a sigh. 'Poor old Art! I don't suppose it's much consolation to him.' Then he turned towards the stately house with its Greek front of weather-stained sandstone and warmer coloured tower, of an earlier date, rising above it. In the doorway stood an elderly man-servant beaming a correctly restrained welcome.

'Ah, Kennedy, a happy Christmas!'

'The same to you, sir.'

Dr Brent stepped briskly from the glory outside into the gloomy house. The entrance-hall was rather dark, and the walls were adorned with sporting trophies and various kinds of weapons. Not a sprig of holly or evergreen relieved their grimness. Only a glowing fire struck a seasonable note.

'Carried out my instructions?' Dr Brent asked, as Kennedy helped him off with his thick travelling coat.

'Everything is all ready, sir; but what the colonel will say when he knows——' Kennedy shook his head despondingly.

Dr Brent laughed. 'He may kick me out—if there's kick enough left in him. I wish I thought there was! But there's one thing he won't do—and that's blame the wrong man. You'll be all right.'

'For acting without orders, sir? I'm taking the risk. It's my Christmas present to the colonel.'

'Nonsense, Kennedy. He can't do without you.'

'I'd have said he couldn't do without Miss Margaret—yet he's shut the door against her.'

'I hope he won't keep it shut much longer. I mean to have a straight talk with him about it.'

Again Kennedy shook his head. 'He won't let you, sir. Me and Mrs Kennedy have both tried, and nearly got dismissed. I know you're different, sir, from the like of us, but if he quarrels with you what's to happen to him? You're the only friend he cares to have come here.'

'Well, I'll go cautiously, and I promise you sha'n't be incriminated. Mind, if ever he does sack you, there's a place with me. I know it wouldn't be the same thing, but I'd be jolly glad to have you and Mrs Kennedy.' Dr Brent's charming smile, which had cheered so many stricken people, shone out and sent a wave of encouragement into the anxious Kennedy.

'Thank you, sir. Me and Mrs Kennedy are getting up in years, and wouldn't suit with new-fangled ways. I doubt London would be a bit strange after Dechindarg, but if things came to the worst here, we'd be glad to serve you.'

'Things aren't coming to the worst! I hope they'll take a turn for the better. By the way, how is the colonel? Pretty middling, I gathered from his letter.'

'He's breaking up fast, sir, and that's a fact! Since his accident he can't ride or shoot. What's he got to live for?'

'Plenty of things—as I mean to point out. Where is he?'

'The library, as usual. He comes down in the morning and goes up at night, with my help. He won't put in a lift. Said he'd be —— hem——' Kennedy gave an embarrassed cough. 'Said he wouldn't care to improve the house for a relative he's never seen and wouldn't like if he did.'

'I rather fancy that lift will go in. It's simple nonsense about unknown relatives when he has a grandson to succeed.'

'I'd be glad to think so, sir, and so would Mrs Kennedy. Miss Margaret losing her mother, and Mrs Kennedy having no little ones of her own, it's natural like she should have took up with the young mistress. I suppose the little boy will be a—a bit foreign-looking, so to speak, sir?'

'Not he. Takes after his mother. Maxwell inside and out.'

'That's good hearing, sir. The name's easy changed if he was coming into Dechindarg—but if he was a bit too dark the colonel would never get over that.'

'The colonel will be proud of him yet, and you'll have a share in bringing it about, if my plan succeeds. Now, I'd better get along to the library, or I may excite suspicion.'

II.

The library was a long, low room with oak beams across its ceiling. The books were shut away in cases with glass lattice-work doors, through which such names as Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, and Surtees, peeped out. The walls were hung with family portraits, and two rather small windows looked out on the snow-covered garden. Again, no holly or flowers suggested a remembrance of the season. The fire-place, at the far end of the room, had its old-fashioned grate piled with blazing logs. Two deep leather-covered armchairs were drawn up in front, and in one of them sat a tall, handsome, gray-haired man of about sixty. He had that perfect grooming which stamps a man as pre-war army—a relic of the days when the army was a social hall-mark rather than a heart-stirring distinction. Unfortunately red-tape and shibboleths had wrapped themselves round Colonel Maxwell's personality as tightly as the bindings of a Chinese woman's feet. Physically he was a fine man; beside him Dr Brent looked small and insignificant, but the little doctor's pleasant face had a tenderness and a strength that were lacking in the colonel's impassive features. The one had ripened and expanded with the passing years; the other had narrowed and hardened.

The mere sight of the kindly doctor brought a glow of comfort to the lonely, stricken man, but his greeting was ungracious: 'Hallo, Martin! Come to spoil another Christmas?'

Dr Brent laughed. 'That's about the most original welcome I've ever received—even from you.'

'Well, you'd have had a much better time at home—worshipped by adoring patients—wouldn't you?'

A sudden flicker of happiness shone in the doctor's gray eyes. 'I had my Christmas Eve at home, old man. I cut that off you, this year; so don't waste your pity. As to patients, the absence of their 'phoning is one of the joys of the holiday. You can't realise what a rest it is to know one won't be rung up. I'm sure

Mrs Kennedy has made my Christmas cake, and I don't believe even you would go the length of forbidding her to give me turkey and plum pudding.'

'You can have snapdragon and a bran pie as well—so long as you don't ask me to pump up fictitious jollity. This getting laid by the heels is the finish. You're a heart specialist; you couldn't give me a better present than the discovery that I've something fatally wrong with my heart.' The colonel's cold blue eyes sent a challenging glance to his cheerful friend.

'What a pity! for I'm giving you something very different,' the doctor answered, undismayed. 'Ah, here is tea and my cake.'

Kennedy stole an anxious glance at his fellow-conspirator as he set the tea-tray on the small table between the two chairs.

Dr Brent's lips formed a silent 'No' as he turned to the man. Then he said aloud.

'Tell Mrs Kennedy I was counting on my cake! What a beauty! Crystallised violets and angelica. "A Merry Christmas" and "M. B." It's a masterpiece! I hope there's plenty of almond icing underneath?'

'You can trust Mrs Kennedy for that, sir, and plenty of fruit, too.' Kennedy withdrew, highly gratified at the reception of the cake.

III.

'What an amazing fellow you are, Martin!' the colonel exclaimed, as the door closed. 'You live up against tragedy—hand out death sentences to terrified patients—yet you're as keen on that cake as a greedy little school-boy.'

'But that's the reason, my dear chap! If I couldn't make the most of every bit of pleasure that comes my way, I'd get hardened or dotty. There's more in this cake than icing, fruit, and all the rest of it—there's Mrs Kennedy's goodwill. It's a great mistake not to enjoy the little happinesses.'

The colonel emitted a scornful grunt. 'And now you've delivered your neat little sermonette you'll feel better, eh? I admit you caught me nicely.'

'You caught yourself, my friend! I wasn't thinking about you.'

'All the same you consider me a grouser. You can't deceive me, Martin.'

'I don't want to! You and I always see life from different angles, and usually fight about it. Worse, now, I fancy, than in the days when we hammered each other as kids—but the old friendship holds still, doesn't it?'

'Good lord, Martin! You don't expect our friendship to break? You're the last prop I've left. If anything happened to you I'd blow my brains out. Before this cursed accident I could say, "Twelfth of August; wonder if the birds will be plentiful." Then the partridges and pheasants took their turn till the hunting

season came to the rescue. Now when Christmas is past I shall say, "July, Martin's holiday;" and then again, "Christmas—Martin will be coming." Thank Heaven you're younger and tougher than I. India played the deuce with my liver, and the late war wasn't good for a man's health.'

Dr Brent rose and laid a hand on his friend's shoulder. 'That's all right, Art—I'll be here till you kick me out, or I kick the bucket.'

'I kick you out? I haven't a kick left in this confounded leg.'

'No; a badly fractured femur takes some mending, but you've plenty of kick in your heart, your old villain!'

'That's the trouble—makes me want to blow my brains out. Life has tried me too hard. To taste happiness and have it cut short; to build up consolation out of the ruins and have it stolen by a damned piano-thumping Dago. Oh, it won't bear thinking about!'

'At least you tasted happiness, Art—I hadn't even that, yet I'm not tempted to try an automatic. I haven't got one, anyway.'

Colonel Maxwell sat up and stared at his friend. 'So there was someone? I never knew—never guessed. You were always so keen on your work and your confounded little trivialities.'

'Because I missed the big happiness I made the most of what came my way. I commend that philosophy of life to you.'

'But who? Who? I can't think! You were such an all-round ladies' man. How you escaped matrimony always beats me.'

'There's safety in numbers.'

'So you envy me? I've always felt there was something queer under your friendship.'

'I'm sorry for that!'

'You're always critical.'

'Honestly, I'm not. I only think you make the road harder for yourself than need be—that's what troubles me, old man.'

'My road's been hard enough without my adding to it. When I lost my dear wife I was broken-hearted, but I bowed to the will of my Maker. My child grew up and became my companion. That she should desert me, and disgrace herself, by marrying Gonzales was an outrage I could not accept with resignation. I could only put her out of my life and try to crush down my unhappiness with sport. Now that's taken from me. What would you do in my place?'

'Send for your daughter.'

'I've no daughter. That—that woman made her choice between me and Gonzales when she eloped. I've done with her.'

'Very well. You can't ride and shoot, but you can teach your grandson to do both. He made no choice—'

'If you mention that Dago's brat to me I'll order the motor to take you to the station. I

never thought it would come to this between us.'

'All right! Just let me finish, then I'll ring the bell myself. You're spoiling your life, and I must make my protest. Little Martin's a chip of the old block—Maxwell inside and out. Think what he would mean to you.'

'You'll suggest I should invite that scoundrel Gonzales to come here and play the piano to cheer me up. Ugh!'

'He couldn't; the poor chap's dead.'

'Good job, too—damn him.'

'You never saw him; I did, and I say God rest his soul.'

'So that's it. Now he's gone *she's* tired of her husks and sends you as her ambassador. Say I've no fatted calf waiting.'

'My god-daughter—I won't call her "that woman," even as a Christmas concession to you—is neither homeless nor destitute. Gonzales died shortly before your accident. When I saw you in the nursing-home you were so ill that I considered it unwise to tell you. Now it is a plain duty to speak out. Make what you please of the information.' Dr Brent held out his hand. 'If I start at once I can get as far as Edinburgh to-night.'

Colonel Maxwell ignored the offered hand. 'Don't go, Martin. I—I'd feel it badly if you did. Forgive my temper; it gets the better of me at times, as you know.'

'Of course I'll stay. I want to, but I draw the line at being turned out. I promise not to worry you any more. Suppose I fetch my Christmas gift—I'm rather wondering if you'll like it.'

'Well, I know you'll like mine, because it's the same as usual. Your box of cigars is on that table.'

The doctor beamed. 'Good man! I always enjoy your cigars—I was thinking of them coming down in the train.'

'You old humbug! Some day I'll give you something impossible for the pleasure of hearing your nice remarks.' The colonel grinned. He felt very much relieved that the dear chap hadn't gone off in a huff.

IV.

Once outside the library door Dr Brent paused and drew his handkerchief over his damp forehead. 'Poor old Art—he's in a bad way! Got terribly cranky. Kennedy sized things up better than I did. Personal experience, I suppose. Well, I've lost the first round, but I'm not beaten yet—and perhaps I've paved the way for the next attempt. I think Gonzales's death made an impression. Queer things we human beings are! Art's letting pride and prejudice spoil what's left of his life—and imagines he's doing something fine. Poor old chap! What a Christmas he's handing out to me.'

At that moment Kennedy came into view.

The doctor had an idea that he had been hovering about the whole time.

'Just going for the wireless now,' he said cheerfully. It would be cruel to let Kennedy know how he was funking the reception of the gift. Together they unpacked the set.

Meanwhile the colonel had also been thinking. Gonzales dead! That was something. Didn't it alter the situation considerably? How he longed for Margaret—and the boy. The direct line following on at Dechindarg. Of course the little chap must take the name of Maxwell—if he made him heir. True, the boy was the son of a—a foreign pianist—a rank outsider, yet Martin had said 'a Maxwell inside and out.' Boys usually did take after their mothers. Besides, Martin's word could always be trusted. How beastly he'd been to poor old Martin!

At that moment the door opened and Dr Brent entered with his Christmas gift.

'Merciful powers—a gramophone!' Blank dismay swept away the welcoming smile from the colonel's face.

'No—better than that,' Dr Brent assured him.

'Well, it couldn't be worse, could it, now?'

'You old ruffian! I wish I *had* inflicted one on you. It's a wireless set.'

'Oh, is it? Thank you, Martin.'

'You're cut off from the world, so the world's coming to you. On cold days it'll warm you up to hear Bolshie speeches. Make you shake your fist like anything, and then think of the pleasure of clicking them off.'

'There's something in that—only I'll know they're still at it.'

'Church is a difficulty with that leg of yours: now you can hear sermons in comfort—better than my sermonettes, eh?'

'Sorry for the parsons if they weren't!'

'There'll be all the latest news, sport, society, murders, and money.'

'Yes, quite so—'

'And music. There's a concert starting now. I'll just switch on London first. You can have Brussels or Paris later.'

The loud-speaker brayed out 'The Mistletoe Bough.' For a moment or two the colonel endured it with mingled politeness and penitence, but it was too much for him. 'For heaven's sake, Martin, stop that damned row. Sorry, old man. Try and get the shop to take it back, won't you! I suppose these things are expensive?'

'I should just think so! But don't worry about that. I haven't got one yet—waited to see if it caught on with you. This will do for me—I like it. If you don't mind I'll have my Christmas concert.'

v.

Dr Brent adjusted the head-phones and sat down. Evidently the old chap didn't realise

Kennedy's share in the business. Now the receiving wires could be removed without any fuss. That was a blessing. Yes, Art was watching him with curiosity. There was still a chance. Evidently the silence puzzled him. The doctor set himself to act an enjoyment he was far too nervous to feel. He beat time to the music, smiled, and now and again closed his eyes. Each time he opened them he met the colonel's inquiring gaze. Was his acting all right, or was he overdoing it? The colonel moved impatiently. There—she was beginning! The loved voice reached him and he ceased to pretend. Margaret was with him—in spite of all the miles between. Here—though she was forbidden to enter Dechindarg. But this was more than even Margaret; some trick of the wireless changed the individuality slightly. It might have been the mother's voice, stealing across the years, instead of the daughter's over land and water. Dr Brent felt his lips quiver.

A hand touched his knee—now it was an impatient tapping, and the colonel pointed to the loud-speaker. Dr Brent turned it on again, and took off his head-phones.

'... Life for ever more.

Wind in the cedars proclaim the joyful story,

Waves of the sea the tidings bear afar;

To you this night is born He who will guide you

To paths of peace, to living waters clear.

Though poor be the chamber, come here, come and

adore,

Lo, the Lord of Heaven has to mortals given Life for evermore.'

The beautiful contralto voice sang the words very tenderly. As the song ceased, Dr Brent switched off. There must be no anti-climax, no other singer to break the spell. He knew his friend's face was working, because it was turned away and shaded by a hand.

'Who, Martin—who is it?' The colonel's voice shook.

'Ah, you feel the likeness too? It's Margaret.'

'Where is she?'

'The London Broadcasting Station.'

'No, no! I mean, where is she living? You're in touch with her—you must know.'

'She and the boy are living with me. Gonzales died at my house—hæmorrhage of the lungs. He walked into my consulting-room and told me he was done for. It was the thought of leaving Margaret and the boy destitute that broke down his overweening pride—he loved her all right, poor chap. Margaret and little Martin have been with me ever since. She takes engagements at the broadcasting station, and I think it comforts her to sing. Music was the bond between her and Gonzales, and, of course, when he came, the boy—she adores him. It's been a wonderful happiness for me. I'd have been a sneak to keep it all to myself.'

There was a pause during which the colonel fought for self-control, and when he spoke his

voice was not quite steady: 'Martin, old man, you've been a thundering good friend to me and mine. I think I know now who it was you loved—and I came home on leave and cut

into it, yet you never reproached me for my selfish blindness. We'll go shares in Margaret for her mother's sake. Words won't tell you what you've done for me to-day.'

A DESTROYER'S DAY.

By 'TAFFRAIL,' Author of *Pincher Martin, O.D.*; *Little Ships, &c.*

IT was blowing a full gale from the north-westward, and once round Duncansby Head and into the mad, wind-ripped welter which is the Pentland Firth, the sea had become heavier and steeper and more confused. There was land on both sides—to starboard, the rugged mass of Swona, with the surges beating tumultuously round its rock-fringed base, and beyond, stretching from right ahead to well abaft the starboard beam, Hoy and South Ronaldshay, the southern islands of the Orkney group. Their reddish cliffs and bleak, wind-swept hills, touched here and there with the dull green of young heather, were brilliant in the strong sunlight. On the port-bow lay the island of Stroma with its lighthouse, and behind it, terminating in the bold hummock of Dunnet Head, was the mainland of Scotland, the inhospitable northern coast of Caithness. The wind-lashed water broke in insensate fury against the rock-studded coast, the white passion of the gale seeming to blend austere with the rugged majesty of cliff and crag.

The Pentland Firth has an evil name among seamen, and well it deserves it. Its pent-up tides are strong and uncertain, its capricious eddies and currents snares for the unwary. Even great men-of-war have suddenly found themselves caught in an unexpected swirl and swung through a right angle or more off their course. But in heavy westerly weather its dangers are magnified a hundredfold, for the gale, blowing against a tidal stream which sometimes runs at ten knots, raises a heavy, toppling sea sufficient to overwhelm an ill-found ship. Its character must be seen to be believed; but during the war a battleship, struggling to the westward against a gale, had her bridge completely demolished by an enormous wave, which broke on board in a liquid avalanche and flooded the ship with hundreds of tons of water.

And as the destroyer steamed on she began to tumble and to pitch as only a small ship can. There was no ordered direction in the breaking seas, no regular cadence in their movement. Wind-driven, carried hither and thither by the tide, they rose and fell hap-hazardly in all directions—rose perpendicularly, toppled over, and fell in ruin, each in its smother of yeasty white. At times, rearing their ragged heads aloft, they charged furiously together like butting

rams, the spray of their impact hurtling to leeward in sheets of flying spindrift.

There was no avoiding them by a sudden twist of the helm. Without any chance of attuning her motion to that of the seas the ship adopted a violent and disconcerting corkscrew movement, which made it impossible to steer a steady course, impossible to stand upright on her reeling bridge without holding on. Sometimes her stern was flung clear of the water, until her propellers raced madly and the rudder was temporarily useless. One felt the bows lifting dizzily on the back of some mighty comber, then an appreciable pause as they hung poised, followed by a sickening plunge as they fell into the succeeding hollow. There came the usual thudding, quivering jar, while a great wall of gray-green water, streaked with a delicate lace-like pattern of white and tipped with yeasty foam, reared itself up in front of the stem. Sea after sea crashed on board and came surging aft along the forecastle. The wind-flung spray went hurtling in sheets high over bridge and funnels. Assailed simultaneously from all directions, the upper deck was often buried as waves leapt bodily on board and surged across it in a cataract. The dead-weight of water and the terrible trip-hammer blows when the bows fell seemed literally to stop the ship dead as she plunged and wallowed. She reminded one of a labouring horse. One could feel her straining, quivering, and bending to the mighty thrust of the seas.

Once clear of the narrow water between the Orkneys and the mainland, however, the sea became more regular. But the great moving hummocks, sweeping down from the westward with the full power of the gale and the weight of many leagues of open ocean behind them, seemed to overtop the masthead as the ship sank into the troughs. So steep were the waves that the destroyer, borne skywards on a boiling crest, leant over to an angle of fully forty-five degrees, and seemed to slide bodily down the next abyss. And always the forecastle and upper deck were overwhelmed in boiling cataracts.

The distance from the Pentland Firth to Cape Wrath is a bare sixty miles; but it was the longest sixty miles the little ship had ever gone. Reeling, plunging, staggering, and quivering, she steamed in turn past Brims Ness, Strathy

Point, Roan Island, the loch-indented coast of Sutherland, and so on to the north-western point of Scotland, the bold, irregular, honey-combed hummock of rock, with the white guardian lighthouse on its summit—which is Cape Wrath.

Great hillocks of water, dashing themselves at the base of its sheer cliffs, broke in upheavals which hurled the spray a full hundred feet into the air. The body of the waves, recoiling seaward after their fruitless efforts to breach the solid rock, impacted against the next advancing billow, so that for fully half a mile out from the shore there was a fringe of whitened, tumbling water leaping and playing in all directions. It was an awe-inspiring spectacle, and one could not help thinking of the awful fate in store for any unfortunate vessel helpless on that iron-bound shore. No wonder some long-forgotten mariner, clawing his way round the dread promontory in his crazy sailing-ship, in the teeth of a westerly gale, named it Cape Wrath.

The destroyer, altering course to the southward, made for the nearest convenient shelter. Swept constantly by the waves, wallowing heavily with the wind and sea now on the quarter, she steamed on, passing by a ten-fathom patch on which the sea, checked abruptly in its stride, broke in tumultuous fury—past Bulgie Island, its low rounded summit almost obliterated in sheets of flying spindrift. But she had little farther to go, for presently, altering course in towards the land, she was steaming past Eilean an Roin, the Island of the Seals, at the entrance to Loch Inchar. Once under its welcome lee the sea started to subside, and in a few minutes the ship was steaming smoothly up a narrow fiord.

'The loch is little used,' say the official Sailing Directions, 'partly in consequence of the entrance being difficult to make out from seaward.' Moreover, its average width is little more than six hundred yards, and within half a mile of the entrance, almost in mid-channel, lies the dreaded Bodha Ceann na Saile, a submerged rocky ledge with a least depth on it of no more than twelve feet. The leading marks are none too good, and the destroyer

drew fourteen and a half feet of water; but the loch provides a good anchorage sheltered from any wind that blows, and storm-beaten and damaged by the seas, her weary officers and men drenched to the skin, and hardly a dry place in the ship, she was compelled to make it. It was a matter of 'any port in a storm.'

It was a wild and a savage spot, a full forty miles from the nearest railway, with bleak, rocky hills patched with heather and coarse vegetation, and no signs of civilisation but a little cluster of gray stone cottages, whose inhabitants could be seen in their doorways staring at the unexpected apparition of a British man-of-war.

But here was peace and quietness, for as the ship steamed on up the narrow gully between the hills, hugging the shore on the port hand to avoid the rocks in mid-channel, the water was only ruffled as the squalls came driving down the valleys between the hills. The ship was on an even keel again. The awful motion had ceased, and the frenzied wallowing and staggering in the wild turmoil outside was a thing of the past.

Weary men, thankfully divesting themselves of their oilskins, appeared on the forecabin and busied themselves about the anchors. Hot food had long been out of the question, and presently the smell of cooking in the galley mingled with the clean scent coming off the land. A leadsmen in the chains twirled his lead and chanted the depth of water. A sharp order from the bridge, and with a splash and a rattle of cable the anchor went to the bottom.

Practically the only joy of a gale at sea in a small ship is the feeling of supreme thankfulness on arriving in harbour—the hot bath, the change of clothing, the warm meal, followed by a pipe and a blessed forty winks. And within an hour and a half the deck of that destroyer was untenanted save by the solitary, yawning quartermaster at the gangway, whose watch it was. Mess decks, wardroom, and cabins alike were occupied by sleeping men. Save for the shrilling of the wind, the hoarse chattering of gulls, an occasional snore, and the ceaseless lapping of water alongside, the silence was undisturbed.

Peace, blessed peace!

PAPER FROM PEAT.

IT was handed to the present writer as a curiosity. But with peat lying waste in multi-millions of acres both in Europe and North America, some go-ahead folks might do well for themselves and the world of commerce by applying modern research and methods to the discovery which M. Lallemand of Besançon made, and profitably utilised before

the use of wood-pulp, as a cheap and efficient material for paper.

There is peat of a fibrous, and also of a non-fibrous nature, and the fibrous alone will do for paper-making, producing a strong and excellent material, though not fine enough for printing or writing purposes. In the Lallemand process, all the earthy substance is washed from the

fibrous part of the peat. It is then soaked for many hours in a caustic lye; soaked again for a shorter time in weak hydrochloric acid; washed and steeped for a short period in a solution of alum; bleached with chlorine; then mixed with a small percentage of rag-pulp, or pulp obtained from old ropes and bagging; and with the resultant peat-pulp the Besançon expert made paper in the ordinary way. Previous to the introduction of pulpwood, Lallemand, and also Keller of Kuehnheide in Saxony, made a fortune in so manufacturing serviceable wrapping-papers from fibrous peat, as well as mill-board, paste-board, and papier-mâché.

With the conservation of timber already being seriously regarded in Canada and the United States, the practicability of producing paper from 'turf,' or peat, should not be overlooked—research in the products' laboratory and present-day methods of paper-making pointing the way toward greatly lessened costs of production.

In the praiseworthy endeavour to create Irish industries good ought to result if such a

manufacture can be started. Ireland possesses millions of acres of fibrous peat, which over-lies ground that in many parts might be utilised for agriculture. A substantial volume might be written on the repeated endeavours to make profitable use of Ireland's bogs. During last century many were the schemes which came to an end suddenly—several of them as 'wild-cat' as can be found on any gold-fields. There were plans for manufacturing peat charcoal, for producing sulphate of ammonia, acetate of lime; nay, naphtha, paraffin, volatile oil and fixed oil, by treating the peat with chemicals.

Indeed, utilising peat as the basis for making paper would be no new venture. Three generations ago, works were started at Clontahard and Tarbert in the county of Kerry for the preparation of wrapping-papers and mill-boards from the adjacent bog. This venture operated along the lines of Lallemand's method. Ill-management brought it soon to an end.

Nowadays the success of such a manufacture in Ireland would prove of more than national interest.

OTHER PEOPLE'S WINDOWS.

PART II.

IV.

IT was a very erect and tight-lipped George Henry Berkley who left, quite possibly for the last time, the Carfax's abode that fateful afternoon. He had taken his departure without pausing to speak with the object of his affections. In his present humour, he was inclined to place at Anne's door at least half the responsibility for his unpleasant ten minutes in the study. As he passed down the long garden-path, he saw from the corner of his eye the nearest curtain of the front-room window move ever so slightly, but setting his teeth, he kept resolutely on his way. George had already made up his mind not only to keep away from Anne's home, but also never to see or speak to Anne again until he had become one of the world's workers.

Coldly elated by his firmness in resisting another glance at that fluttering curtain, he strode on down the quiet tree-darkened avenue with his chin in the air and shoulders squared. However, his pace slackened a little as his thoughts began to take more coherent shape. Where was he to find work? What manner of work was he seeking? Was he capable of doing any sort of work? As well as being good at games, George really was a sportsman, two excellent qualities which unfortunately do not always go together. In his heart of hearts he was forced to admit the justice of the alderman's criticisms. After all, a man should

work. Of course his father could find him something to do, but for some reason which he could not at the moment explain, George strongly objected to working for his father. 'I must find my own job,' he reflected; 'make my own career.' Suddenly his meditations were interrupted by a shrill voice which came from somewhere above him. George glanced up and saw the upper half of a stout maid-servant, seated half-way out of a bedroom window. She was using a wash-leather with great vigour, and carrying on a spasmodic conversation with the servant next door, who was similarly occupied. Their remarks were destined to have far-reaching effects on George's fate, and change completely the whole course and structure of his life. The servants were merely grumbling because the professional window-cleaner had failed to appear at the stipulated time. Both seemed convinced that he was a most unreliable individual who took no interest in his work, and also that Northtowers was the worst town in the world, so far as window-cleaning was concerned.

The complaints of the servants suggested something to George, an idea so preposterous that it was worth considering, if only for the amusement afforded by thinking it over. He smiled and stopped. Then he chuckled outright and moved on again. 'Window-cleaning is just the sort of job that would suit me,' he muttered. 'Out in the open all day. On the move all the time. No terrific brain power

required. No night work, and Saturday afternoons free.'

The more he thought over the idea the less preposterous it became, and a spasm of self-disgust shook him. 'Here I've been wasting my life in this disgraceful fashion, when all the time I'm a born window-cleaner.'

He became reflective again. Judging from the remarks of the servants, the window-cleaning facilities of Northtowers left much to be desired. 'These slap-dash methods of cleaning other people's windows must cease,' George told himself sternly. 'This business must be organised and placed on a proper footing; also it must be made to pay.'

The idea of cleaning windows in the town where he was born did not dismay George in the least. He was no snob, and in any case his friends had long ceased to wonder at anything he did. The more he considered window-cleaning as a profession suited to his peculiar requirements, the more enamoured of it he became. The one big advantage about window-cleaning was that it did not require a great deal of previous experience. George felt quite sure that one would not be obliged to take a special course of study, or serve seven years' apprenticeship in order to become an efficient window-cleaner.

His interest in windows once awakened, George noted that he was in a veritable forest of glass. 'Windows,' he muttered exultingly—'windows everywhere, and they all require cleaning.' At the corner of the avenue, which opened into another and wider avenue, he stopped and lighted a cigarette, thus attracting the attention of another young man on the opposite pavement. Turning abruptly from his original course, the stranger moved towards George, making urgent signals with his right hand, which also grasped a small attaché case of peculiar shape. 'Keep it in!' he requested breathlessly, when only half-way across the road. 'Please keep it in!' Evidently he meant the match between George's fingers.

'Sorry, too far gone,' answered George. He produced his box again and handed it to the newcomer. 'Help yourself.'

'Thanks,' said the stranger gratefully; 'you're the first man, apart from a policeman, whom I've met for some time, and begging matches from policemen is a trifle beyond me.' He produced a crumpled cigarette from an inside pocket, and lowered the attaché case to the pavement. George eyed him with interest. The stranger was a pleasant-looking young man of about his own age, whose clothes, though well and fashionably cut, had been worn too long. His shoes, while surviving a cursory glance, would not bear a closer inspection, and the light socks above them showed occasional traces of amateurish mending. His linen, however, was beyond reproach. 'If ever I become wealthy,

I shall buy some matches of my own,' declared this young man, emitting a huge cloud of smoke and returning the match-box.

George laughed. 'Out of work?'

The other nodded. 'Practically.'

'So am I,' answered George. This statement, taken in conjunction with his expensive lounge suit, faultless headgear and neat shoes, seemed incongruous, but the newcomer did not appear to be greatly surprised. He shrugged philosophically.

'I was envying you just now—thought you were a millionaire.'

George laughed again. 'Doing a bit of travelling until something better comes along?' he asked, indicating the case with a nod.

The other nodded, and raised his property from the ground. 'The contents of this'—he gave the case a slight shake—'would make me a rich man if only I had the capital to advertise it. That's what I lack—capital.'

'Some sort of invention?' inquired George with sympathetic interest.

'My own invention,' answered the other with pride; 'absolutely the finest cleanser on the market. I'm selling the stuff from door to door. Begging people to give me sixpence a packet. If only I could get publicity, they would willingly pay the grocer twice as much for half the quantity. All profit, too, for the stuff costs practically nothing to manufacture.'

'Is it some sort of soap?'

'Hardly soap; any ordinary mop or brush, dipped in water which has been treated with my invention, will remove stains and absorb dirt as blotting-paper absorbs ink. No energy required, elbow grease absolutely unnecessary. I call it the crystal cleanser.'

'Will the stuff clean windows?' asked George eagerly.

The other smiled rather contemptuously. 'Think of something difficult,' he requested. 'Windows are too easy.'

'But still, have you tried it on windows?' persisted George.

'No,' admitted the inventor, 'I haven't tried it on windows; and to do so is quite unnecessary. I can assure you that my invention will enable you to clean a window in about the same length of time it would take you to break one.'

George drew a deep breath. 'If you are not mistaken about this invention of yours, your troubles are at an end,' he declared impressively. 'Did you happen to see a window-cleaner as you were coming along?'

'I saw a little cart with some ladders on it—about the third turning on this side. But look here, do you know someone who might be prepared to finance—'

'Several,' interrupted George, 'but they're not going to get the chance. I've got an idea that will not only give this cleanser a first-class advertisement, but also provide us with some working capital.'

The inventor stared at him with eyes that were at once incredulous and hopeful.

'There will be three of us ; you, me, and one other,' George further explained.

The inventor nodded and extended his hand. 'I shall be only too glad to work on equal terms. My name is Kemp. By the way—er—who is our third partner?'

'I don't know his name,' answered George, 'but he's the window-cleaner.'

V.

They found the little handcart and its burden of ladders drawn up against the side-walk half-way down Acacia Avenue. On each side of the cart the name P. G. Green was painted in large white letters.

As George and his companion approached, a tall and incredibly thin young man with a straggling straw-coloured moustache emerged from the gateway immediately opposite the cart. In his right hand he carried a bucket, and in his left a washleather. On his head he wore an ancient cloth cap, with the peak at the back instead of the front. The sides of his blue slop jacket bulged with dusters. George decided that this must be Mr P. G. Green himself. 'Excuse me,' he said without hesitation. 'We should like a few words with you.'

The window-cleaner hesitated for a moment, and then lowered his pail. 'Right-o!' he said at last, but with obvious reluctance. 'Be as brief as you can, mister ; I'm awfully busy.'

'Yes, I know ; more work than you can manage comfortably, haven't you?'

Mr Green nodded without enthusiasm. 'I shall have to get an assistant, though I can't afford one really. You see I have to cover such a large area in a place of this sort. More than half my time is spent in shoving this blessed cart from one place to another, and I don't get paid for that.'

'I suppose that's the reason there isn't more opposition?' suggested George.

'Somehow,' explained Mr Green, 'you can't keep to one area. Half-a-dozen customers here, and another half-dozen somewhere else. Window-cleaning would be all right if you could have all the windows placed in a nice row and get straight at 'em. I'm learning to drive a motor-car in my spare time. After this blessed handcart, I mean to shove the next vehicle I drive from the inside, and sit down to it, too. Now what is it you wanted to see me about, mister?'

'Mr Kemp and myself have a proposition which, if successful, will rob window-cleaning of its worst terrors, and eliminate to some extent this difficulty of distance. We won't detain you now, but will make an appointment for the near future. Perhaps you will be good enough to give us your address?'

VI.

That evening George sought out his father at the Northtowers Social Club. Old Mitchell Berkley had just been beaten by the club's worst billiard player, and he was in anything but a good temper when George arrived. 'Sorry to interrupt, dad, but can I have a few words with you? It's rather important.'

Mr Berkley nodded briefly, and disposing of his cue, resumed his jacket. He was a big man, whose broad nose and heavy, stubborn chin suggested harshness and intolerance. His ordinary manner, too, lent colour to this impression. However, this rough exterior covered a warm and kindly nature. Mitchell Berkley's bark was much worse than his bite. It so happened that the billiard-room was almost deserted, and most of those present were gathered about the tables. George placed an affectionate hand on his father's shoulder, and, leading him to the fireplace, pushed him gently into an easy-chair.

Berkley senior smiled. 'How much d'you want?' he asked.

George shook his head. 'I've begun to take life seriously. I'm going into business,' he declared.

His father eyed him incredulously. 'Motor bandit?' he inquired with gentle sarcasm.

George laughed. 'No ; window-cleaner,' he answered calmly.

Mr Berkley jerked forward in his chair. 'A what?'

'A window-cleaner.'

There was a long silence, and then Mr Berkley senior spoke again. His manner was serious and his voice grave. 'Now listen to me, my boy ; it's quite time we two had an understanding. I've put up with a great deal from you—and without over-much grumbling, too. At different times your follies have caused me a great deal of worry, not to mention the cost in hard cash. I've always consoled myself with the reflection that your fool pranks were the outcome of high spirits rather than any real desire to make mischief. You're a sportsman, even if you do sometimes act like an idiot, but I won't stand this window-cleaning business. Do you expect me to let you make a fool of yourself in the town where I've lived all my life, and where I am respected? You'll leave other people's windows alone. Now understand that.'

'I said a window-cleaner, dad, not a window breaker.'

His father was unconvinced. 'Your past record isn't good enough,' he answered with a stubborn shake of the head. 'The farther you keep away from glass the better it will be for everyone concerned.'

George leaned forward. 'But, look here, dad, this window-cleaning project isn't a joke.

I'm absolutely serious,' he declared earnestly. 'Something happened to-day which caused me to start looking about for suitable employment. I seized the first opening which offered, and I'm determined to go through with it—become one of the world's workers and all that sort of thing, you know.'

Berkley senior's expression relaxed a little. 'But why on earth clean other people's windows for a living?' he asked in a voice of perplexity.

'Why not?' asked George simply. 'Windows require cleaning, and in this town at least the present facilities for cleaning them are inadequate. I know, because I've been making inquiries.'

The old man sighed. 'I'm glad you've decided to work, my boy, but why can't you come into my business? There's room for you.'

'Just because it is your business, dad. You made it yourself, out of nothing, so to speak. Well, I want to build something, too, or at least help to build something—be in from the very start, if you understand me. You know quite well that there are a score of men who could run your business quite satisfactorily now they have the finished product to work on, but it takes genius to create.'

Old Mitchell smiled. He was proud of his life's work, and his son's tribute greatly pleased him. 'Do you think you have a genius for window-cleaning, George?' he asked.

George shook his head. 'I'll be perfectly frank with you, dad; the window-cleaning business is only a means to an end—an advertisement. We don't expect it to pay. Our firm has its genius already. He's invented the finest cleanser ever known, and we're going to put it on the market. I'm publicity manager and odd-job man.'

Mitchell Berkley rose to his feet. 'Very well, my boy; after all, there's nothing like making your own way in life, and perhaps window-cleaning is as good a way as any. I always hate to see a woman cleaning an upper room window. It looks dangerous to me. Now, if you are really serious about this business, I'll be glad to advance you anything in reason—'

George interrupted him quickly. 'Thanks, dad, but all I want from you is "Little 'Enry".'

VII.

The fact that the crystal polisher really carried out all that was claimed for it by the proud inventor rendered the success of the Crystal Express Window Cleaning Company a foregone conclusion. The problem of getting the polisher onto the market was, of course, both difficult and complicated, but the three young men went to work in an eminently business-like fashion. George belonged to every club in Northtowers and knew many

influential people. He spent a great deal of time in the company of prominent business men and with persons of importance in local politics, town councillors, &c. He ordered his life with a definite purpose, and his expression became anxious and preoccupied.

Meanwhile the residents of Northtowers were being sedulously cultivated by the energetic inventor of the crystal polisher. Smartly dressed, he moved about the suburbs and amongst the minor tradespeople, canvassing from door to door and shop to shop, frequently lighting cigarettes with a wonderful new automatic lighter. The third member of the company, the window-cleaner himself, was far too busy preserving the nucleus of the business to undertake additional duties. It was noticed, however, that he went about his work with greater zest, sometimes whistling loudly and even breaking into snatches of song. The moment 'Little 'Enry' was ready for the road the three would be working together as practical window-cleaners.

'Little 'Enry' was a light motor wagon of famous and reliable manufacture, which had been callously relegated to the darkest corner of the Berkley garage after long and faithful service. Now, however, he was brought forth from this inglorious retirement, thoroughly overhauled, and re-painted a startling red. Ladders and pails, and a large tank containing the priceless polisher, all painted in the same bright colour, were loaded on 'Little 'Enry,' and the Crystal Express Window Cleaning Company was ready to start business in good earnest.

No time was wasted, and, after a sort of grand tour of the principal thoroughfares, 'Little 'Enry' departed proudly for the suburbs. And his first stop was Anne's home. George, dressed like his companions in blue overalls and heavy boots, went quickly to the side entrance of the house, and touching the peak of his rather startling check cap to the servant, requested an interview with her mistress. The girl smiled at him in a puzzled fashion, and asked him to come in. George shook his head, and the servant, more puzzled than ever, went in search of Anne.

If the vision of George Henry Berkley, usually so immaculate, attired in the habiliments of toil caused Miss Carfax the least surprise, she permitted no outward indication of such feeling to escape her. She pretended not to know him. George imagined that her eyes were a little brighter, and the suggestion of dimples in her cheeks a little deeper, but she treated him exactly as she would have treated the butcher or the grocer or any other tradesman.

'Good morning,' she greeted pleasantly. 'What is it you wanted to see me about?'

George touched his cap respectfully. 'Morning, miss. I represent the Crystal Express Window Cleaning Company. I thought perhaps

you would like us to clean your windows. Our terms are very moderate.'

Anne pursed her lips thoughtfully. 'We have a window-cleaner,' she said at last, and then added with a smile, 'somewhere.'

George smiled too, but very respectfully.

'He's so unreliable,' she went on; 'sometimes he comes twice a week, and then we don't see him once in a month. It's most unsatisfactory.'

'The poor chap was overworked,' explained George, 'but we've taken the business over and re-organised it. We state a time and we're there to the second. Reliability is our watch-word.'

Miss Carfax looked away, biting a tremulous underlip.

'There is just one other consideration, Mr—er—Crystal,' she murmured in a stifled voice. 'Do you know how to clean windows? That's rather important, you know.'

George bowed gravely. 'We use the famous crystal polish, miss. Therefore we are able to guarantee complete satisfaction. The word "satisfaction" is printed on all our circulars and handbills, and is painted on all our ladders and pails. We also place the word satisfaction across your windows—in a metaphorical sense, of course. Satisfaction is our war-cry.'

'Very well,' said the girl in a small voice, 'you may clean the outside of all the windows, and if the result is satisfactory, I shall leave them in your hands in the future.'

George was very grateful. 'I'd like to speak to the alderman about the shop windows if he is about, miss.'

'He has just gone out,' answered the girl. 'You will find him at the shop any afternoon but Wednesday.'

'Thanks, miss; I'll call and see him.'

'Yes, do—go just as you are. Now,' she added, with a slightly malicious smile, 'I will leave you to get on with your work.'

In an incredibly short space of time, George, flushed and triumphant, was knocking at the side door again. In his inmost heart, he had believed that if Anne was the Crystal Company's first customer, success would smile upon the venture. He had gained his object, a good omen.

Anne was politely incredulous. She did not believe it possible that windows could be cleaned properly in such a short time. But inspection convinced her that the windows were not only clean, but cleaner than she had ever seen windows before. They shone like crystal, glittering and sparkling with that wonderful brilliance which was soon to make the Crystal Express famous. There was a peculiar expression in her eyes as she paid George. She closed the door without a word, and going into the front room, drew the curtain gently to one side and watched the somewhat ostentatious departure of 'Little 'Enry.'

(Continued on page 806.)

AFRICAN SILHOUETTES.

III.—NAMITIE THE CARPENTER.

By C. M. M. PATERSON.

I.

IT seems extremely doubtful if Namitie, of the tribe of Wagishu, head of the estate carpenters, will ever again return to his happy home—and the reason for such a sad prophecy is based entirely on stomachic grounds.

Supplying neighbouring settlers, and the 'boys' of their estates, with a few of the necessities of life, there is, on the Central African farm where Namitie performs (or otherwise, as he feels inclined) his daily toil, a shop.

This emporium, in conjunction with Namitie's fanciful appetite, is the cause of years of absence from the bosom of his family. This big native's wages are mortgaged for months ahead, and have been so for years—through tinned herrings!

It is difficult to look on affection for that common fish of the sea as a vice, yet the cigarette habit fades into insignificance compared to the craving for tinned herrings with which this hefty Wagishu is cursed! Tinned herrings he

must have—the world, and many other things, are well lost for them!

There was, indeed, an historic occasion, now nearly two years ago, when, having by supreme effort denied himself his favourite diet, Namitie had saved enough almost to clear the shop debt, and to pay for the railway fare. The cause of such self-denial was an urgent one. News had filtered through, in the wonderful way it does in illiterate Africa, that one of Namitie's cousins was making love to his best wife. From that hour strenuous attempts were made to clear off the herring mortgage—an impulse to go and interview that cousin overpowering stomachic sentiments. But shop debts were heavy. Before our head carpenter could settle them, a message arrived from the lady herself to announce she had been run away with! Namitie promptly applied for leave. His reason was a justifiable one—urgent private affairs. Yet the situation apparently did not cause indignation against the erring spouse, which it would have

inspired in the breast of an ordinary European husband. The lady, he explained to his Bwana,¹ had no wish to cause matrimonial troubles. She loved him—him, Namitie—and had doubtless been forcibly persuaded otherwise! He must go to retrieve her.

His request being granted, the few remaining rupees still owing to the shop cancelled, Namitie, dressed magnificently in his master's cast-off clothing, bade adieu, and went off to recover his unwillingly erring wife.

But he never reached his happy home, or that sinful cousin! Half-way on the long trek to the station, Namitie dropped in at another farm to see some friends. He found them engaged in a merry little gambling game, and being a convivial soul, he stayed to join in the fun. Beyond that happy spot Namitie's footsteps did not pass! For three weeks he enjoyed the hospitality of these cheery acquaintances, until his last cent had disappeared, and even the Bwana's old clothes had gone in pawn for monetary losses. Later the 'boys' quarters on that farm were raided by the police, and the ring-leaders arrested—the place proving a veritable gambling hell—but this drastic action came too late to save Namitie, who returned, clad only in a dirty cotton loin-cloth, to his master—a sadder and perhaps wiser man. The wife still continued to send him S.O.S. signals, but, rescue being now impossible, Namitie, with that calm philosophy which seems to be inherent in his breed, resigned himself apparently to envisioning her in the arms of the perfidious cousin; and from that day to this has taken no further action in the matter.

II.

Cigarettes are another of the weaknesses of this quaint character. These are smoked with the fiery end in his mouth, being, he says, a more economical luxury if thus enjoyed.

The Bwana regards at times with consternation his tobacco bill, but he has no intention of venturing on the method of economy thus practised by his carpenter.

It is now many years since Namitie arrived on the farm—a practically naked savage, fresh from the Wagishu reserve. Work was desired, he stated, any sort of work, though how to set about any labour which the odd Wasungu² wanted, he had not a notion. To a most casual observer it was obvious that he had not exerted any energy in his home life, for this powerful man was then incapable of lifting a ten-pound weight! Now he can carry two hundred pounds on his back, and glories in such exhibition of his strength.

Accompanying him was a younger brother—Padi, a very plump naked boy, and one of the cheeriest of mortals. Padi looked on this escape

from the native reserve as a great adventure. Little did he know that shortly he was to embark on the greatest adventure of all. A few months only were his merry face and deep laugh allowed to brighten the farm life. Cerebro-spinal meningitis broke out among the labourers, and poor fat Padi was among the first victims. Perhaps his case was an abnormal one, but in forty-eight hours the body of this extremely plump native was reduced to a barely living skeleton—the fever of this terrifying disease literally burning him up.

Namitie took his brother's death with usual philosophical calm. 'Obviously,' he said, 'to die in such a hurry was certain manifestation that God needed Padi with much urgency.' Luckily, however, God did not want the wages Padi had earned and saved, and these, together with the dead boy's cooking-pots, Namitie annexed. The shop off-loaded tinned herrings with rapidity for some weeks after Padi's death.

III.

The passing of time, as recorded by days, months, and years, is immaterial to our carpenter. If one possesses no knowledge of the date one came into the world, obviously the advancing hour when we shall probably leave it loses somewhat of its menace. To Namitie Nature alone provides the chronicle of his migration. Outside the entrance gate of the master's home is a tall blue eucalyptus tree. It is also the farm calendar. Sometimes Namitie may be heard, in the vicinity of this tree, swaggering to raw labour recruits of the long age spent in the Bwana's service. 'You see that mighty tree,' he will say. 'When first I came to work on this farm it was only so high'—indicating with a huge black hand the height of two feet or so; and the new arrivals gape with awe and wonder.

But one day such boastfulness received a damping snub. Koski, the head cattleman, unfortunately chanced to pass by, just as Namitie was expounding to some fresh labourers the connection of the eucalyptus with his own honourable service.

The expression of contempt on old Koski's face would have made him a valuable 'find' could any film-producer have witnessed it. 'Pah!' he remarked, spitting, as was his wont, with a noise like a pistol-shot. 'You! You! Why, when I first came into the Bwana's service there was no tree here at all! I saw it planted!'

Namitie's powers of repartee rarely, however, fail him. 'That may or may not be true,' he replied, in a tone which conveyed to his listeners the impression that Koski was a habitual liar, 'but during the time this tree has been growing tall I have built many houses and mended scores of wagons, while you have but idled away the years watching cattle fill their stomachs.'

¹ Master.

² White man.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

MEDES AND PERSIANS.

By HILTON BROWN.

PART I.

'According to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.'

I.

THE Buhl clock on the drawing-room mantel-piece chimed sweetly: a quarter past eight. Mrs Lessing looked up at it with impatience.

'I do wish Mr Rossiter would not be quite so casual. When I say dinner at eight, I mean dinner at eight.'

Major Brander, who was leaning against the mantel, laughed with a tingle of irritation. It was odd to hear Mrs Lessing abusing the casual. Major Brander was going to marry her daughter, but that did not blind him to the fact that of all the haphazard, muddling, casual—yes, casual—households of his acquaintance, Mrs Lessing's was the worst. His mother had a descriptive word for such establishments—'through-other.' The major did not admire 'through-other' houses. His was a simple creed; you kept 'fit,' did things decently and in order, and went to church on Sunday mornings. If Mrs Lessing had any creed at all—which was doubtful—it was not that.

He shifted irritably from one foot to the other. 'Well, your own daughter isn't down yet.'

'Oh, Joyce!' said Mrs Lessing still crossly; 'Joyce can be down at any moment. She hates waiting about, just as I do.'

Major Brander mentally agreed, and added the rider that she was equally indifferent as to how long she kept others waiting when it happened to suit her. He wanted his dinner. 'Young Rossiter—' he began; but at that moment Joyce thought fit to appear. The major brightened; Joyce was very pleasant to look at.

'Hullo, Harold! I suppose Charlie hasn't come yet. He is a slacker.'

Mrs Lessing surveyed her daughter with less than her usual approval. 'My dear child, you've put on your amber earrings with your jade beads.'

'I know,' said Joyce calmly. 'I've lost one of the jade ones. I suppose it'll turn up.'

This time the major was conscious of real
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annoyance. The jade earrings had been a present from himself; she shouldn't have just 'lost' them in that careless way. What annoyed him still more was to be reminded of Joyce's incomprehensible habit of losing things—valuable, useful things—wherever she went. During the last few months Major Brander had become acquainted with the ladies' cloakroom of almost every restaurant and theatre in London—during off hours, of course. He had even been to Scotland Yard in pursuit of a purse containing about ten pounds which Joyce had airily 'lost' at a dance at the Cecil. He had not found it, because in the course of the day Joyce had discovered that after all she had left it in her bedroom at home. That rankled. Major Brander was sufficiently Scottish to detest waste, to abominate this neglect and ill-treatment of possessions that had to be made good. It was really intolerable!

He frowned and said nothing. Joyce shot a sidelong glance at his lean upright figure, his stern face, the touches of gray in his exactly arranged hair. What a wonderful man to be engaged to! But she felt a little afraid of him.

'You're looking very solemn, Harold,' she ventured.

Major Brander's reply was drowned in the roar of a noisy motor-cycle in the street outside, followed by the whirr of an electric bell. Presently there blundered into the room a boyish young man, grinning happily out of a rosy, clean-shaven face—Charlie Rossiter.

'Charlie, old scout!' Joyce sprang up to greet him with dancing eyes.

Mrs Lessing met him with more dignity. 'Really, Charlie—twenty-five minutes past eight! This is too bad.'

'Sorry, sorry, sorry,' said Charlie, looking anything but sorry. 'Magneto got fed-up other side of Edgware.' He glanced cheerfully round the room, 'Hullo, major; very fit?' He held out two grimy hands towards Mrs Lessing. 'My paws. Can I go and ablute? I've got a tin of soap—wonderful stuff.'

'Please do,' said Mrs Lessing stiffly. Charlie went, quite unabashed.

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II.

Major Brander turned to poke the fire in order to cover his annoyance. Why on earth, he asked himself, did young Rossiter make him so cross? He was a good boy; he had done very well in the war, like all his type; and after the armistice he had settled down cheerfully to sell motors. He was slangy and superficial, perhaps, but that wasn't the cause of the crossness. Was it possibly—the major straightened his back—the least touch of envy? Rossiter's youth was perpetual; the major could never remember being young at all. The major was careful over many things; Rossiter happily careless of all. . . . And then there was that dancing, light-hearted look in Joyce's eyes when she greeted Charlie; that spontaneous 'Charlie, old scout!' The major did not particularly want to be called 'old scout,' yet he irrationally disliked the conviction that he never would be. Not by Joyce, anyway.

The major knew that Charlie had been his rival. He knew that Charlie had proposed at a certain dance. He even knew what he had said when Joyce had told him she was going to marry Brander.

'Well, well, old thing,' he had said, 'I'll fade away and eat worms. You'll have a Fizzer for a husband. That's that.'

What a way to talk! How could anyone seriously consider a grinning idiot, who degraded the most solemn occasions with the *clichés* of a war-story subaltern? . . . But neither Major Brander nor Joyce had seen, in the gray dawning after that dance, a young man with a dust-coat over his dinner-jacket driving a racing motor-bicycle round and round the suburbs of London. He sucked at an empty briar, and stared out over his handle-bars at the flying roads. His face was Charlie Rossiter's, but it bore no grin; neither was it particularly idiotic, nor careless, nor young.

The major turned back to Mrs Lessing's extravagant drawing-room. Charlie came crashing in, exhibiting the results of his 'ablute.' 'Whiter than snow!' he exclaimed, thrusting out his hands. 'The original of this testimonial may be seen at our office.' Why couldn't the young idiot speak without quotations?

'Oh come and feed, for heaven's sake,' said Joyce, and trailed off to the dining-room with Charlie chattering at her heels. The major offered a staid arm to Mrs Lessing; there were decencies . . .

III.

The dinner went through rather wearily. The major prided himself—not without reason—on his table-talk, but in this atmosphere he felt stupidly stiff and formal. It was impossible to speak like a normal being without feeling absurdly pedantic. Because one had some

respect for order and convention it wasn't necessary to feel like a pedantic grammarian presiding at a Lower Third tea-party. Yet that was how the major felt at Mrs Lessing's table.

The major knew he was in the right. He called to his aid mental visions of his friends—Colonel Barclay, Major Steele, Cavendish of the War Office. These all thought him a 'good fellow'; they wouldn't have known him if he had any taint of priggery. It was ridiculous to be so discomfited by a childish young ruffian who sold motors—what Barclay expressively called a 'bull-flapper.' It was intolerable.

Yet that 'Charlie, old scout!' rankled. And once or twice as Joyce bent towards Charlie he caught in her eyes that elfin look he himself could never arouse.

Soon after dinner Charlie did the decent thing; he went away. 'I'm Dee Trop,' he said humorously. 'I'm off to hit the Great Lone Trail. Cheeroh, major!'

'Good-bye,' said the major stiffly.

Joyce followed Charlie into the hall while he dragged on his leather coat. 'I've got to go to Edinburgh on Friday,' she said, 'to stay with Harold's people. Charlie, I'm rather in a funk.'

Charlie was lighting his pipe. 'Rot!' he said. 'What have you got to be in a funk for? They'll fall at your feet; if they don't, send for me and I'll chastise them.'

It was the merest ragging, no doubt, but somehow it was strangely comforting. Joyce took hold of one of the big buttons on his coat and fingered it nervously. 'Poor old Charlie!' she murmured.

Charlie breathed hard through his nose. 'You're never in a funk,' he said; 'never were, never will be. Besides, the major'll be there.'

'Oh yes,' said Joyce heartily, 'Harold'll be there.' But her enthusiasm was forced.

Presently the motor-bicycle roared away. Joyce stood a moment in the hall, and then turned to the drawing-room. And her step was not quite that of a maid going to her lover.

IV.

The long journey up to Edinburgh afforded Joyce much—too much—time for reflection. As she had frankly admitted to Charlie, she was in a funk; and in common with others in that condition she found that an idle interval in which to review the situation is not the best treatment. The journey seemed interminably long. Joyce gave way—a rare habit with her—to self-analysis. Harold was splendid—but she was the least thing in the world afraid of him. Charlie Rossiter had spoken only justly when he had said that funk and Joyce were strangers; and the novelty was disconcerting. A fine self-confidence was one of her principal assets. Now, for the first time, it began to fail her.

Harold came nearer her ideal man than any one she had ever hoped to meet; but—could she live up to him?

What would his mother be like? thought Joyce; and the forces of funk delivered a fresh attack. Harold spoke of her with affectionate admiration, praised her courage during her long years of widowhood, her great gifts of organising. But—what would the sort of woman Harold admired think of Joyce? She would certainly be very different from Mrs Lessing. Very. Joyce suddenly began to forget many petty annoyances, and to think of her mother as rather a dear.

If only Harold had stayed and travelled north with her! But for some reason it had seemed to him inevitably necessary that he should go on in advance, like a herald to prepare the way. Both Joyce and her mother had thought it an absurd manœuvre; but the way Harold had put it forward, it had seemed impossible to argue against him. It always did; in the language of Charlie, what Harold said 'went.'

The train toiled up the long dismal slopes of Shap. . . . Harold was a magnificent man, *very* near the ideal; but he took life terribly seriously. Could she live up to him? She could do it for the duration of this visit, of course; but over a long period of years—what then?

V.

Scotland met them with dark, sweeping clouds, which gradually thickened and descended till the imposing buttresses of Tinto stood sheeted in a soaking rain. The washed ochre of the Lanarkshire moors and the gray rain-pocked stretch of the Cobbinshaw reservoir depressed Joyce unbearably. She saw the Pentlands, and remembered that part of Harold's programme had been long walks on these hills. 'I often do ten miles across from Balerno just to keep fit.' 'Keeping fit'; Harold's creed! Could she, with her town-bred taxi-and-cushion-loving little soul, live up to that? Would he expect her to walk about those moors in weather like this? If he did, could she refuse to try? And if she tried, could she avoid disgracing herself for ever?

The train roared down an incline. The mountainous 'bings' of shale-pits loomed through the gloom. Joyce shuddered. 'I thought you said Edinburgh was such a beautiful place!' she said to her sole travelling-companion.

'So it is,' he snapped. 'It's the most beautiful place in the world—if you can appreciate it.'

Did that, Joyce wondered, apply to Harold and Harold's mother?

Princes Street Station at last; Joyce got to her feet rather shakily. Would Harold's mother have come down?

She had not; Harold was there alone. He

greeted her with his usual undemonstrative kindness, kissed her cheek. He looked very handsome, absolutely right, in his gray suit with a tie of his regimental colours. Joyce warmed to him. The wonderful, dear man that he was. And he was actually hers, her very own.

'Mother's waiting for you at the house,' he said in the taxi. 'I'm longing for you to meet her. She's a wonderful woman. Wonderful!'

'What about me?' thought Joyce with a touch of pique. 'Should I not be rather wonderful too?' But aloud she said, 'I'm so excited, Harold. I believe I'm quite funky.'

'Silly girl!' said Harold, and patted her hand.

Then, presently, there was Harold's mother.

Joyce saw her at first through a haze; then out of the blur emerged an exact replica of Harold—Harold twenty years older and changed in sex, tall, dignified, essentially correct and 'fit.' A cool, firm hand took Joyce's; after a moment's hesitation lips just brushed her cheek.

'Oh!' cried Joyce. 'I was so hoping you would do that!'

'Dear me!' said Mrs Brander with a smile. 'Surely! . . . What a lot of luggage you've got.'

Joyce, accustomed to Mrs Lessing's lavishness in trunks, thought she had very little.

'I brought as little as I could,' she said timidly. 'There—there's another box coming on by goods. In point of fact there were two; Joyce realised with a touch of irritation that the lie was her first concession to funk.

'Oh, really!' said Mrs Brander without expression. Joyce was damped.

VI.

She was powdering her face when a bell rang insistently, and for the second time. She hurried downstairs, and found Harold fidgeting in the hall.

'You didn't hear the first time?' he said.

Joyce felt unjustly reproved; they might have given her a minute. 'No,' she said shortly. Lie the second. Funk two, Joyce nothing.

After tea Harold proposed a stroll. Joyce, who was feeling tired and lazy, was dismayed.

'Has it stopped raining?' she asked.

'Oh, it's nothing much,' said Harold, peering from the window. 'Just a drizzle. You can stick on an old coat.'

'I haven't got an old coat,' said Joyce crossly.

'Harold always takes a turn between tea and dinner,' said Mrs Brander in her smooth voice, and as if that settled it.

Joyce tried once more. 'I haven't unpacked my walking-shoes yet.'

'Fish 'em out, then,' said Harold cheerfully. 'No good fugging in the house. A breath of air will do you good after sitting in the train all day.'

Joyce would have liked to curl up in a comfortable chair and eat chocolates. But apparently her point of view did not present itself, and somehow it seemed impossible to put it forward. She went.

Harold tramped her solemnly round the Blackford Hill. To Joyce it seemed a very long and weary walk through savage solitudes. Not so, apparently, to Harold. 'I hate wandering about these streets,' he said; 'to-morrow we'll have a decent walk.' Joyce thought she might have been consulted about that.

'We always dress for dinner,' said Mrs Brander when they came in, 'but we won't to-night.' Odd, thought Joyce, how she used the word 'always.' In Mrs Lessing's ménage you did not do things 'always.' Sometimes, 'any old time,' you did all sorts of things, but nothing 'always.'

Dinner was a rather trying meal of consciously sustained conversations. Only one item remained in Joyce's memory. It was when Mrs Brander asked her if she had had a comfortable journey.

'Oh, splendid,' said Joyce; adding guilelessly, 'mother made me go first class.'

'We always go third,' said Harold's mother. 'Really, the third is so comfortable nowadays—'

Again, with nothing said, Joyce felt that she and her mother stood rebuked.

VII.

After dinner they sat in the library and continued the sustained conversations. Joyce found the struggle getting more and more difficult. There seemed no prospect of Mrs Brander's going to bed and leaving the betrothed together. Was this tactlessness, Joyce wondered, or malice aforethought, or simply the practice of an older school? She felt herself dropping asleep, and grew weary of swallowing enormous yawns. She got up. 'If you'll excuse me,' she said, 'I think I'll go up now. It's past ten.'

Harold fidgeted. Mrs Brander's voice made its dispassionate reply. 'We never go to bed till eleven.' Again that chilling rebuke, unexpressed but painfully implicit.

'You'll excuse me, anyway?' Joyce said with an attempt at a smile.

'Oh, certainly, my dear,' said Mrs Brander; and 'Of course, of course,' said Harold, and got up to open the door for her. But Joyce felt that translation was needed. What Mrs Brander had really meant was, 'If a guest in my house chooses to indulge in such extraordinary practices, what *can* I do but excuse her?' And Harold's gruff 'Of course, of course,' could be rendered 'This is a let-down, but if you won't play up, you won't.'

What would Charlie have said? 'Time for a little shut-eye? Righto! You toddle up

and hit the hay, and pleasant dreams and all that.' Dear Charlie!

Up in her magnificent bedroom, Joyce reproved herself for these malicious thoughts. Harold was as splendid as ever; and yet—and yet—in this house he was somehow different. He was hers; but—but was he really hers or his mother's? Could she live up to this rigid code, this 'always'? . . . What was Charlie's mother like?

Brushing out her hair, Joyce wondered why she kept thinking of Persians; all the evening the word had been wandering into her mind. Had she seen a Persian cat? No, it wasn't that. Persian lamb? No . . . Ah, this was it—Medes and Persians. These were the people in the Bible or somewhere who had laws—laws that you couldn't alter. Never.

'Always.' . .

VIII.

Joyce woke in the morning late, and still sleepy. Sometime in the night a servant had knocked at the door and said 'Seven-thirty, please'; but Joyce had paid no attention. That happened regularly at home—except that the Lessing maid said 'eight-thirty'—but it was understood to call for no action. You went on sleeping till you really woke, and then called the servant again for fresh tea or fresh hot water or whatever it had been. Joyce adopted this procedure now, discovering a camouflaged bell with some difficulty. After an interval the maid came.

'Bring the tea now, please,' said Joyce.

The girl had a very pleasant Scottish face, but her expression was blank. Joyce was conscious of a terrible *faux pas*; in this incredible household, evidently, 'we never' had early tea.

'Tea, miss?' said the maid, gathering her forces after the shock. 'Please, miss, breakfast's ready. It's ten past eight.'

'Gracious!' said Joyce, with an attempt to cover her failure. 'I'd no idea it was so late. You'd better turn on the bath.'

The girl vanished, and Joyce struggled out of bed. It was ten past eight—nearly the quarter. And she had a vague recollection of having been told overnight that breakfast was at eight-fifteen. It had seemed too bad to be true.

'Oh well,' she reflected, 'I can't do it now. As well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb. I may as well have that bath.'

She had it—while a loud gong roared vindictively downstairs. But back in her room, while she struggled with clothes which were all somehow inside-out, there came a knock at her door. Mrs Brander's calm accents made themselves heard.

'Are you all right, my dear?'

'Perfectly, thanks,' gasped the guest; 'I'll be down in one minute.'

'Very well,' said the voice cheerfully; 'we'll wait for you.'

'Please don't,' said Joyce, but the voice was gone. Joyce knew with certainty that there was another black mark scored against her—that Mrs Brander had had to come upstairs because, unless in case of serious illness, 'we always' came down in time for breakfast, and expected 'our' guests to do the same. And Joyce wasn't at all ill. . . . Joyce loved the process of dressing—leisurely, with due attention to hair and nails; her present hurried toilet sent her down in a sulky temper.

Harold's greeting was kind, but he looked distressed. His eyes said, 'You've let me down again.'

'I'm afraid the sole is overdone,' said Mrs Brander. 'But we're later than usual.' Another veiled rebuke!

IX.

'What a lovely day!' said Joyce. 'I'm going down Princes Street immediately. I'm longing to see the Edinburgh shops, you know.'

There was a slight silence; instantly Joyce knew she had blundered again. She had collided with some pre-arranged programme.

Harold fidgeted, with that apologetic squirm she was coming to know. He looked sideways at his mother. 'I suppose we might do a little shopping?'

'Oh certainly, certainly!' Mrs Brander's voice was as devoid of definite expression as ever. 'Whatever Joyce likes.'

'Not—not if there's anything else,' floundered Joyce.

There was. Harold took her by bus to Lothianburn, and they walked round by the Stevensonian Mecca of Swanston and through Colinton Dell to Slateford. The route is by no means level, and though Harold was evidently holding in his strides, he had Joyce breathless more than once.

'You're not in training,' he said kindly. 'Never mind, you'll soon get into it.'

Joyce cast a downward glance at her light flimsy shoes—which would never be the same again. Her right foot was hurting cruelly. Would Harold expect her to keep 'in training,' if—*when!*—they were married? Manifestly, yes.

'You want some sensible shoes, you know,' said Harold, following her glance.

Sensible shoes! It would be sensible clothes next. Joyce was conscious that the keen wind off the Forth had been blowing through something very thin; but 'sensible' garments—never!

The morning having gone according to plan, Joyce was rewarded by a tranquil lunch. She thought she made headway with Mrs Brander, but at the close of the meal she was undeceived.

'By the way, Joyce dear,' said Mrs Brander in her smoothest tones, 'if you take the paper out of the library you might put it back there. We always keep it in the library till it goes down to the kitchen. If it's taken, out the servants don't understand.'

Joyce had a guilty vision of a huge chair in the drawing-room suddenly vacated at Harold's summons, and of a *Scotsman* treated *à la* Lessing; that is to say, reduced to its component sheets and distributed variously about the floor. She flushed with mortification.

The day went on—according to plan; the Princes Street shops remained unvisited. But there was a little, significant incident at tea. Harold had passed in his cup to be refilled.

'You've had your two cups, dear' said Mrs Brander.

'Oh well, then—' said Harold, and drew back his cup, and finished his cake dry.

'We always have two cups,' thought Joyce, and restrained a giggle with difficulty.

(Continued on page 822.)

A MERRY BIOLOGICAL CHRISTMAS.

By JAMES DRUMMOND, F.L.S., F.Z.S.

IF bright flowers symbolise joy, New Zealand's two brilliant wild flowers, the pohutukawa and the scarlet mistletoe, are consistent with this season, in which they are at the height of their glory. According to the floral time-table, they should bloom through December and January. The dates are not strictly observed, but it is a very unusual season when they are not at their best in Christmas week. Early colonists named the pohutukawa the Christmas Tree. Although it has the clearest claim to the title, its Maori name is more in favour. The flower's glorious colour is supplied by scarlet stamens. These light up trees seventy

feet high, with massive, spreading branches, which often stretch out over banks and sea-cliffs, and steep the blooms in the water below.

New Zealand's characteristically gloomy forests are relieved in the spring by the pure white flowers of the clematis and by the golden drops of the yellow kowhai, which has been nominated as the Dominion's national flower. The scarlet mistletoe flames amongst forest leaves at Christmas time, more conspicuously in dark beech forests than anywhere else. Sentiment, which played an important part in the colonisation of New Zealand, led to the introduction of the English mistletoe. As it

has been acclimatised in only a few private gardens, kissing under it is not general in New Zealand. Apart from the scarlet mistletoe's auspicious time for blooming, it has no particular sentimental association to the New Zealand public. To most New Zealanders, it is merely a scarlet parasite, to be admired for its vivid beauty only. To gray-haired New Zealanders, who knew William Colenso, however, *Loranthus Colensoi* is the badge of an old missionary and botanist. He loved New Zealand flowers, and was loved by the settlers and the Maoris of his generation, and his memory, for many reasons, should not be a fading flower.

It is strange that Charles Darwin, after spending Christmas week in New Zealand ninety years ago, and attending Christmas service in a little missionary chapel in the Bay of Islands, mentions in his diary neither the *pohutukawa* nor the scarlet mistletoe, nor any other mid-summer wild flower. In front of the settlers' cottages he saw roses, honeysuckle, jasmine, and hedges of sweet-brier. The stately *kauri-pine* and the bracken fern are the only native plants that attracted his notice. The young naturalist—without pay—on *H.M.S. Beagle* saw New Zealand through a glass darkly. The scenery nowhere was beautiful to his eyes. 'In many places,' he wrote sourly, 'I saw several species of weeds, which, like the rats, I was forced to own as my countrymen.' He accepted the presence of the common dock as evidence of the rascality of an Englishman who sold dock seeds for seeds of the tobacco-plant. This explanation of the dock's introduction to New Zealand, probably, is apocryphal. At the time of Darwin's visit there was enmity between the missionaries and the traders, and Darwin, who was friendly with the missionaries, seems to have had the story from them. More feasibly, the dock, like the Scottish thistle and many other British weeds, came to New Zealand without design, a concomitant of the European coloniser.

In New Zealand, Christmas is the time of the singing of birds. Their plumages at this season are bright, their singing notes particularly sweet. Many nests are completed in September and October, and in November they contain complements of eggs. Owls and petrels are the waits who, on Christmas Eve, announce the

approach of Christmas Day. The common morepork owl is a forest bird. Its *whoo-whoo* is boding, but few sounds, to New Zealanders' ears, are more pleasing. Some petrels laugh mockingly as they fly overhead at night. The black petrel—as black as night itself—has a note that seems to combine a soft whistle with a deep whirr coming from the bottom of a husky throat, a loud and rasping note, utterly unmusical. Bellbirds, tuis, and other melodists on Christmas Day, from exquisitely-tuned throats, send forth a wild bewildering carol, long before a church bell has chimed, or a single human voice has sung 'O come, all ye Faithful.'

From trees and shrubs, when the sun shines on them, stridulating male cicadas fill the air with a loud monotonous drone. It is loudest in the middle of the day, when the birds usually are silent. This chorus, falling and swelling, sometimes is the only sound that breaks the cloister-like stillness of the forests. It symbolises dreamy inertia. It begins feebly before the Lady of the Light has touched the cicadas' habitations with her rosy fingers, and continues until the owls begin to hoot in the twilight. As the little instrumentalists are invisible, the sound seems to come from the leaves. Each tree is a singing-tree, like the singing-tree in the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*. When Princess Perie-yadeh tried to please the Emperor of Persia, she conducted him to a tree, where he heard a concert different from any he had heard before. 'My daughter,' he said, 'where are the musicians whom I hear? Are they underground, or in the air? Such excellent performers will lose nothing by being seen; on the contrary, they would please me the more.' He went nearer, and was so entranced by the sweet harmony that he could never have been tired of hearing it. 'Sire,' the princess said, 'this tree is no other than the singing-tree; its history is connected with the golden water and the speaking bird.'

Christmas is the brightest season of the year under the Southern Cross. It is a fecund season, in which Nature throbs with life, a season for liberation from the prison-walls of shell and chrysalis to free and joyous days in the sunshine and the fresh air. Biologically, it is the merriest of all possible Christmases.

OTHER PEOPLE'S WINDOWS.

PART III.

VIII.

THE Crystal Express covered a great deal of ground and got through a tremendous amount of work that day. The labour-saving qualities of the new polisher had not been exaggerated,

and stood them in good stead. It was late in the afternoon before George could find time to visit Alderman Carfax at the big drapery establishment, but as business took 'Little 'Enry' in the vicinity of Bank Street, he was able to make the call with a minimum loss of

time. George had previously decided not to have the alderman canvassed until the Crystal Express was actually on a working basis.

A uniformed commissionaire, with obvious misgivings, directed George to the private office, and for his trouble received a tip which rendered him almost speechless. Muttering apologies, George wended his way through groups of fashionably-dressed ladies at long counters, and at last reaching the door marked 'private,' thrust it open and entered without ceremony.

'Good afternoon, sir,' he greeted, as Mr Carfax emerged from an inner and even more private office. 'I hope you'll excuse my abruptness, but there's something about a drapery establishment that unnerves the average man.'

The alderman ignored the greeting and removed his cigar. 'Well, what d'you want this time?' he asked grimly. 'If you've come to talk about Anne, you're wasting your time. That subject is closed, and likely to remain closed, so I should advise you to go to the pictures or something. I'm busy.'

George laughed. There were moments when he felt a sneaking regard for the irritable old man.

'There's another thing,' went on the alderman, angered by this unseemly mirth; 'I'll thank you to keep away from my—'

George interrupted him with upraised hand. 'Some other time, sir,' he said politely but firmly. 'I appreciate the honour you do me in discussing your private affairs with me. If my advice and sympathy can be of service to you, it is yours to command, but—some other time; this is my busy day. I have six busy days a week. I'm in business, you know.'

The older man was not without a sense of humour. His quick bright eyes travelled from the check cap in his visitor's hand, over the blue overalls, and finally to the young man's face. He smiled grimly. 'Burglary?' he inquired.

George started. 'Window-cleaning,' he answered coldly. 'I called to see if you would give me the contract for your shop.'

Alderman Carfax hesitated. He suspected that this window-cleaning, of which he had heard rumours, was an elaborate practical joke, of which he would in all probability turn out to be the ultimate victim. 'No, you can't,' he said at last. 'The windows are cleaned by my assistants.'

George smiled in a superior manner. 'A shop assistant is a shop assistant. Window-cleaning is a profession in itself—a separate art,' he declared, and proceeded to give rein to his imagination. 'We are expert window-cleaners; we have studied the subject from every angle, and read every manual ever written about window-cleaning—at all events I suppose

our Mr Green has read them. Our unique knowledge of the theory of window-cleaning, combined with many years of actual experience—our Mr Green has been cleaning windows for quite a long time now—has enabled us to bring this industry down to an exact science. The Crystal Express Window Cleaning Company, sir, positively guarantees speed, efficiency, and the absolute minimum of inconvenience to its customers. You simply cannot afford to clean your own windows, sir.'

Alderman Carfax eyed the flushed and slightly breathless George with reluctant admiration. 'A few weeks ago,' he said, removing his cigar, 'you didn't know the difference between cleaning a window and swilling a backyard. You didn't know whether windows were cleaned with a scrubbing-brush or a bar of soap and a towel, and now you pose as an authority on the subject—you stand there making speeches. I like your impertinence.'

George grinned. 'Quite right, sir,' he admitted cheerfully. 'One doesn't need to be an expert to clean windows or anything else with the crystal cleanser. It's wonderful stuff, and you'll hear more about it shortly. Possibly this list will induce you to give us the contract for the shop. Anyhow, it will prove to you that our business is a serious one.' He thrust his hand into an inside pocket and produced a crumpled sheet of paper. 'Just listen to this, sir; the cleaning of every window in the Empire and Paragon Mills has been entrusted to us. We have also been successful in securing several valuable municipal contracts. The Town Hall, the Public Library, and both the Council Schools. In addition to numerous private residences—your own amongst them—we are sole window-cleaners to St John's Church, St Mark's Church, St Mary's Church, The Farmer's Arms, The Red Lion, and the Vegetarian Restaurant in Bank Street.' He paused for breath, and then added impressively, 'Much of this is stained glass work.'

The alderman resumed his cigar. He was beginning to conceive a certain respect for George. 'So you are this Crystal Company I've been hearing about, eh? Well, look here, young man, you say my daughter let you clean the windows at home. I'll ask her to report on your work this evening. If she is satisfied, you can start on the shop windows.'

'We have already taken that liberty, sir. My partners set to work on the outside of these windows before I came into the office. Perhaps you will be good enough to inspect their work for yourself. There will, of course, be no charge—this is a free demonstration.'

IX.

From being rather silent and apprehensive about the window-cleaning project, old Mitchell

Berkley had suddenly become boastful. He discussed his son's plebeian business, and bragged to all and sundry about the flourishing condition of that business, until all but his most intimate friends began to avoid him.

'I knew the boy had it in him,' he said to Alderman Carfax one evening at the North-towers Social Club. 'He needed wakening up, that's all.'

The other smiled grimly. 'Somebody appears to have wakened him up pretty thoroughly,' he commented; and then added, after a slight pause, 'Wonder who it can be?'

The proud father winked heavily. 'Between you and me,' he said, lowering his voice to a confidential whisper, 'I think he's interested in some girl—there's usually a girl behind sudden transformations of this sort.'

The alderman did his best to appear politely incredulous. 'No, really?'

'Good thing, too,' went on Berkley senior, 'if only she's the right sort of girl. Marriage made me.'

'And me,' responded Alderman Carfax, his hard-lined face softening suddenly.

'By the way, how's your Anne keeping these days? It seems ages since I saw her. Little thing with a long plait and a big bow. Getting quite grown up now, eh?'

'Anne's quite well, thanks. We'll both be pleased to see you any time you like to call round.'

After a short silence Mitchell Berkley returned to the original topic. 'Between you and me, this window-cleaning is only the beginning,' he declared, becoming confidential again. 'If you knew the next move these three boys are contemplating, you would be surprised.'

Alderman Carfax smiled dryly. 'It is to be hoped they aren't surprised—unpleasantly so.'

X.

Later the same evening, Alderman Carfax surprised his daughter by voluntarily mentioning George's name in her hearing for the first time since that fateful Wednesday afternoon when he had practically ordered the young man out of the house for ever. Not only did the alderman mention the name—he even spoke of its owner with a certain guarded magnanimity. Belated enthusiasm of this sort is often infectious. It suddenly occurred to Anne that now George was making a serious and, from all accounts, successful attempt to justify his existence there could be no further objection to their friendship being resumed on the old footing.

When 'Little 'Enry' called again, Anne, looking even prettier than usual, contrived to be at the front gate, and George received a smile that made his heart race. He merely touched the peak of his cap and wished her a deferential 'good morning.' Evidently there

was no room in George's life for anything but window-cleaning. Damped by this unpromising attitude, Anne returned indoors, and waited patiently for that moment when, the work finished, the workman would be ready to receive the price of his hire. At last came a deferential tap at the side door. Anne hurried to answer it herself, anticipating the servant by inches only.

George was waiting, cap in hand.

'Well, Mr Crystal, how do you find business?' she asked with a rather nervous laugh.

'Can't grumble, miss,' he answered, with the ingratiating smile of a very small tradesman.

Anne lost patience with him suddenly. 'Oh, don't be ridiculous, George; this nonsense has gone far enough, surely?' George maintained an inscrutable silence. 'It is a long time since you came here as a friend,' she said softly.

He shuffled uncomfortably and looked down at his feet. 'Ye—es, we're awfully busy,' he answered, without looking up.

With a great effort, the girl refrained from boxing his ears. 'In that case, I'd better not keep you,' she said coldly.

'Will you please examine the windows, miss?'

'Your work is always satisfactory,' she told him in the same tone.

That evening Alderman Carfax persisted in discussing the activities of the Crystal Express Company. Anne's silence was so complete that at last her father began to suspect that there was something deeper than mere lack of interest in the subject of his conversation. On making a more or less tactful inquiry he was informed that George and all his works had ceased to interest her in the least.

'He used to be human once, but now he crawls, literally *crawls*.'

'He must save that attitude for the suburbs,' declared her father; 'he's curt enough when he calls at the office to be paid for the work at the shop—our agreement is weekly. He takes the money as though he had done me a personal favour. I must admit that our windows look better than they have ever looked before, and they are so quick with the work—get the job done in no time. I suppose he isn't likely to be—er—calling round here at any time, Anne?'

Anne lowered the magazine she was pretending to read and looked straight at her father. 'Have you invited him to call?' she asked calmly.

'Me invited him! Certainly not!'

'Then it is most unlikely that he will be calling here at any time.'

XI.

The following Wednesday afternoon 'Little 'Enry' was rolling majestically along High Street, when a sudden commotion among the pedestrians on the sidewalk attracted the atten-

tion of George and his companions. People everywhere were gazing northward and speaking excitedly. Many were pointing animatedly, and not a few were running. Away to the north a cloud of thick smoke was rising, column on column, into the blue heavens. The fire, which had evidently obtained a good hold, seemed about two miles away.

'It's the Mayflower Mills!' shouted George in a voice sufficiently loud to be heard above the roar of 'Little 'Enry's' engine. Then came the quick piercing clang of the fire-bell. 'Either the engines have been detained, or the fire has spread with amazing speed. One of our best customers, too. Listen, you chaps. Let's go. We might be of some use down there; it's hardly likely, but one never knows.'

The other two assented unanimously, Mr Green pointing out that the Crystal Express possessed some good long ladders, and Mr Kemp remarking that, for all he knew to the contrary, the great polisher might be capable of earning further laurels as a fire extinguisher. Deciding to cut through the suburbs and avoid the congested traffic of the busy thoroughfare, George turned out of High Street and then increased his speed. This route led them past Acacia Avenue, and just as they were approaching the scene of George's first commercial inspiration, a little hatless figure turned the corner and went speeding along the sidewalk ahead of them. It was Alderman Carfax, his coat-tails streaming out behind him as he ran. The alderman, as George well knew, was financially interested in the Mayflower Mills.

'Extend yourself, 'Enry!'

'Little 'Enry' extended himself gallantly. With creaking ladders and rattling pails he fled along the road like a regular fire-engine, but the Mayflower Mills were never reached. His burst of speed was short-lived. Hardly were they past the Avenue when George felt a sharp tug at his shoulder and heard an excited voice in his ear.

'Fire!' cried the voice of Kemp.

'I know,' George retorted irritably, without turning.

'In Acacia Avenue,' Kemp shouted back.

'Didn't you see the smoke? Turn back!'

XII.

That disaster which Alderman Carfax's daughter and servants had been predicting for years as the inevitable result of carelessness with matches had chosen this inopportune moment to fall on his house. When news of the fire at the Mayflower Mills was communicated to him over the telephone, the alderman had been lighting a cigar. Without troubling to remove the cigar, and with the match still burning in one hand, he took up the receiver in the other. Alderman Carfax had shares in the Mayflower Mills, and he never

waited to see where the match fell. Possibly there was, somewhere at the back of his mind, a subconscious belief that he had extinguished the match the moment its purpose was served. But his waste-paper basket was burning merrily even as he slammed the door behind him; smoke was curling out through the open window before he had rounded the corner of Acacia Avenue.

Anne had gone up to her bedroom and was looking pensively at a certain photograph, when a vague uneasiness began to trouble her. She hurriedly put down the photograph and rose from her chair. She was about to move to the window, when a choking cry outside brought her to a standstill. Then a fear-crazed servant flung open the door, shrieking that the house was on fire and that the whole of the lower floor was in flames. The acrid cloud of smoke which followed the girl into the room lent colour and odour to her not unpardonable exaggeration.

Anne acted promptly. 'That's father,' she said severely. 'Into the lumber-room with you, Martha! We can get onto the roof from there.'

The two girls fled up the stairs into the attic, and after some trouble with the heavy trap-door, which was reached from a chair placed on the top of a slightly insecure table, crawled through to the roof. George had experienced some difficulty in turning 'Little 'Enry,' and owing to this delay the two girls emerged from the trap-door just in time to see the Crystal Express Window Cleaning Company take the corner on two wheels.

'Mostly smoke, I think,' George shouted, as 'Little 'Enry' drew up with a clatter in front of the house. 'There's two girls on the roof. You get the pails down, and I'll get the long ladder into action.'

Fortunately, the writing-table was in the centre of the room, isolated from the rest of the furniture. While George was mounting to the roof, intent on a spectacular rescue, Mr Green and the intrepid inventor, a pail in each hand, had smashed the window and gained entry into the house. In a short space of time an almost continuous stream of water was being applied to the flames. Then the ingenious Mr Kemp had the idea of smothering the whole of the table in the thick carpet, which was hurriedly taken up and saturated. This proved entirely effective, and a few minutes later a pale but perfectly self-possessed young woman was thanking her rescuers.

In the afternoon of the following day, Alderman Carfax, hatless and wearing a black alpaca jacket, emerged from the magnificent main entrance to his shop and strode up to a young man in blue overalls and a check cap, who was cleaning a huge plate-glass window. 'When are you coming round to see us again, George?' he asked in a voice of constraint.

'We are very busy, sir,' the young man answered apologetically.

The alderman nodded submissively. The incidents of the previous day had robbed him of his customary belligerent self-assurance. 'Anne told me to ask you if you'd come,' he further explained.

'What about you?' asked the window-cleaner.

'Well, I'm asking you, aren't I?' he explained, with a touch of his old irritability.

George's eyes sparkled. 'Thanks; I'll be glad to come. Will to-morrow evening be convenient? I'd like Anne's opinion on some publicity matter I've been getting out for the new crystal cleaner. A woman is a better judge of such things than any man.'

THE END.

'BRUMBIES.'

By F. W. ALLEN.

THIS is the name by which Australia's wild horses are known. They are descended from the stock which came from the United Kingdom, India, Cape Colony, and Timor. The first-mentioned supplied thoroughbred blood, also pure Clydesdale and Shire animals, while India gave Australia some very fine Arab stallions. Cape Colony, being handier, provided Australia with useful grades for riding purposes. From Timor came many specimens of the diminutive thoroughbreds in the shape of Timor ponies.

The horse was one of the principal means by which settlement in the early days was made possible, and, as this progressed, riding animals became valuable, agriculture not having come upon the scene in what was known as the back-blocks. With immense open spaces extending for hundreds of miles without fences and with ample feed and water, occasionally animals escaped, and in this way formed wild or 'brumby' mobs, which consisted of mares and one lord of the harem. Bushrangers always stole the horses they required, which invariably were the best blood obtainable. Of these some escaped, others were discarded, and many joined the 'brumby' mobs. Directly the male foals in these mobs were a year old they were banished by the leaders. When travellers with riding-horses, or over-landing drovers who were opening up new country passed by the locality where a wild mob was known to graze, they had to keep a very sharp watch at night-time over their mares, otherwise the lords of the harem would come along and drive them off to their new homes, and that was the last their owners would know of them.

In this way some of the best foundations of Queensland's wild mobs were laid after the year 1840. It was remarkable how many of those wild mobs remained true to type and colour. In one that I knew well the piebald and skewbald colours predominated; while another had a majority of creamies, owing to circus animals having escaped at different times when travelling. Roan was another distinct colour; so was chestnut; and one fine large mob was composed

of bays and browns, showing a pronounced thoroughbred strain.

As regards the last mob, instead of having them shot down and exterminated for their hides and hair, the settler who squatted on their country turned them into an asset in another way. He was a young Highlander, born in the vicinity of Inverness, where he had become an accomplished rider and a splendid judge of horseflesh. Directly he had secured the license to occupy about a hundred square miles of this fine grazing land, his new home, he quickly located the above-mentioned mob of 'brumbies,' which, with the marsupials and emus, owned it. Noticing that the majority of them were thoroughbred animals, he captured two or three of the young ones, broke them in, and found that they were splendid animals to ride upon after stock. Thereupon he made up his mind to capture the lot. By degrees he had a ring fence built around their main haunt, where they were practically made prisoners, but not otherwise disturbed except when certain individuals were purposely shot to improve the mob.

It was not long before the settler's clips of merino wool had to be carried by teams to the nearest seaport, two hundred miles away. For obvious reasons oxen were principally used, one being the cheaper upkeep of equipment. Young Roderick at once decided to change his teams at the first opportunity. Fortunately he managed to obtain a good stamp of a stocky draught stallion, which was turned out among the wild mob. In a few years he had sufficient fine active draught animals to equip four teams, by which all of his wool and produce were quickly transported to the coast and station supplies brought back. From that day he never once looked back, and he became one of Australia's successful pioneers. In the meantime railways have been built, one of which runs close to pretty Terrica, whose fleets of motor lorries and cars have taken the place of the horse-teams and changed the time of transport from weeks into hours.

Recently, in another part of Australia where settlement is increasing, the manager of a large station decided to brand the young horses graz-

ing on it. The time was considered opportune owing to the effects of a drought, which had dried up much of the surface water, and on one corner the whole of it, the two mobs of 'brumbies' there being forced to drink at troughs, which were kept filled by a windmill from a well or bore. The animals were as fleet as deer over the rocks and stones, and defied all efforts of the stockmen or cowboys to yard them. To overcome this difficulty a strong yard, with two smaller ones adjoining, was quickly built of young trees (saplings) around the troughs, with but one main entrance, over which a strong trap-gate was suspended. Through this gate the thirsty animals were allowed to go undisturbed for a few nights, after which a trained scout was hidden at dusk one evening, whose duty was to pull the wire which would release the bolt and let the gate drop.

It was a beautiful moonlight night, so the remainder of the horsemen had to hide inside a scrub or jungle nearly a mile away. The silence was intense; they could hear the beating of their hearts, when presently came the Australian Coo-ee vibrating through the resonant night air. This time it was the signal of success. Horses were quickly mounted, and they raced to the yards,

where the members of one mob were prisoners. These 'brumbies' made frantic efforts to get out, but failed, and were driven by stockwhips into one of the smaller yards and locked in. The trap-gate was once more set, and riders and horses returned to their hiding-places in the scrub. While patiently waiting here they had time to watch the rocket flights of the luminous fire-flies around them, and enjoy the serenades of the curlews close by, till once more Coo-ee was heard. Again the sure-footed steeds carried their riders safely to the yards, to find another mob trapped. At daylight all hands were eager to inspect the 'brumbies,' and recognised several outlaws that were familiar to them.

After an enjoyable breakfast of corned meat, damper, and billy-can tea an anxious but busy forenoon followed, resulting in the pick of the young animals being drafted into a small yard. The remainder were branded and liberated. After the picked animals had been handled sufficiently, and the short lengths of green hide properly placed on their front feet, the captives were safely yarded at the head station to become properly broken in—a fine addition to the working plant of a very large cattle station.

MEMORIES OF A SCOTTISH SALMON-RIVER.

PART II.

VI.

'MAY 10, Sunday, &c.,' was a day of storm and rain. Miniature cascades showed white threads of water on the hill-sides, and indicated the certainty of a spate. On 'May 11, Monday, &c.' the river was up, surging and foam-flecked, and our boat too high to fish, though we did try it for a short time in the evening. 'May 12, Tuesday. 1 (12½ lb.)' calls for little comment. That was the fish that played normally, without exciting incident. On May 13 the 11½ lb. came within a few minutes of my beginning to fish the first pool. He came in a deep, swirling stream, just below where the whole river, confined between two rocks, comes roaring down a fall, where, as Arthur Clough puts it:

... over a ledge of granite
Into a granite basin the amber torrent descended ...
Beautiful there for the colour derived from green
rocks under;
Beautiful most of all, where beads of foam uprising
Mingle their clouds of white with the delicate hue of
the stillness ...
Cliff over cliff for its sides, with rowan and pendant
birch boughs.

Those words will, I am sure, awaken memories in the hearts of most fly-fishers, even of those in whom a public-school education of the early-Victorian type has caused an unfortunate aversion to the use of hexameters.

But let us return to that 12½ lb. that proved, on closer acquaintance, to be the most beautiful and gracefully made, small-headed, bright, silver-sided fish which it has ever been my good fortune to land. When 'he' came I was perched upon a rock near the head of the pool, to which stand I had dropped from a shelving ledge above. The fish worked down-stream, so I handed the rod to the gillie to hold while I negotiated the overhanging ledge. He left me in order to follow the fish. Having a rather badly disabled hand, I failed in my climb, and remained helpless over the deep swirling torrent until he came back to me, letting out line. The gillie gave me a helping hand while he played the fish with the other, and then he returned the rod. The fish kept very deep in the water, nearly the whole of the seven-foot cast of gut being submerged, and he 'jigged' excruciatingly, but was landed at last.

The rest of the day was blank. So was the whole of the next day, sufficiently described in the diary as 'May 14, Thursday. Hot sun. Hard sky, &c.' Then came a great experience, a day in a thousand, when sky, light, weather, and water were all in our favour, and fish came well throughout the day. 'May 15, &c.' (See diary.) My three fish (out of the eight that were borne across the long expanse of heather to the road) gave many thrills in the

playing. So did one from which the fly came away after a long struggle. There was a strong wind, so I 'backed' the pools, instead of fishing down-stream in the usual way. 'Backing,' of course, means casting at the bottom of the pool, down and across, and then walking slowly up the bank until the fly is on one's own side, and so on, *da capo*. Sometimes the most deadly procedure with an up-stream wind; and is it not written in that delightful little seventeenth-century pamphlet signed 'G. M.' for Gervase Markham, and called *The Young Sportsman's Delight and Instructor in Angling, Fowling, Hawking, Hunting, &c. &c.* (whereof the published price was sixpence, and the price paid for a copy at a sale in the year of the war 1916 was £57, 10s.) that 'Salmon bites best about 3 in the afternoon, especially from May to September, and when the water is clear, and a little wind, and the wind bloweth against the Stream'?

We had to leave the river early, or we might have made a bigger score. Personally, I was ready to leave, having had a grand day's sport, and both tops of my favourite rod having been broken—one by myself, by laying it carelessly down on the ground when running to see a particularly beautiful fish that had just been taken out in the net; the other top broken by someone else, who was trying the casting-power of the rod. I had had a really good day, and 'too much is enough,' as the Frenchman said when incited to help himself a third time to a favourite dish. And that takes us to the last day. 'May 16 (Saturday). Blank. Tremendous battle with very big fish, &c.'

VII.

Readers who have followed me so far in this recital may have noticed that a somewhat similar incident on May 7 has not been enlarged upon. I thought that one tragedy was enough. To have described two would have overloaded my account with a weight of gloom, and so given a false general impression of the happiest and most light-hearted fortnight in the experience of a lifetime. Figure to yourself a persistently hopeful angler fishing down a deep streamy run near the head of an open pool. The casting easy, from a low bank of pebbles which gave a good foothold. The opposite bank a miniature cliff of clay, topped with heather, and intercepted at one spot by an agricultural drain, of which more anon. Deep water under the bank, and a good steady stream to pull the fly. All other conditions adverse. Water considered too low for this particular spot to hold taking fish. A borrowed rod, to which I was unaccustomed, and a necessity to use trout-gut ('stout lake') and a very small fly.

Well, to cut the recital as short as possible, 'he' came, half-way down the pool. He came gently, just showing a fin and a broad back. Then followed ten mad delirious minutes, the

climax of many years of fly-fishing experience, and a supreme summit of adventure. It is not possible to describe all my impressions of the movement of that great thing beneath the water that were crowded into those few minutes of wild, but firmly repressed, excitement. A steady, rapid, irresistible procession to the pool some way above, spray spouting up from where the cast cut the water against the stream. A long run down-stream to the next pool below the one of hooking. A desperate effort to haul the head of the great leviathan out of the strong stream, where he found his strength, into a still back-water which might exhaust him, and the fear of putting an excessive strain upon the tackle. The feeling of helplessness on gaining no control whatever over the situation after what seemed to be long ages of conflict, but with it complete certainty of ultimate success, as the great fish was obviously well hooked, and I had no difficulty in following along the bank and keeping the rod up and level with him. What seemed to be a few years of anxiety followed, allayed by that feeling of confidence. Then the fish bored steadily up-stream, so close to the opposite bank that his side seemed to be rubbing along it, until he came to the spot where the agricultural drain entered the river. There the line seemed to stop, but curiously. It seemed to stop before the fish did, and the strain was no longer alive, but steady. I eased the line at once, thinking that the gut might be round a sunken snag. A despairing glance over my shoulder at the gillie told me that he was taking off his boots and socks, and turning his nether garments up to the thigh. He went down to a shallow run below the pool, taking the landing-net, and waded across. Came up the bank to the fateful spot, and reached out the net-handle to clear the line. It was round a sunken tree, probably washed down that drain in the last flood. Was the fish on?

I eased the line further to aid the gillie in clearing the gut from the tree, laid the borrowed rod down very gently on the pebbles, and sought a convenient seat on the heather, where I sat for some time, head in hands, pondering over my past as a fisherman, and thinking that, as such, I could have no future. Ichabod! By a curious mischance that tree was lying at an angle that caused the gut inevitably to slide down it and become fast, as it still was. The great fish had bored his way onward up-stream, without showing and without giving any indication of the break-away. When it occurred I do not know. Within half-an-hour I was fishing another pool, with keenness fully restored.

On my return to the Lodge, I visited, elsewhere, the stuffed corpse in a glass case of the heaviest fish ever taken in the river. Having ascertained privately (from the daughter of the house) that that fish weighed 45 lb., I sought

out its taker, and told him that I had just lost one of 46 lb. I told him the whole tale afterwards, but let us leave my (?) fish at that weight. It will serve as well as any other.

Such are the vicissitudes and the ups and downs of May salmon-fishing in the North of Scotland as I have known it. Treasured memories of every incident are recalled by the mind during the long journey southwards.

They will remain in the heart for years. And so we arrive, rejuvenated and ready for a strenuous spell of work, at the point from which we started. 'Euston Station. Early morning. . . . Echoing the sounds of awakening London; the braying of motor-horns, a babel of voices, and the roar of distant traffic.'

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THE END.

THE CONVOY.

By ALEXANDER BIRD.

I.

'THE Spaniards are a nation of brigands,' said Sergeant Millefeux one night.

He was sitting in his accustomed place, in the Café Napoléon, and the talk had drifted—as it generally did when he was present—to the great days of the Empire.

'You can fight an army,' continued Sergeant Millefeux, 'for an army is something you can get hold of; and even if you lose your battle, at least you have had a chance, and that is always a satisfaction. But those Spanish guerillas never gave us a chance. They would shoot at us from behind rocks and trees where we couldn't see them. We only saw the puffs of smoke and heard the bullets whizzing past our ears, and when we rushed forward—pouf, they were gone, just as if the earth had swallowed them up. And then, while we stood wondering what to do next, the bullets would begin to whizz again, and men would fall down dead or wounded. Ah, the brigands!'

'Unhappily, the brigands are not all on the south side of the Pyrenees. There are one or two in France, for instance. It was one of those who nearly got the better of me when I was in charge of the convoy of silver. When I feel the sun rather warm, as it is sometimes in the summer, it always makes me think of the hot sun of Spain and of that day, thirty years ago, when I was a strong man and had charge of the convoy.'

'The silver was for the pay of the garrison in Trinidad, and it was all packed up very snugly in nine wine-casks. We had three wagons—those clumsy Spanish country carts—and there were three barrels, full of the silver, in each cart. Each of the wagons was drawn by four mules—obstinate, bad-tempered brutes they were, too, though, after all, it was not their fault, for they had been brought up in Spain all their lives, and had never known anybody better than those rascally Spaniards.'

'I had twenty-five men to escort those wagons and all that silver from Madrid to Trinidad. It was far too few, of course, but the French in those days had been doing the impossible

for so long that they couldn't break off the habit. Besides, the wagons were piled with hay, so it was thought that no one would know anything about the treasure. Anyone who saw us would fancy we were conveying forage to the next post. Also, for a wonder, the district we were travelling through had had no brigands up till then to its discredit.'

'The country was fairly open, and we bumped along in peace and quietness till we came within a matter of twenty miles from Trinidad, where we were to deliver up the silver. The day had been very hot, and the country was beginning to get hilly, and the roads were abominable. The mules, too, gave us no end of trouble. I have told you there were four to each wagon, and each one of the four wanted to pull in a different direction. There was only one at each wagon that would pull in the right way, and he only did so to spite the others. All day long we coaxed and cursed them alternately, and we were all very glad when at last we arrived at the small fort at Alcantara, which marked the end of the day's march.'

II.

'The fort was situated on one side of a range of hills, and on the other side, twenty miles away, was Trinidad. The village of Alcantara lay at the foot of a small hill, from the top of which the guns of the fort looked down upon the village and the scoundrels who formed its population.'

'As our wagons rolled and bumped over the cobble-stones of the detestable street, the villagers stood and stared at us from the doorways and windows; and I knew they were cursing us under their breath. That was the sort of people they were—those Spaniards. As we came out of the village, we entered on a fine broad road that rose in a gentle slope up to the gateway of the fort; and I noticed that another procession of wagons was moving on in front of us. Those wagons, like ours, were laden with wine-casks, but the casks were in open view, not hidden beneath a pile of hay as ours were. Also, they contained real wine, which the picturesque rascals who were in

charge would soon be selling to the commandant of the fort.

'It was just as I imagined, and by the time I had got my wagons drawn up for the night inside the protecting walls of the fort, the commandant, Captain France, had come out of his quarters to interview the wine-sellers. They haggled for some time over the price, but at length they were satisfied, and half-a-dozen soldiers began to roll some of the casks along to the captain's cellar. As the commandant was now at liberty, I stepped up to him and reported my arrival with the convoy.

"Convoy, ah, yes," he replied; "the silver, of course." Then he stopped short, as if he had just realised that the three Spaniards were within hearing. He shot a quick glance in their direction; and so did I, for that matter, but they appeared fully occupied helping the soldiers with the casks. "Follow me, sergeant," he said, and he marched off to the central building of the fort, where, of course, his quarters were.

'Very comfortable quarters they were, too, but his words were very disturbing.

"How many men have you, sergeant?" was his first question.

"Twenty-five, *mon capitaine*," I replied.

"Only twenty-five," he said. "That is far too few."

"But the district is quiet," I answered; "is it not?"

"It *was* quiet," said he; "but I know there are guerillas in the hills now over yonder." And, as he spoke, he glanced out of the window to where the high ridge of the Sierra Gerena rose up, with its peaks glowing in the setting sun.

"But the guerillas do not know anything of the silver," I replied. "They don't know even that I am going to Trinidad."

"I would not be too sure," he replied with a laugh. "Those messieurs have a very awkward talent for getting at our deepest secrets. And they can smell money as a cat smells fish. I shouldn't wonder if those guerillas have come round here solely for your benefit. It is very strange they should come just at this moment, anyway, for they have never been here before."

"If you will lend me another twenty-five men, captain—" I was beginning, when he broke in.

"Impossible, sergeant," he said. "My garrison is too small, and with the news of those guerillas in the neighbourhood, I cannot spare a single man."

"But it would only be for a couple of days," I remonstrated.

"*Parbleu*, and how much can happen in a couple of days!" returned the captain. "What is it that the Emperor always says? 'It is the last quarter of an hour that wins the battle.' So a couple of days might easily win this fort, sergeant."

'I remained silent, for it was clear there was no moving this man, and, besides, an idea had just flashed into my head. Moreover, there was something about this Captain France that made me very suspicious and uneasy.

"Well?" he asked, after waiting a minute. "What do you think?"

"I am sorry you cannot lend me a few more men, captain," I replied; "but, as I do not see how the guerillas can know anything about this silver, I shall risk it. After all, we will be on our guard."

"Very good!" said he. "Of course, it may be as you say. I hope those fellows did not hear me mention the word silver. I don't think they did, but I will try to find out. I'll send and have a word with them. You can go now, sergeant."

III.

'Accordingly, I went off with my head full of thoughts. The Spaniards, I found, had brought their wagons close to the place where mine were standing, and their mules, like mine, were all fastened by the head to a convenient wooden rail. The mules were all busy with their corn-bags, and all, therefore, at peace for once. It was getting dusk, and one of my men had already taken up his station as sentry beside our wagons. The three Spaniards were squatted on the ground. They appeared to be busy with their evening meal, but a French soldier soon appeared and, after a few words, they all went off in the direction of the captain's quarters.

'This was a rare chance, and, as soon as they were gone, I stepped up to the Spaniards' wagons. I noticed there were exactly the same number of casks in each of their carts as there were in mine.

"Pierre," I said, coming back to the sentry, "just slip up to the barracks and bring half-a-dozen of our fellows down here. Quietly, you know, no fuss."

'Pierre went off at once, and in a few minutes he came back with six of my men.

"Now, my lads" I said, "just get all our barrels out of the wagons."

'They needed no second bidding, but got to work at once; and, after they had pulled the trusses of hay off, they soon had the nine barrels of silver standing on the ground.

"Now for the wine-casks," was my next order. "Get them off the Spaniards' wagons, and be smart about it."

'The men looked a bit surprised, but, of course, they did at once as they had been told. I never fully realised before what a grand thing discipline is; but, all the same, I cast a very anxious glance towards the captain's quarters, where he was confabbing with the Spaniards.

'However, luck favoured us, and, in a few minutes more, the exchange had been very

neatly carried out. My nine barrels of silver were lying in the Spaniards' carts and the nine barrels of wine were reposing in my wagons, with the trusses of hay on the top of them.

"Now, my lads," I said to my astonished soldiery, "you can all go back to the canteen and enjoy yourselves. There is no need even for a sentry. But, mind, mum's the word. If one of you let's out what we have been doing I'll have him shot, hanged, and quartered."

"That night, I laughed to myself as I went to sleep, and I slept the sleep of a just man who has successfully cheated his neighbour. You see, the Spaniards were going to Trinidad to sell the remainder of their wine. And, if there were guerillas to fight, the wine-sellers, of course, would not be molested. *They* would go quietly through to Trinidad, and the brigands would attack us. So, however the fight went, the silver would arrive safely at its destination. And it was the idea of those innocent scoundrels taking my silver for me quite safely to Trinidad that made me laugh as I went to sleep that night.

"But I said nothing to the commandant of the fort. As I said before, there was something about him I distrusted. Nothing definite, of course—a something in his manner, in the look of his eye, in his way of speaking. It all came to this: that I had a vague feeling that he was after that quarter million of francs, and that he had something more to do with those three Spaniards than a mere buying of wine.

IV.

"Well, next morning, we were astir at an early hour, for we had twenty miles of hill and wood to get over before sunset.

"The captain came to see us depart, and he mentioned the guerillas again to me very earnestly. "There is a very good inn half-way at the top of the ridge," he added. "If the guerillas let you get as far as there you will be all right, I should think, and you will get some very fair refreshment at the inn."

"Thank you, *mon capitaine*," I replied. "I will not forget either the inn or the guerillas."

"Well, *bon voyage*, sergeant," he replied. "Best of luck!"

"Au revoir, *mon capitaine*," I returned.

"And then we were off. The Spaniards went on in front and we came lumbering behind.

"We were soon lost in the woods, and the mules had so much hard work pulling up the steep hilly road that they quite forgot to make trouble. We climbed higher and higher up the side of the great ridge. The woods grew thicker and darker, and the road was no better than the dried-up bed of a stream. I had a dozen of my men scouting through the woods to right and left, and the rest of us marched steadily along with the wagons.

"I had made my plans, of course. At the

first sign of trouble all my men were to take cover in the woods on either side of the road. "Every man to his tree," I had said to them, "and the devil can look after the wagons till the fight is over." So, as I chuckled to myself, I had arranged very well both for the silver and the guerillas.

"However, nothing happened, and in due course we came about noon to the inn of which the captain had spoken. The innkeeper stood smiling at the door, and that itself was a bad sign. But I was so happy at the way things had gone that I was not so suspicious as I ought to have been.

"We were all glad to make a halt, and, as the inn was too small to hold us all, my men sat down on the grass, and the innkeeper brought out his best wine and served it out to us with a great show of friendliness. The three Spaniards, however, went inside the inn to rejoice themselves with their eternal garlic and onions.

"Well, of course, our wine was drugged, as I ought to have foreseen. The smiling innkeeper did not go so far as to deal in poison, but he put something into the wine to make us sleep. And sleep we did, the whole twenty-five of us, for a solid three hours by the clock. We should probably have slept even longer, but I fancy the drug was weak. You see, twenty-five men need a good deal of wine, and the drug would lose its strength through being mixed with so much liquid.

"In spite of that, however, it was nearly four o'clock in the afternoon before I woke up. It was some time before I could shake off the drowsiness and realise what had happened. Then, I began to think fast enough. I tumbled to it at once that our wine had been tampered with, and I sent some of my men post-haste into the inn to arrest the innkeeper. But, of course, the bird had flown. Not a soul was in the place.

"I looked into the wagons to see if he had done anything with the barrels, which he would think were full of silver. However, there was no sign of their having been disturbed. Even the trusses of hay were just as we had placed them. Then I reflected that the innkeeper must have gone off to summon his friends the guerillas, while the wine-sellers had continued on their journey to Trinidad with their wine, or rather, what they thought was their wine, but which, of course, was my silver.

"I congratulated myself, and very heartily too, on the trick I had played, though I could not understand why the innkeeper had bungled things so badly as to give us time to waken up again before getting away with my treasure-wagons. However, that was his affair, and, as the guerillas might appear now at any moment, I quickly set the men in motion once more.

"The Spaniards, I reckoned, would by now be at Trinidad, so the silver was quite safe; but, as

they would be in a terrible state if they lost their wine, we brought the wagons along with us.

v.

'We marched steadily along, and, as you may imagine, we kept a very bright lookout for the innkeeper and his friends, but we were unmolested. No one appeared, and we bumped along in peace.

'It was nearly dark when we marched through the gate of the big fort at Trinidad, and, as soon as we had got safely inside the walls, I went off to report my arrival to the commandant.

'Ah!' he said, 'I am glad to see you, for the troops are a long time in arrears with their pay. I will have the silver brought up here at once.'

'*Mon colonel*,' I said, 'I have brought in the wagons that used to have the silver in them, but there is none in them now.'

'What!' he exclaimed; and I laughed to myself to see the flush of surprise on his old face. 'What do you mean, sergeant?'

'It was a piece of strategy, *mon colonel*,' I replied. And then I told him with great gusto how I had put the silver in the wine-sellers' wagons and made them the unconscious carriers of the treasure.

'If you go into your cellars, *mon colonel*,' I wound up, 'and open the barrels of wine they have sold you, you will find the silver safe enough.'

Instead of looking pleased, however, the colonel seemed frankly puzzled.

'I don't understand you, sergeant,' he replied at last. 'No wine-merchants have come here to-day, and there are no barrels of either wine or silver in my cellars.'

'What!' I exclaimed, astonished now in my turn, and very alarmed also, I must confess. 'No wine-sellers here to-day! But, *mon colonel*, there must have been; they had plenty of time to get here hours ago, and we did not overtake them on the road.'

'We stood staring at each other in silence for a full minute.

'My lad,' said the colonel at last, 'you have been done by those scoundrels—done, as brown as toast. You had better leave strategy to the Emperor after this. He may understand it, but it is very plain that sergeants do not.'

'I was overwhelmed with confusion and grief. To think I had lost the whole convoy of silver—a quarter million of francs in the hands of those devils, the wine-merchants! And what was even more painful, to think that my precious scheme had been turned so completely against myself! I ground my teeth as I thought of how it had all worked out. The three Spaniards had known somehow all along that the silver was in their own carts, and I remembered how they had gone into the inn and, no doubt, taken the innkeeper into their confidence and got him to put

us all to sleep, while they walked calmly off with the booty.

'That explained why *my* wagons had not been disturbed, and why no guerillas had appeared. It had never been a question of guerillas at all—only those three men and the innkeeper.

'But at that another thought flashed through my mind. The captain at Alcantara fort! The captain had talked so much about these same guerillas who had never shown themselves. And he had had a long confabulation with the three rascally wine-sellers after he had seen me. He was the leading spirit in the whole matter, I felt convinced. And all the doubt and suspicion I had had of him was now justified up to the hilt. And yet I could prove nothing against him. The cunning devil!

'Well,' said the colonel, breaking in on my sad meditations, 'it is no use crying over spilt milk. The silver is gone, but the wine remains. Let us, at least, have some of the wine you have convoyed so safely.'

'So I went off, gloomily enough, and my men soon brought a couple of the barrels up to the colonel's quarters.

'Now for a drink,' said the colonel. 'I haven't had a proper glass of wine for a month.'

'His servant brought out some glasses, and we knocked out the bung of one of the barrels.

'But no wine flowed.

'Why, what the devil!' exclaimed the colonel, angry at last. 'Have you neither brought silver nor wine, sergeant?'

'I can't understand it, colonel,' I replied. 'Perhaps it is an empty cask.'

'Well, try the other,' he said.

'So we tried the other cask, but it seemed empty as well, for not a drop of wine could we get out of it.

'Look here, sergeant,' said the colonel, 'there must be something in those barrels, for they have weight. Break them open.'

'So we got chisels and hammers, and, after a while, we prised open the top of one of the wine-casks. And then—! I could have dropped with amazement. The barrel was full of silver!

'Good Heavens, sergeant!' shouted the colonel. 'Whatever does all this mean? Bring up all the barrels!'

'So we got the whole cargo up to the colonel's room and opened them, and in them we found all the silver that I thought was lost for ever.

'We all stood staring in amazement, as you can well imagine, and for a time we could make nothing of it.

'Then, at last, I tumbled to the solution of the problem.

'*Mon colonel*,' I said, 'the matter is really very simple after all. Those Spaniards must have had the same idea as myself—the barrels were changed *twice* at Alcantara!'

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

KNOWING there were ghosts to be seen, real ghosts, and not the concocted invisibilities of amateur sensationalists, a certain man, one of our friends, took the train from London on an afternoon of the recent autumn to a lonely place in the north-west of our country, and arrived when it was dark. His object was to commune with these ghosts. The mood of the adventure was perhaps a little sombre, and yet natural. It was the mood of a man of departed youth, who, in a world that seems not to increase in loveliness or harmony, finds the problem of life and the future, the unknown, to be increasingly distressing, and, as is often the manner with such people, looks behind with soft and tender sentiments. Visitation upon scenes of the past, with which acquaintance has long been cut, is often done by men and women who think inwards with themselves. The countries of their inner lives are peopled with many intimate figures that no longer walk about outside, while the landscapes—the cottages and lanes, the hills and streams, the trees and the very individual flowering plants—have a peculiar vivid freshness, and a tender sympathy with the observer who was once part of them and is now, by right of mind and long attachment, their spiritual possessor. No person of sense and sensibility, stirred by these strange spiritual hankerings after the past, would venture upon any attempt to satisfy desire in the company of another, however sympathetic. If there are supreme moments for the enjoyment of solitude and silence, they are then. Time must be of no account; there must be lingering and loitering, searchings of remembrance and a pathetic meditation upon simple things, as upon a great oak tree which in forty years seems not to have added anything to its splendid stature, and, like the mountains, appears to have some arrangement with eternity; or upon a stream which, through weeds and siltings, has by a trifle changed its shape in the same period; or a footpath through the fields which is no more a footpath, since, by changes of labour and of persons, it is no longer needed, and the later farmer has grown thorns where stiles were once. In such moments the company of the dearest friend would be an intrusion almost

vulgar. What to him or her is that simple gate, which indeed may have the appearance of many other rickety gates grown old? To tell that you once or many times stood there, merely stood, does not assist to another's sympathy or understanding. The bend in the great white road, with a most ancient view of distant hills through some old fir trees that, as we know, have framed it for forty years, seems to hold no magic of recollection for a companion who, in striding by, might even think of politics. To him it is a simple turn in a plain old road, and not a spot where fairies used to play. As they need silence and solitude, the practised adventurers among the sweet sentiments of old remembrance include among their rules that the season should be the autumn, that the day should be still and not bright, for there is tragedy enough in this affair without the howling of the wind, and sunshine makes an irony we were better spared from. The hour is that of twilight.

* * *

This man had been sated with emotional experiences in abundance, and was tired. It seemed to him, morose, that even his frequent adventures among remembrance had lost much of their pristine charm, and that he needed stronger stuff. That is why, for him with an imagination and a soul to feed on, ghosts, real ghosts, were needed, and he went in search of them boldly. He had come to understand that old and beloved remembrance, embroidered with its delicate poignancy, cannot be stirred again to living reality in the light of day with all the sights and sounds, the people and animals, of another world about. Show Hamlet to us in golfing costume if it is desired, but yet I could not by any effort imagine a mimic presentation of Antony praising a dead Cæsar in Trafalgar Square; and less do I accept the anachronism of automobiles flashing and honking along the sacred roads of my early youth, or the incongruity of these new and thoughtless boys to whom it all seems so much less than it was to me—or as now I think it was. Then may not darkness restore the truth and life of a beloved scene? This may be an experiment not often planned. The man, a most intimate friend, was bent deliberately and carefully upon this experiment, and upon nothing else. He arrived at

the small country place in the dark. He left a few belongings at an inn, ate a small meal after a long journey, and then went out for hours of tramping over the countryside in the night, in the gloom, in the soft quietness. Good in its results was this adventure, and, sure that it has a personal application to each one of us who at this very season more than others are given to looking towards the hindmost years and dwelling upon remembrance, we have gathered from the general chronicle of our friend some points that, by their personal similarities, may prick the consciousness of those who read. Let them test the truth of it who sit late on Christmas nights by firesides, when the young and the old alike have gone upstairs and silent reveries begin—for then spring what we call reminders. The glorification of trivialities is the essence of all such meditations. Thus such a reverie as this is a nocturne of their tinklings which, to one who hurries heedless in the pace of youth, seem useless nothings; but to their elders they make up the patterns of a life that has been lived, and the materials of all our patterns is much the same. Each has its meaning and its essential.

* * *

The night was black when the man set out, and heavy clouds were drifting low. He left the little town behind, and struck out upon a high road full of twists and turns, whose every line and gate and bush he knew and remembered better than he could now recall many of the features of his home in the city in the south which he had left only that morning. Soon he was in the open country; it slept so still in the clamminess of the late autumnal night. At first it was a little difficult to discern and feel the way upon the footpath, which was certainly narrower and much more overgrown with grass and weeds than it used to be. Where once was a full yard width for walking there was now scarcely more than a foot. This was strange, a momentous change, and why was it? By the simplest reasoning the tramping of the country folk along this main road in a district of agriculture with a few collieries, once extensive, must have nearly ceased. That could not be a matter either of railways or of motor-cars. To skip the analysis of forty years of circumstance, the reasons are found to be these: a certain industrial decline of the country as against the town, fast increasing in recent years, and the shutting-down of collieries and works, resulting in less tramping of labourers between their places of toil and their homes; the great cheapening of cycles, and, with the economic improvement of the position of a large proportion of these country people, the plain fact that possession of them is common now, which seemed strange to this thinker in the night when he remembered how in his youth he rode upon these roads with the only tricycle

(and tricycles are now an almost extinct type) for ten miles round, and was sometimes accompanied by a schoolfellow on a high bicycle whose wheel was forty-eight inches in diameter, which was small, considering that the standard was fifty-two. A cyclist was a sight for the villagers in those days, and sometimes they beheld a company of them from a distant city proceeding in regimental or squadron style, in a dark blue uniform with tight breeches and a long-peaked cap like a huntsman's, a bugler at the head of them. Such were the first cycling clubs, the earliest departure from horse-locomotion along this country road. And now the sons of Giles have their cycles, and some indeed their motor-cycles, and those who loitered and lazied by the yard of path now flash along the miles, and their lives are quick, and their nerves sometimes a little thin. Another cause of the decay of footpaths was, of course, the war, with its disturbance of the country routine, and the further attraction to the towns. Yet the chiefest cause of all is the most recent, and may be unsuspected. It is country transport by motor-omnibuses, which now in regular services run along every country road where people ever walked in numbers. Only when he reaches these remote districts can the dweller in the big cities appreciate the great revolution made by the motor-omnibuses. They have caused the virtual abolition of country-walking, except the little that is done for pleasure, and to a large extent also the abolition of the pony and trap of the small proprietor, who is just above cottage rank. They have brought into intimate and regular association small towns whose ten or twenty miles of separation had once the effect of hundreds. Above all, they have placed the railways, with their few and inflexible routes and their stiff services, into a strange position of unregarded dispensability. In these places the railways are now often like a late reserve, and here is a giant fact for consideration by those who, because of their investments and for other reasons, consider the future of our railways. Labour troubles are not the only menace to their existence or prosperity. And so long grass and weeds bend over the narrowed footpath, brushing the shins of the haunter of old scenes, who would find here now by day that the modern god of speed, with his rush and rattle, has come to the countryside that was once so sweetly slow and placid. Progress must be served, and down go the idylls, the pastoral simplicities and green Nature herself. The modern lambs, used to their time, do not scamper off in fright when a petrol juggernaut thunders past their field. But such thoughts of mechanical things are only faintly related to the ghosts for which the man has come to search by night, intruding upon the scheme only because as yet he has scarcely entered into the full spirit of the country night, and the habit

of the town and the present still sticks upon his thought. . . . In greater loneliness the night spreads out. From the stillness come whisperings of Nature in her dreams. And the strange dead light of darkness increases to the vision of the nocturnal roamer, who becomes a part of this solemn scene. As he wanders on, a certain nervous expectation creeps into his mind. Might not some frightful fiend be treading close behind? This is the country of the past. This is the time for ghosts . . .

* * *

Within the space of two or three hundred yards along a bending road, overhung by many trees, arise three great remembrances, very different and yet possessing some association with each other. Fronting the highway is a splendid pair of tall black wrought-iron gates, fine and massive workmanship, standing for the entrance to a mansion among the trees up the hill beyond. Not in our time will the halls of squires be served by such gates again. The man when a boy must have passed these gates more than a thousand times, and commonly, as he recalls, a certain vague sense of awe—and yet not awe—respect—and yet not that, either, in any humble or craven sense—descended upon him as he entered the zone of road with the view of these gates, remaining until he passed out of it. And this, it is certain, was the faint emotion of all persons of the place possessed of any sensibility. That used to be a habit in the country. Peculiar traditions were attached to the gates, and the personage who dwelt in the hall was rarely if ever seen to pass through them, which made mystery. In those days, as will be remembered, plain men became immensely great to the thinking of country folk through some little imagined mystery like this. He dwelt mostly in London, it was believed, and his power was fancied to be immense, London then being, in the measurement of thought, quite a thousand miles away. Long afterwards, with romantic fancies gone, the fact was accepted that he was a successful tradesman, and with Olympus had no connection whatsoever, nor yet Parnassus. But, to pass from the personage, this entrance with the black gates had another attraction. On each side was, and is, a tiny lodge in smooth square stone, so small as to consist of only one most limited chamber, and the guardians, who dwelt and ate on the one side by day, had to cross over—let the storm be what it might—to the other side to sleep by night. Over the portal of the habitation on the left was an elaborate sculptured device of musical instruments, with a large violin upright in the middle of them; and over the portal of the habitation on the right were representations of things of war, such as a coat-of-mail to match the fiddle, and implements of slaughter round about it. Such as wish may pleasantly conjecture upon the state

and fancy of the original owner who had these emblems fashioned for him; but the remembrance of this wanderer, as he peered upon them through the gloom, went acutely back to the circumstance that all the folk of the country round had tales and legends to tell of them, and most especially called them, according to their tradition, Heaven and Hell: Heaven on the left, Hell on the right; Heaven with the sign of music, and Hell with the sign of war. It occurred to the man, only after forty years, how exactly the common country people of that time were right in their association of ideas, though they were insensible of any such association. At that time war was nothing, or, if anything, it was grand. The Crimea was long forgotten. There was only the Soudan and the battle of Abu Klea, and they called up no mothers' sons for that, nor cut down the meat to twice a week.

* * *

Now, near to the black gates, after a bend in the road, the wanderer, plodding along the grassy path, was confronted suddenly by a great sinister ghostly recollection. It was a tree, a small tree, that rose from the high hedge, and, with one long menacing arm, bent over the path as if to stop and challenge, upon a memory, him who might go sneaking past. This was a ghost of sorts, and so it looked. He remembered it. The tree had scarcely grown at all in those forty years; it was just the same, and well did the man remember that overhanging arm. For on that branch one morning a robin was singing pleasantly, and a boy had a catapult, made by himself of a fork of wood and some elastic. He put a stone into the catapult, aimed at the robin, and it fell dead at his feet. Now, he was not by nature a cruel boy—far from it. He sometimes played with a catapult because it was the youthful custom so to do, and in utter thoughtlessness he had many times aimed at birds because it was a custom, but never once till now had hit one. He was overwhelmed by this tragic surprise. The robin that was singing on a morn of May was dead, and he had killed it. That other people killed nearly everything except their kind, and sometimes even that, mattered nothing to the case. He cried, and for this time he was not ashamed to cry. Then, when he had buried the bird and his tears were dried, he vowed he would never again kill or try to kill any bird or animal whatsoever, in sport or play or in any way, and he has kept the vow. And yet after forty years—and the slaughter of the war—this old ghost tree lays its arm across the path, the arm upon which the robin sang, and sadly says, 'So you have come again!' The emotions of that long-past morning suddenly for a second flooded through him, and he was sad. The spirituality of this existence of ours, how darkly, deeply mysterious it seems, even in such trifling manifestations as this!

Now, the third of those great remembrances, enshrined within a small space upon a lonely country road, is a very different kind of thing. Only some fifty yards from the tree of tragedy the man came to a point in the road where a lane turns off, and the remembrance here is of something wholly and splendidly beautiful, with the ringing of wedding-bells, or emotional sounds as much like that as a boy's imagination might sometimes reach. For Gloria was here; he beheld her often here; and Gloria was the most heavenly girl that God had up to that time made. (Or so it seemed. Twelve or thirteen years had the man now walking in the night to his credit then, and Gloria had one less, or so he fancied, for he never really knew.) He was so shy and never came to the simplest talk. He worshipped her usually from a distance of many yards, but in the abounding purity of his boyish soul he would, had it belonged to him, have given the whole of that countryside for possession of her. Nothing that ever happened later has made him feel so much like Dante gazing upon the passing Beatrice. And Gloria was worth it all. In the straight line of his loves she was the successor to his little cousin, then a princess in a pantomime seen but once, next a farmer's daughter (whose regard was lost through his folly in releasing her pet doves from a cage at the instance of the farmer when in his cups), and once a real, if minor, princess of Hindoo blood, who was schooling somewhere there and spending holiday with this very farmer's daughter—both aged ten. But Gloria was quite the most splendid of them all. She was the daughter of the gamekeeper of the squire who lived up at the hall, and twice a day the boy, going to a distant school and returning, passed that end of the lane up which, among the trees, was her father's small white cottage. She was very good to look upon, and had a perfect foil to display her enchantments all the more by contrast, for she had a younger sister, Letty as they called her, often with her. Letty was little and shy, very meek and modest in her way, always looking to the side or down, and she was somewhat dark of countenance. But Gloria was a big upstanding golden thing. She held herself up high, all quivering life and vigour, all boldness and laughter, and yet, as the man remembers so well, a fine, defending, and challenging dignity about her always. Freckled and rosy was her face, and masses of hair of real auburn gold flowed about her shoulders. Never could Bond Street have done anything for the enhancement of that charm. Her simple little clothes were perfect for their part, and for private reasons, as the man supposes, they were nearly always just the same, a plain little frock reaching to the knees, and a black pinafore with an upper part rising nearly to the neck, with two wavy lines

of some plain embroidery near to the edge of it all round. This recollection is strangely precise. Letty was attired to match. The boy and this Gloria never once stopped and talked together in any friendly way. Once or twice she fired a phrase of challenge at him as he passed, and he stood for a moment dumb and abject, and then uneasily went on. Once by chance they stood facing each other, but did not speak. Humbler in the social scale she was supposed to be, but certainly he never thought of that. Then he went away into the world, and of course forgot. For thirty years or more he never once recalled that vision of young girlish brilliance and life, until at last one night out in a lonely desert, in all its utter solitude, it seemed suddenly in a reverie that the crest of life's hill had been mounted and the descent to death had at last begun. Then memories of the earliest times flooded through the mind, and among them came this of Gloria, and it flamed to a dazzling brilliance. Was her name truly Gloria? He was unsure; but he felt it must have been. He was certain of Letty, and Gloria—it must have been! What a trick was this remembrance after such a yawning gap of life! So in our aged philosophy do we ruminate upon the pretty ways of Nature, when, with a delicacy so infinitely pure, she comes first to flick with a feather upon the sense of boy and girl. In the desert the man was wondering if the romances—and the tragedies—of maturity holds more sweetness after all than those first affections when idealism storms the children's soul. And where may Gloria, that bounding, golden creature be? He does not know, and he knows it is better he does not know, for, if he knew and saw, perhaps the picture might be spoiled.

* * *

He came to a stone bridge, charmingly situated with tall firs at the approach, a line of sycamores and chestnuts bordering the road beyond. Even though it was dark, he knew that the trees were there, for he knew them forty years ago, and, though one forgets the war, such facts as these, gathered in youth, are not forgotten. But strangely, as he looked towards them, they seemed less lofty than in the olden days, though in such a case there could be no clipping. Again, around the bend two hundred yards ahead there was another well-remembered tree that surely, though big and fine, seemed smaller than before, and everywhere in this beloved country it was the same. The majestic oak in the park land near the home, the beech on the very lawn thereof, and a hundred more were at least no bigger than before. Their main branches spread forth to the same extent and at the same angle as before. They had stood still while time went on and men went withering with it. Only the saplings of those ancient days had risen. Yet, of course, the truth was that all had grown immensely as

trees must do, and here was one of the illusions of youth and age. To the child the tree, a monarch of Nature to which he feels so much akin, is immense and glorious, and more immense than a measurement by rule would make it. If he could think so much, the boy child would feel as Ruskin said of trees—what a great thought of God it was when He thought a tree! So much does this early emotion saturate the system, that in later life our thoughts wander backwards to the early scenes, the old trees we so worked upon by imagination, that they mount upwards to the sky and spread out thickly beyond all their natural broadness. Some idealising here again. Now, what a strange vitality there is in trees! Hardly any were missing. Only one majestic line had gone, one that bordered the orchard in which he played and drowsed, into the several trunks of which he had cut the initial letters of his name, and so taken those trees specially unto him. Those which had kept intact and clear the token for nearly thirty years fell in the war for sacrifice. Yet near by was a weakling little plum tree whose puny delicate limbs he had pinned against a wall, and whose life each winter had hung upon a frosty chance. Now, after more than half the period of a man's life, it leaned there still, so weak and frail, and hardly higher. From the bridge, along the line of sycamores and chestnuts, the summer singing of the trees in those distant days was in imagination heard again. Those who have lived only in the towns and never heard in their impressionable youth the murmur of the leaves of trees as zephyrs stir them on a sunny afternoon have not known the most soothing music Nature sings. Here at the bridge the most sweetly harmonious duet was made by the ripple over stones of the shallow stream beneath. With the twittering of birds there is thus the most delicious nature music, like that which Wagner tried to catch in the murmurings of the forest through which Siegfried wandered as a boy. Now, when the man leaned upon the bridge, and the big wide harvest moon broke a mystic light through banks of clouds, and fell into ruminations deep as Hamlet's, he heard only in reality the ripple of the dark stream below, but in fancy listened to the soft singing of the trees again. The ripple of this self-same stream, only a few miles nearer its mountain cradle, kindled once the inspiration of a great musician, for Mendelssohn, when visiting this country and idling here, heard it, and then he composed a wordless song which you may find with the label, 'Op. 30, No. 3.'

* * *

From the top of a brow the man looked down upon the village. This for him in reality at boyhood, and in the dreams of later life, had always been as the village of the world. Every man

and woman should carry on with them in their piling years the memory of some small village of this country, its structure, its character, and its life; for, let big cities and their 'call' be what they will, it is the villages that best show the simple goodness and strength of our homeland. Here time counts for little, and tradition is all. Communists that take their lead from Moscow have small chance in these villages, for each one is a commune to itself, established upon a system of human helpfulness and sympathy. Or so it was, for the squires, through taxation, are leaving now, and the social fabric of the village crumbles. By the light of the moon, however, the man can see and even hear all as it was those forty years ago. Here, on the right, is the village church, poplars surrounding its graveyard, while the thin tower rises over all. Nothing is changed, except the lych-gate for a war memorial. Here at half-past ten, in his Sunday clothes, came the boy on the Sabbath, spending an appreciable part of the service, ninety minutes, always in a vague contemplation of an adjacent window of stained glass in which were displayed figures to illustrate a very excellent and encouraging text—'Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things.' This text and the squire's daughter in an adjacent pew were nearly the only things the boy remembered afterwards of those Sabbath mornings in the church. Not a word of the sermons, though preached by the father of his closest chum. The text was the best thing to remember after all. The man passed into the churchyard, and in the night-light wandered among the tombs. Alas! Here, and here, and there, and everywhere, old friends of youth who had lived and worked their day, and resting now. Resting truly, for in the villages the belief in rest and resurrection holds faster than in the towns, and there is more happiness and contentment accordingly. Opposite to the church was the village inn, kept by an old widowed lady who was a young wife when the boy used to go that way. Beyond the church was the village school, where the children seemed to be singing half their time—singing hymns and songs, preparing catechisms for the coming of church examiners, and reciting in musical chorus the long stanzas of Scott's *Lady of the Lake*. Thinking upon all the modern problems and doubts of education, the man, as he leaned by the gates of the schoolyard, did not seem to find that there was much wrong with this. Are progress and improvement all? he asked. Are beauty and belief, with music, nearly nothing? Beyond the school, amid a clump of trees, was the parsonage, farther down the road the doctor's house, and after that a cluster of dwellings, a mill with motor wheel, and a big bridge and a cricket ground. Here was the complete village, and the life of it glowed round the church and the school. Its human elements

were joined in that perfect dependence that we find in one of Trollope's tales of Barsetshire. Humanity is here, weak and tender, often a little silly in its self-centred way, pathetic in its simplicity, but lovelier than humanity in the greater outer world. . . . Our friend in his chronicle asks leave to wait a while, for in this

journey he now came to the place of home, and of childhood's home it is easier to think than speak. In those days of all others we have known, with doubts and difficulties tightening upon the world, how sublime are thoughts of childhood's home, how sweet the word home—the simple, lovely name of home!

MEDES AND PERSIANS.

PART II.

X.

DINNER came on early—strange variation of routine!—because they were going to a rather dull play at the Lyceum. The theatre was part of Joyce's life; she loved it. In London it always meant, if not supper, at least a comfortable hour with drinks and sandwiches in front of a fire. Edinburgh did not indulge in theatre suppers, but Joyce counted on that pleasant aftermath—she and Harold alone. That would make up for a lot.

But no, it was not to be. 'We always go to bed at eleven.' If that meant 'we never go to bed till eleven,' it also meant, apparently, 'we never sit up after it.' They got back to the house at ten-forty-five, and there were no sandwiches. There was a bottle of lager for Harold, a glass of milk for Joyce, some careful conversation, a few well-timed yawns, and then inexorably, and on the tick of the clock—bed.

The next day was mostly calls; and calls, under the observantly merciless eye of Mrs Brander, were something of an ordeal. But Joyce bore with them, because the evening promised a real pleasure. She and Harold were to go with a party of friends to the Palais de Danse in Fountainbridge. Harold danced beautifully, Joyce was mad on it; and at any rate there would be no Mrs Brander.

The Palais de Danse was all that could be desired, but the party of friends was disappointing. Meeting his contemporaries, Joyce suddenly realised that Harold was a much older man than she had thought; there was hardly anyone in the party below forty. Male and female, they struck Joyce as stiff, cold, and critical. She did not understand that that was only Edinburgh, where people make friends cautiously and critically, and with no exotic effusiveness; and had a stupid suspicion that Mrs Brander had warned them against her. The jazz bands did their noble work, but produced no appreciable thaw; you could only get teetotal drinks, and the main idea in the minds of Harold's friends seemed to be 'how soon can we get home?' Two by two they drifted away, until at last only Harold and Joyce remained.

Harold looked at his big military wrist-watch with its network of protecting bars over the face.

'It's past eleven. We'd better get along after this dance!'

Joyce was utterly dismayed. 'Harold! It's just beginning to be nice, now all these stuffy people have gone. Just you and me.'

Harold allowed the compliment to himself to outweigh the disparaging reference to his friends. He smiled kindly.

'Well, but we can't keep the mater up all night, you know.'

Dismay turned to horror; Joyce was appalled. 'You don't mean to say she's sitting up for us?'

Harold smiled again, but rather less patiently.

'Oh yes, she is. She always does. She always insists on seeing everybody into bed.'

'Always,' thought Joyce. 'Always.'

'But—but, Harold,' she said shyly, 'sha'n't we even get a little while together—alone—you know—'

'I'm afraid not, goosie,' said Harold; 'not at this time of night. . . . Come on, let's have one more dance.'

XI.

In the cab going home Joyce sat silent for a little, then nerved herself to speak. 'Harold, dearest, don't think me horrid, but—but—do you always do things in your house according to rote?'

Harold was slightly annoyed. 'I don't think we do that more than any other people. You must have some order, you know. I think my mother runs the house uncommonly well.'

'Uncommonly,' thought Joyce, '—and far, far better than I shall ever do.' The tears crept into her eyes as she said piteously—'But mother's house is very nice, Harold. You always used to think so. And you know we don't worry about things like—like you do here.'

She felt the arm round her shoulders tighten.

'I know you don't. You know I'm fond of your mother'—oh scandalous falsehood!—'but I don't think I could live in a house run on those lines. If you want to be comfortable, Joyce, you must do things decently and in order, you know.'

'But, Harold, *always* to do so-and-so, *never* to vary! Even little things—'

'But what would you have, you baby?' said Harold kindly. 'You must have a plan, a

scheme of sorts. Otherwise you only get mess and muddle and discomfort. You keep losing things—you never get anything done. Anything's better than muddle.'

'Prisons aren't,' snapped Joyce, stung at last.

At the house she astonished Mrs Brander by refusing to sit down. She drank off her glass of milk standing. 'It's long past eleven,' she said with a touch of bitterness. 'We ought to be in bed.' And she went.

Mrs Brander rose and elaborately closed the door Joyce had left open. 'I hope Joyce isn't pettish, dear,' she said kindly.

XII.

In the morning Joyce was contrite. By dint of waking herself first at five-thirty, then six, then six-thirty, then permanently at seven, she contrived to be first down for breakfast. She remembered to close the bathroom door—there had been a remark about that—and to leave the sacred *Scotsman* unviolated in its place. She thought she had been really good.

But not good enough. After breakfast Mrs Brander called her into the drawing-room. With the air of a witch-doctor performing some elaborate ceremonial she found her keys and unlocked her bureau. From its keeping emerged Joyce's vanity-bag, looking idiotically frivolous among these business-like surroundings.

'You left this in the hall last night,' said Mrs Brander with patient suavity. 'It appeared to have some money in it, so I locked it away. One can't be too careful—'

'Oh thanks, so much,' said Joyce, fighting down a variety of rebellious and unsuitable expressions; 'I'm afraid I'm very careless.'

Mrs Brander took no notice of this overture. 'And this,' she said, 'was on the stairs.'

'This' was a tortoiseshell comb with brilliants. Joyce took it without a word.

She had just remembered that an embroidered silk bag with her best slippers was reposing in what the Palais de Danse, for unknown reasons, labelled the 'Dames' Boudoir.' The recollection silenced her.

XIII.

No fixed duration had officially been laid down for Joyce's visit to Edinburgh, but a general understanding, mysteriously arrived at, placed it at ten days. The understanding may have originated from Mrs Brander, and in Mrs Brander's well-ordered house, if a visit were timed for ten days, it was unlikely on any pretext to exceed that period. Nor, on the other hand, should it have failed to reach its scheduled date of termination. Yet, in the case of Joyce, a full two days before the ten, Mrs Lessing received a short telegram which seemed to afford her some annoyance. She threw the message in the fire (but the envelope littered various corners of the drawing-room for quite a considerable time).

Charlie Rossiter, sitting at his pretentious roll-top desk in his motor-selling office, received at the same time a similar telegram, but much longer. Perhaps this distinction accounted for the fact that he displayed no annoyance at all. Nor did he throw it in the fire. He read it very carefully twice, while a slow incredulous smile spread over his face, and then transferred it gently to his pocket-book.

This done, he seized his desk telephone in a business-like grasp.

'Hullo! . . . Is that Eugene? Mr Rossiter here. . . . No, Rossiter, man. Rossiter . . . Look here, book me the usual table for to-morrow night without fail. . . . And let some of the good stuff be waiting on the ice. Comprenny? Right!'

His partner, a staid young man in spectacles, entered suddenly, to find him dancing on the hearthrug. 'Been at it again?' said the staid young man. 'So early, too.'

'Love's young dream, old toad,' said Charlie. 'What did that biblical Johnny say?—"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Not when it comes off, it doesn't. Not much!'

XIV.

In the dining-car (first-class) Joyce, rather white of face, rather strained of eyes, was writing a letter, alternately biting the end and licking the point of the pencil she had borrowed from the attendant. The letter began bravely on a fine sheet of purple notepaper with a 'J.L.' monogram, but tailed off into two unmatched fragments, not scrupulously clean and bearing the name of the London Midland and Scottish Railway Company. These also Joyce owed to the kindness of the attendant; later they were the subject of a remark. . . . But Joyce had to write that letter then or never.

It was a long letter, for it was a confession of failure, which is ever apt to be a wordy business. It was also a difficult letter, for every sentence must inevitably hurt a friend. The gist of it—a condensed recapitulation of most of its points—came at the end.

'You see, Harold dear,' it said, 'I didn't realise till I stayed in your house just what you would expect your home to be like. I thought you liked ragging about—like me, but I see you don't. If we started to keep house together, I can see it would just become a place like your mother's, where we'd *always* have to do things at a certain time and never possibly at any other time, just like those Meads (*sic*) and Persians. I don't want to be a Mead and Persian. I couldn't. I don't say it's wrong or anything; I just could never do it. I couldn't live up to you at all. I see that now. I should just disappoint.'

There was much more to the same effect—a pathetic little document altogether. Later, the pathos of it, not less than the blow it delivered,

brought an unwonted lump into the major's throat.

Joyce crammed it into her last purple envelope (which it didn't at all fit) and rang for the attendant.

'Post this at Crewe, please,' she said. 'It's most important.'

The astonished attendant found himself surveying a half-crown. He weighed the bulky missive in his hand and sighed.

'Writin' love-letters! An' only left 'im a few hours back, I dessay. Gawd!'

Joyce went back to her compartment through

the other half of the dining-car. A pair of commercials eyed her appraisingly as she passed.

'Pretty kid!' said one of them. 'Looks worried, though. Strung-up, eh?'

'Excited, if you ask me,' said his friend. 'Looks as though she'd just got loose from somewhere. Off on the spree. Goin' to meet her boy, maybe. Escaped from mother and dad. Run away, I shouldn't wonder.'

'Aw, shut up!' said the other. 'You're always imaginin' things. . . . Now, what I was sayin' about them Manchester goods—'

THE END.

BRUSSELS, CHRISTMAS 1918.

By Major T. A. LOWE, D.S.O., M.C.

I.

EXCLUSION from the triumphal march of the allied armies to Germany, after the Armistice had been signed, was probably the greatest disappointment that an officer of the British Expeditionary Force—especially one who had spent the greater part of his service in France and Flanders—could be asked to endure. That triumphal march was a unique event in history; everyone had dreamed about it in the early, optimistic days, until the professional soldiers had confessed that it could only come to pass as a miracle. It was now a reality, an all-absorbing fact, which in the dazed weeks immediately following the Armistice seemed yet another 'sop' to help us to further zeal and further efforts to conquer physical weariness.

There were those who maintained that the first Army of Occupation should have been composed of troops who had fought for the longest time against Germany. This, of course, would have been impossible from an administrative point of view. Confusion would have been caused throughout the army by the withdrawal of individuals, and the units so formed would have consisted of a mere mob of eager sight-seers.

In sending those *divisions* that were fittest to move, the Commander-in-chief did the only thing which was rational under the circumstances. He was up against the fact that demobilisation, somewhat prematurely decreed by the politicians at home, had begun almost as soon as the Armistice was signed.

But every disappointment has its sedative. A great number of troops that had remained to be demobilised found themselves quartered in Belgium and Flanders. For the most part the industrial districts of Lille, Tourcoing, Mouscron, and Roubaix were chosen, because in these towns there was accommodation suitable to the possibilities of a severe winter, and this, incidentally, materialised. Protection against the elements is essential for troops which are not actively engaged in warlike operations,

and the industrial districts of Belgium and Flanders solved the problem—as they had previously done upon many historic occasions.

Also there was Brussels and its immediate surroundings, where many of the troops were billeted. They were the envy of all their comrades, for, next to Cologne, Brussels was at that time the mecca of every British soldier.

II.

There were many reasons why Brussels should be so considered. To begin with, the city is beautifully situated. It occupies the plain of the river Senne, and it is partly built upon a hill. Many cities of England and Scotland are built on hills, and natives of these enjoy the sensation of walking in streets where their muscles are brought into play, and where, should you halt before a shop, there is a feeling that part of that shop's frontage is on a higher plane than another. I cannot account for this feeling except that I have often (having been born in a city which was set upon a hill) experienced it myself. The plains of Flanders had become a nightmare after a time, *simply because they were flat!* Brussels was the first sign of a hill that many of us had experienced for months.

Apart from such absurd considerations, Brussels was a fair city to the war-weary eyes of the Briton. Everyone described the city as 'Paris in miniature,' and that was enough. We should have preferred London or Edinburgh, or Manchester or Birmingham, but they were postponed indefinitely, and no one could tell what the future held. The boulevards of Brussels were real; they were wide and clean, and the public buildings stately and beautiful and *tangible*; shops, hotels, and restaurants vied with each other for the small custom which we could bring them—the will, on our part, being greater than the deed, for after the rigours of the blockade they had literally nothing to sell.

Brussels had recently been delivered from the heel of an oppressor. Life under the Germans,

from what one could gather from those inhabitants who would discuss the matter at all, had been intolerable. Intolerable not so much from the point of view of 'Frightfulness,' as from the discipline which modern war conditions enforce, and from the petty restrictions which had been imposed upon every action of the civil population. The tragic sensation of imprisonment, the uncertainty of the future, and the threat—a very real one—of imminent starvation. To all outward appearances, especially where her enemy was concerned, Brussels had remained calm and dignified; inwardly her citizens were suffering untold hardships and privations.

The hasty departure of the Germans and the almost simultaneous arrival of the British was the most exciting event which had happened in Brussels since Waterloo. Actually, when the Armistice came, British cavalry were operating on the famous battlefield of Wellington and Napoleon. This in itself was a romance, and even the private soldier—seldom touched by sentiment, though often by sentimentality—was conscious that the ground over which he was marching had been of historical importance in bygone days. Later, when the troops had settled down in the billets allotted to them, and short leave was permitted, large numbers of British soldiers made the pilgrimage to Waterloo. This was their first instinct, and the theatres, picture-houses, and estaminets of Brussels were not considered until curiosity was satisfied regarding the appearance of battlefields more than a century old.

III.

There is much on the road from Brussels to Waterloo to engross the attention and to fire the imagination. A great drama had been enacted upon it, and it was extraordinarily easy to visualise the scenes of *Vanity Fair*. The galloping horsemen hurrying from the great ball at breakneck speed; the mad, unruly crowd of cowardly fugitives returning to their base at the sound of the first discharge, to spread rumours of alarm and despondency amongst the civil population—nothing new about this, for had we not experienced what the confusion of camp-followers was really like at Amiens that very year; the wild ride of Lady Smith of the Rifle Brigade when she rode out to search for the body of her husband, Sir Harry Smith, who, they told her (the camp-followers, I mean), had been killed in battle, but whom she found eventually, safe and well, marching at the head of his victorious battalion, when she herself had braved terrors unspeakable in the field. These things became almost a reality, and when we reached the Lion Monument, which was erected by the allied powers after Waterloo as a symbol of victory, everyone felt a real thrill.

The first sight which greeted me when I arrived at Waterloo was a Canadian battalion

paraded in review order to receive its newly-consecrated colours from an English corps commander. The ceremony was performed on the very spot where our Guards Brigade met and defeated the Imperial French Guard under Marshal Ney in 1815. This was a solemn and impressive sight, and I believe that parade helped every Canadian present to realise that he was an integral part of a great empire. Here, a hundred years ago, the youth and glory of Britain had fought for liberty and won it. After a similar and more deadly fight in the same cause, they had done it again and established their cause. It was a near thing on both occasions.

We climbed the Lion Monument, where the best view of the battlefield of Waterloo may be obtained. There are 226 steps to be climbed before the top is reached, and to do it without a halt was an interesting test of physical training which many youngsters were gaily attempting. Squads of private soldiers were grouped around the great lion which crowns the monument, and they were much more engrossed in carving their names, numbers, and regiments on the pedestal of the unfortunate beast than they were in viewing the battlefield. I was reminded of the story of the enthusiastic American officer just arrived in France some time in the dark days of 1917. He was filled with the usual intense desire of the newcomer, to fight for Belgium and 'Freedom,' and all was very new and interesting. As he neared the trenches he came upon a British soldier carrying rations on his back and tramping along slowly towards the front line. 'Say,' he questioned, 'this cause we're fighting for, it's just fine! How many Germans have you killed, Bo?' The private lowered his bundle in some amazement, and gaped at the American. 'I ain't killed no Bosches,' he replied. 'I'm C Company's cook, and I've lost a —y dug-out called "The Drop-Inn."' Then he picked up his bundle of rations and continued his forlorn way towards his hoped-for objective. Naturally the American couldn't understand it, nor would he have understood any better those groups of men solemnly carving their names and numbers on the face of the Lion Monument. But somehow I couldn't help feeling that the ghosts of their ancestors, who had died at Waterloo, looked on and approved. Probably the day before that battle most of them were playing 'House' or its equivalent.

At the foot of the monument is a little rotunda building, and in the centre of this one stands on a pedestal, around which is hung a huge circular picture representing the battle of Waterloo. French cavalymen in gorgeous uniform are depicted as charging solid squares of British red-coated infantry, while their own foot regiments manœuvre into position in rear in dense masses. In the far distance is Napoleon, seated on a horse and surrounded by a glittering

staff, and on the other side the Iron Duke himself can be seen, similarly situated. During the Great War the remark was often heard that fighting must have been a jolly affair a hundred years ago, in comparison to what it is now. As an infantryman I do not agree; the thought of being charged by cavalry was always a nightmare, and barbed wire had the advantage of saving one from that, if from nothing else. But to return to modern times.

IV.

In Brussels, after the first joyful surprise at the advent of the British troops, the inhabitants settled down to enjoy the novelty of freedom. Not for a century had the city witnessed such scenes of dazzling brilliance as now took place in the form of court levees (the King and Queen of the Belgians had returned to their palace), public receptions, state balls, balls given by Canadian and British divisions, &c. And to those of the Third Corps, who were actually stationed in Brussels and the surrounding area, the ball given by their own general officer will ever be a memorable one. But to these affairs only the selected were bidden, so that the bulk of the younger generation were dependent for amusement on the public entertainments of the city, and of these the claims of the Palace Hotel were outstanding.

My impressions of the Palace Hotel, Brussels, are still vivid. Its accommodation was enormous; its cuisine (in spite of the food shortage) superlative to palates which had tasted only the roughest of diets throughout months of hard campaigning. Its cosmopolitan population, the female portion of which fought for the honour of dancing with a British officer, could be studied with never-failing interest. Its spotless bedrooms had luxurious baths attached. Its dance bands played incessantly while a mass of people endeavoured to gyrate between tables in the main restaurant. In its long corridor-lounge, drinks could be discussed with comrades who turned up unexpectedly from the ends of the earth. To say the least of it, this was a cheery rendezvous. Rank mattered nothing, and general officers and subalterns disported themselves indiscriminately, in the comforting knowledge that the war was really over. Naturally prices were high, but what did that matter when everyone had pockets full of money? Also there was a sense abroad—which time, alas! failed to confirm—that the world was re-born, and that, the great task having been performed, such grim diseases as want, poverty, and depression were banished for ever. Looking back in the knowledge of the years that have passed, one wonders: would we have gone 'all out' with our purses at the Palace Hotel as we did, had there been even a suspicion that many of that gallant throng would be reduced to wheeling barrel-organs, selling matches, exhibiting pavement pictures,

and the other countless forms of exacting charity to which failure to find work in any other more useful capacity drove them? Failure!—the word had no meaning in those days, and the shadow of the 'ex-officer' problem was nowhere to be seen. Certainly the Palace Hotel boasted no such shadows. The talk was all of high ambitions and world-wide service; of comradeship which would become the greatest force in history; of an empire whose civilisation would dominate all nations.

High hopes and ambitions! It is easy to smile now, but were there not reasons for such ideals? Had we not visited the field of Waterloo and remembered gloatingly, with small attention to details, that great wars in the past had laid the foundation of Britain's prosperity? The years of want and distress which had followed Waterloo, as they must inevitably follow every campaign of great magnitude, were forgotten. That even small wars are expensive luxuries and have to be paid for by some one, and that the paying usually has to be done by the survivors, these were facts about which it was rather 'bad form' to think. Certainly the main fact which has emerged, namely, that a victorious nation, or nations, must groan under burdens almost as great as the vanquished, was not apparent at the Palace Hotel, Brussels, during that wonderful Christmas season of 1918. 'Let's go to the Palace and dance' was the motto, and the bands played and the glasses clinked, and the ghosts of our forefathers, who had died at Waterloo, looked on doubtless and muttered, 'Poor devils, let them enjoy themselves; we played the fool in just the same way, but the memory of it softened the awakening.'

V.

Not that life was entirely a matter of enjoyment in those extraordinary days. The Higher Command was quick to realise that demobilisation would take a long time, and that vast armies living in a friendly country must be employed, if trouble was to be avoided. Great military reviews were organised, and the work entailed produced a salutary effect. Drill, the acknowledged basis of all military discipline, was soon begun, and it was amazing with what speed the troops who had been fighting but a few weeks before under grim conditions began to take on the smart, finished appearance of the peace-time soldier. Competition became keen between the various divisions as to which could dress and drill the smartest, and parties of officers made rapid journeys to the depots of their regiments at home, to return triumphant with the sacred colours which had been so long in custody. The writer will always remember what a joyous sight the Third Corps presented when it marched past the King of the Belgians in review order. The Prince of Wales was there, mounted beside the Belgian king, and a great company of the

civilian population of Brussels had forgathered to witness the scene. It had been snowing and freezing intermittently, and the wide boulevard outside the palace presented a fairy picture, each tree covered with shiny particles of frost, and the horses at the saluting base blowing the air through their nostrils like smoke, and stamping impatiently on the slippery surface. Perhaps it was a finer sight to witness than to take part in, because riders and drivers alike were hard put to it to keep their horses upright, but the pageant passed, in spite of this, in perfect alignment.

First the corps commander accompanied by his staff, and then a vast array of cavalry, infantry, and guns. The infantry marched eight abreast (a somewhat unusual but impressive formation); the guns in sections, with horses groomed and saddlery polished. Every man looked bronzed and fit, and passed the king with a proud look in his eye. Division after division at full war strength saluted the monarch under whose command many of them had fought, until, after three hours' steady movement, the last unit faded into the distance. The sun had disappeared an hour ago, and the snow was falling in steady, silent flakes, but King Albert and our prince sat on, watching intently. And when they turned at last to ride through the huzzahing crowds to the palace, I wondered if I should ever see a British Army Corps at full war strength again. Forty or fifty thousand men, at least, must have been present on that great parade, an army of tried veterans such as not even the great Napoleon had commanded. Not three per cent. are with the colours to-day! 'Why did we let them go? Could not the pick of them have been retained?' sighed the professional soldiers, left at a future date to cope with the rigours of an Irish conflict. A tiny conflict, perhaps, in comparison to what had gone before, but one which quickly found the joints in the armour of the newly-joined.

VI.

After dinner that night we sallied forth to the theatre. A revue entitled *Flotte, Petit Drapeau*, was billed—a disappointing affair, but the Opera was booked for weeks—and, being a revue, was welcome, for who among us had ever thought to see such things again? The theme seemed to be entirely concerned with the German occupation of Brussels, and one scene at least was a vivid one. This depicted a prisoners' camp in which were interned Belgian, French, and British soldiers, apparently living under conditions of squalor and hardship, so much so, in fact, that many of the audience burst into tears at the spectacle. When a German sentry arrived and proceeded to flog a Belgian soldier who persisted in singing patriotic songs, the tears changed to shouts of anger. The auditorium of the theatre reminded me of a scene witnessed in Dublin

years before the war, when an acrobat at a music-hall, standing on his head at the piano, proceeded to play 'God Save the King' with his toes. His intentions were of the best, but the emotion displayed by the audience was such that he was obliged to conclude his performance somewhat hurriedly. However, as the motive underlying these two examples of public emotion is by no means the same, perhaps it is unfair to the Belgians to mention it. The audience in this instance was certainly the most entertaining part of the revue, and the way the crowd laughed at six performers calling themselves 'Les Rois Dégommés,' or 'The Ungummed Kings,' who endeavoured to interpret their feelings with regard to the Kaiser and all his works, was refreshing in the light of subsequent history. But theatres, even in Brussels at times of patriotic fervency, become monotonous when the audience is continually standing to attention while national anthems are being played. There were so many gallant allies engaged before the war came to a victorious conclusion!

Probably the outstanding picture of the Great War from the point of view of propaganda, was the cartoon in *Punch* which depicted the King of the Belgians being tempted by the Kaiser, and refusing to sell him his soul. The idea was so simple that it made a profound impression in Europe and America. Somehow copies of this cartoon had got into Brussels, and they were a source of great encouragement to the inhabitants throughout the weary years of occupation which they had to suffer.

They kept their Christmas of 1918 with their monarch again in their midst. It was like a family party, a reunion, and the father of the nation was at home once more. The children gathered round the fireside and lit their candles and exchanged their gifts, and wished each other well.

Fortunate were those of the outer circle, who were privileged to look on and rejoice at their happiness.

SONG OF HOPE.

HOPE on, nor let the demon of Despair
Within your bosom make himself a lair;
Look for the sweet and lovely things that are—
No sky too black, but somewhere shines a star.
Hope on!

Hope on; cast all your doubts and fears away,
To-morrow must be better than to-day;
While Hope's bright rainbow spans this 'vale of tears'
With courage you can meet the coming years.
Hope on!

Hope on, hope on, your eyes fixed on the goal—
The issue lies in your own conquering soul;
The while you strive, learn to 'be still' and wait;
Know he who masters self has master'd fate.
Hope on!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

AMONG THE CROCODILES OF MADAGASCAR.

By JAMES SIBREE, D.D.

OF the few wild animals to be found in Madagascar, the crocodile is certainly the most prominent and the most formidable. It is also exceedingly abundant, for it is to be seen in all the rivers and lakes of the great island, and indeed in pieces of water which are not larger than good-sized ponds. Occasionally it has been seen even in the rice-fields, when these have been flooded through the river-banks giving way in a specially heavy rainy season.

It is therefore greatly dreaded by the Malagasy, and they have charms which they trust in to protect them when fording the rivers. Yet they are very unwilling to kill it, for they believe that the companions of the dead crocodile will, sooner or later, avenge its death by killing some man or woman. Some years ago two Frenchmen spent a short time on and around Lake Itasy in Central Madagascar, and besides shooting water-fowl, they also shot two or three crocodiles. The people around the lake were greatly alarmed by this act, and were so afraid that the reptiles would retaliate on them that the strangers found it expedient to get away from the place as quickly as possible.

I was one morning crossing by canoe a small but rather deep stream, and while waiting for my bearers to get over with my palanquin and baggage, I strolled along the bank, and was presently startled to come across one of these very 'ugly customers,' a good-sized one, enjoying the sunshine. He was as much surprised as myself, and shuffled off into the water with a great splash. A few minutes later I watched a large party of Malagasy fording the little river in a body, making a great shouting and beating the water to frighten away the crocodiles. A native saying is: 'Cross in a crowd, and the crocodile won't catch you.'

Some years ago, when travelling along the south-east coast of Madagascar, and having to cross and travel along many of the rivers, I noticed that wherever there was a village on the bank of a river, a space of several yards square was enclosed with strong stakes, so that the women and children could draw water without fear of being seized by the jaws, or swept off by the tail, of the ferocious reptiles.

A friend of mine had a servant called Moosa, who, while cutting some arums in a marsh, had his foot suddenly seized by a crocodile which was lying in wait close by. In the first moment of alarm he punched the creature's head. But as that was considerably harder than his own, he bent down and caught hold of the enemy by one of its forepaws. Then commenced a real tug-of-war. The crocodile pulled for his dinner,

but the man for his life! and the former being fortunately a rather small animal, and the latter a big strong man, Moosa began to prevail. Then, to his astonishment, the crocodile opened his jaws and allowed the poor fellow to escape.

Such escapes are, however, very rare, for, as the Malagasy proverb puts it: 'Once in the jaws of a crocodile, there's no getting out!' Many native sayings—some score, in fact—refer to this dreaded creature and its prey. One of these is: 'An angler carried off by a crocodile: each takes what he likes'—that is, the fisher takes the fishes, and the crocodile takes him! Another is: 'A dog hunted a crocodile, and then the latter had his turn.'

The eggs of the crocodile are collected and sold for food in the markets, and are said to be perfectly good eating; but I confess I never brought myself to try one. They are nearly as large as a goose's egg, but have a very rough shell.

The Malagasy have two names for the crocodile: one is *màmba*, a word derived from the Swahili, and the other is *voày*, a Malayan word, slightly altered from its original form of *body*. So a native saying is: 'The *màmba* is gone, but the *voày* comes'—that is, 'One trouble is followed by another.'

When returning to England on furlough many years ago, we had to travel part of the way to the north-west coast of Madagascar by canoe for four days down the river Ikôpa. We saw about twenty to thirty crocodiles each day, some on the sandy islands in the middle of the stream, and some basking in the sunshine on the banks, and near enough to be splashed by the paddles of the rowers as we passed along. They were generally lying with their jaws wide open. Most of them were light-gray in colour, but others like dark slate, and others again spotted with black. They varied in length from seven or eight to fourteen or fifteen feet. The head is rather small, and the back and tail are serrated like a great pit-saw.

A year or two earlier than our canoe voyage three friends took the same journey, and the crocodiles they saw were far greater in number than those we came across. The late Rev. Dr Mullens, one of that party, said that they must have seen at least a thousand of the reptiles during their three days' voyage on the river.

It is a rather curious fact that the crocodile existing in the great lake Alaotra is a different species from those in all other Madagascar waters, and is identical with a species found in a fossil state, together with the remains of an extinct hippopotamus and extinct lemurs and gigantic birds.

A crocodile's tooth used to be worn as an amulet or charm, and silver ornaments made in that shape formed part of the adornment of the Malagasy in former times; while one in gold was the central object in the royal crown.

Among the Tanàla, or forest people of the south-east, there was (perhaps still is) an 'ordeal by crocodile.' In this test, the person accused of wrong-doing—chiefly witchcraft—was taken to a river known to be full of these reptiles. Before the people assembled to witness the proceedings, a diviner stood by the accused, and struck the water thrice, and, addressing

the crocodiles, begged them to show whether the accused person was guilty or innocent. The culprit was then obliged to swim a certain distance and back again; and if he accomplished this and took no harm, the accuser was fined four oxen. Of these, the swimmer received two, the king one, and his counsellors one. Probably few people escaped this ordeal with life; and if the accused was seized and killed, he was supposed to have merited his fate. A romantic story, founded on this Malagasy custom, may be found in *Chambers's Journal* of 1849.¹

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A REVOLUTIONARY INVENTION IN WINDMILLS.

A STARTLING novelty in windmills has been invented by a Finn, Engineer-Captain Sigurd J. Savonius, of Helsingfors. The form of the device may be understood by imagining a hollow vertical cylinder which is cut in half down a plane parallel with its axis. Now, suppose that the halves are displaced sideways on the plane of the cut until one edge of the one half meets the opposite edge of the other, making an S in section. It is easy to understand that the inside of the S would offer more resistance to the wind than the outside; hence, if the device were mounted on a spindle, it would rotate. In principle it would be similar to the rotating-cup instrument for measuring the speed of the wind, the hollow sides of the cups offering more resistance than the convex sides. But the cups are mounted upon arms and widely separated. This plan was tried with the half cylinders, but the results in power were not so good as when they were close together. Now we come to the revolutionary feature of the invention, which is the placing of the half cylinders so that each overlaps the other by a radius; i.e., the edge of each is halfway between the two edges of the other. This arrangement gives an S-shaped channel between the two half cylinders, through which the wind passes. The results in power are three times those attained by the first arrangement, while the peripheral speed of the rotor is 1.7 times that of the wind. The top and bottom of the half cylinders are covered by discs which overlap the greatest width by one quarter to one-third. Compared with an ordinary windmill this device is very simple, since it needs no tail to keep it facing into the wind, and no toothed gear at the top, as it is mounted directly on the vertical shaft which transmits the power to the ground level. The only accessory needed, apart from the shaft and its bearings, is a brake to stop the rotation. This new windmill has been applied to pumping

water with what are claimed to be satisfactory results. It has been found also that the device has a Magnus effect similar to that of the rotating cylinders used in the rotor ship described in our April issue. Two tried in a 16-foot boat gave a speed of nearly 6 miles an hour with a breeze of 15 miles an hour, while the speed increased to 7 miles an hour in a wind of $21\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour. Their combined projected area was about 36 sq. ft., and their effect equal to that of a sail with an area of 100 sq. ft. The 'wingrotor,' as the new invention is called, has not so great a Magnus effect as the Flettner plain cylinder, which is rotated by mechanical power; but the elimination of the driving motor and mechanism is a great advantage. Like the Flettner towers, wingrotors have to be reversed each time a vessel fitted with them is 'put about' when 'tacking to windward.' This is done by mounting each half-cylinder or wing on a spindle, through which it can be given a half-turn. Means are provided also for closing up the wings in strong winds, the effect being similar to that produced by reefing a sail. When it is desired to stop the vessel, this operation is continued until the wings are opposite each other and form a complete cylinder, in which condition they have no propulsive effect, and offer very little resistance to the wind. A development forecasted by the inventor is the application of wingrotors to the rotation of Flettner towers, thereby combining the advantages of both.

AN AUSTRALIAN ENCYCLOPEDIA.

All the Dominions of the British Empire have their Year Books, crammed full of statistical and other information in the most compact form. Invaluable as these are to those seeking details regarding this, that, or the other department of overseas life and progress, they seldom supply either the student or the general reader with a

¹ 'The Trial by Caiman,' by Percy B. St John, *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, No. 309; 1st December 1849.

connected and satisfying account of the matter in question, which may be relatively of insufficient importance to command much space in any of the standard encyclopædias. Hence the value of a purely Colonial encyclopædia, such as that now being brought out in Australia. The *Illustrated Australian Encyclopædia* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 2 vols.), both by its size and by its character, is an impressive token of Australian advancement. Its general editor is Captain Arthur Jose, the well-known author of *A History of Australia from the Earliest Times*, and contributor of Australian articles to *Chambers's Encyclopædia*, to which the *Australian Encyclopædia* makes a fitting companion, its format and arrangement being much the same. An army of Australian experts has been enlisted for the preparation of the work, which contains over two thousand articles, relating to Australian history and discovery, farming and manufactures, birds and beasts, trees and flowers, literature, art, and sport—indeed, every aspect of national conditions and progress. The Commonwealth may well be proud of this encyclopædia, 'conceived, written, edited, printed, and produced' entirely within its own bounds. The Briton at home who, for intellectual or business purposes, would keep in touch with the general development and special potentialities—agricultural, industrial, and what not—of the great Australian continent will find the *Australian Encyclopædia* not only an indispensable but a delectable book of reference.

SOUNDING BY ECHOES.

Several devices have been brought out to enable the navigator of a ship to take soundings at frequent intervals without resorting to the slow and cumbersome process of 'heaving the lead.' One was described in these pages in October 1923. Another, which is based upon the time taken for sound to reach the bottom of the sea and for the echo to return, has been invented recently. A sharp, quick sound is made by a steel diaphragm which is vibrated at the rate of 1050 times a second by an electromagnet through which an alternating current is passed. The result, a musical note, is cut off instantaneously with the current. The echo is received underwater by a hydrophone, or what may be described as a 'watertight telephone transmitter.' The faint electric waves thus produced are passed to an amplifying filter circuit connected to a relay, the current from the latter giving flashes which indicate the depth on a scale. To simplify the description of how this is done we will confine our attention for the moment to depths of under 100 fathoms. These are marked round a glass dial making a complete circular scale. At the back of the dial is a disc which is turned by a motor at four revolutions a second. A Geissler tube is fixed behind a narrow radial slot in the disc. When

the slot is at the zero mark on the scale, a cam on the disc spindle makes an electric contact which passes current through the magnet and causes it to vibrate the diaphragm for a few thousandths of a second. The resulting sound vibrates the receiver and produces a red flash in the Geissler tube, this flash appearing exactly at zero on the scale. The receiver is vibrated by the echo a trifle later, and the position of the flash on the scale indicates the depth. Of course the slot moves round too fast for the eye to follow it (240 r.p.m.), but the recurring flashes leave a stationary impression which is easily read. Greater depths, up to 600 fathoms, are taken with the same apparatus, but with the disc turning at only forty revolutions a minute. At this speed the eye can follow round an illuminated pointer, formed by another slot in the disc with a tiny incandescent lamp behind it. The slot is opposite that for the Geissler tube, and the 600 fathom scale is outside that for 100 fathoms, but with the zero at the bottom instead of the top. With these arrangements the sound is produced when the slot is passing the zero mark. But there are no flashes; the sound and the echo are heard through telephone receivers, and the position of the slot on the scale is noted when the echo occurs. For greater depths than 600 fathoms the magnet circuit is broken after one sound has been made, and 600 fathoms is added to the reading when the echo is heard for each complete revolution of the disc. A box with a glass front, on which the scales are marked, contains the revolving disc, the cam contact device, and a tiny electric motor to drive them. This box is connected by insulated wires to the sound producer and to the hydrophone. It can be fixed on the bridge or in the chart room, where the navigating officer can set it to work at any time by pressing a button.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SHIP PROPULSION.

As citizens of the predominant maritime nation, developments in ships should interest us all. At the present time there is keen competition between the steamship and the motor-ship. From 1912, when the first big motor-ship was sent to sea, until now, this type of vessel has been increasing in numbers; and although steamships still form the bulk of our merchant fleet, we have reached a stage when more motor-ships than steamships are in course of construction. Among them are passenger liners up to the limits of size now considered to be profitable, the building of vessels such as the *Majestic* and the *Leviathan* being no longer deemed a paying proposition. The largest motor vessel, an Italian liner, has a gross tonnage of about 30,000. She is driven by four screws, each of which is turned by an engine of 10,000 horse-power, the result expected being a speed of 22 knots. These engines work on

similar principles to those in motor-cars, but they burn low-priced heavy oil instead of petrol, and use far less of it for every horse-power produced. The most arresting feature is their double-acting pistons, the undersides being pushed up as well as the tops being pushed down. This means, of course, valves for the bottom of the cylinders, which are closed in, while the pistons are worked by rods which pass through stuffing-boxes. The eight cylinders in each engine have a bore of 33 inches and a stroke of 59 inches, while the total height from the underside of the crank case to the valve gear at the tops of the cylinders is about 36 feet. Full power is given at 115 revolutions a minute, but by increasing this speed and by making some modifications, this size of engine could be made to give 15,000 horse-power, which is enough for the biggest and fastest passenger liners likely to be built for some years to come. But it is by no means certain that this type of engine will last. What is known as the two-stroke engine is much simpler, because no valves are needed, while a charge is fired at the top of every down stroke. Two-stroke engines have been used in cars, but in the smaller sizes they are very extravagant in petrol, and have other drawbacks. These have been overcome in the big marine engine, and there is little doubt that the two-stroke is the engine of the future. Those interested in the making of steam turbines are not taking the above-stated position 'lying down.' Important developments are taking place, of which the chief are the increase in steam pressures, the use of powdered coal, and the reduction in the size of boilers. To demonstrate the economy of higher pressures a steamer is to be built shortly which will be fitted with Parsons turbines of 4000 horse-power. The boiler pressure in this vessel is to be 550 lb. per square inch, and the consumption of coal is estimated at .98 lb. per horse-power per hour. Unfortunately for the steam interests, the handling of coal involves extra labour, and powdered coal cannot be used, because the pulverising machinery is too bulky, and spontaneous combustion would take place if it were stored in bunkers. When the powdered coke resulting from the new carbonisation process described in our last month's issue is available, it can be safely stored in bunkers, and supplied to the boiler furnaces without labour. But even with these advantages it is not certain that steam will be able to compete with the Diesel engine.

A NOVEL KETTLE.

Two faults in the domestic kettle have been patiently endured by housewives for centuries. One is the liability to scald the hand when removing the lid of a kettle containing boiling water: the other, the tendency of water to come out under the lid when a full kettle is tipped for pouring. Both of these drawbacks have

been eliminated in a kettle which has been recently patented. The new design may be visualised by imagining an ordinary kettle with the rear half of the handle cut off, and with the front half of the lid permanently fixed on with a water-tight joint. The unsupported end of the handle is connected to this fixed half of the lid by a vertical tube, and the handle is cane-covered. Where the back half of the lid would be there is a flap which is hinged to the front half. At the middle of the hinge, and fixed to the flap, is a small toothed pinion which engages with a rack in the tube, the rack terminating in a knob that projects above the rear end of the handle. When this knob is pressed down by the thumb, the rack tips up the flap by partially turning the pinion fixed to it. By these means the hand is kept clear of the scalding steam, the kettle can be tipped without causing leakage of water from the front of the lid, and the lid cannot tumble off. These kettles are British-made of stout aluminium.

A FOOL-PROOF WIRELESS ACCUMULATOR CHARGER FOR ALTERNATING CURRENT CIRCUITS.

Electrical accumulators or storage batteries have come into widespread use in connection with valve wireless sets, and these accessories have to be charged at intervals. If this can be done at home, money is saved, as well as the trouble of taking heavy cells to and from the nearest garage or the local electric generating station. If the householder has a direct-current supply, charging is a simple operation, although it may be very slow or exceedingly wasteful of current. If, as is more common, only alternating current is available, it must be changed, or 'rectified,' as it is called, into direct current. Rectifiers are of the chemical, the mechanical, or the valve type. The last-named is becoming increasingly popular among the owners of wireless sets for charging their accumulators; indeed, the most competent experts are of opinion that charging from alternating current mains by means of valve rectifiers is not only the most economical, but is also the simplest way. Alternating current changes its direction at least fifty times a second, and may do so two hundred times or more, rising from zero to a maximum pressure and then falling again each time. The essential feature of every rectifier is that it will pass current only one way. Two electrodes of different materials, such as aluminium and iron, or aluminium and carbon, if immersed in a solution of ammonium-phosphate or some similar salt, meet this requirement. So also does the two-electrode valve. Anyone who makes a diagram for charging an accumulator from an alternating current circuit will find that four rectifiers are needed, besides a transformer to reduce the voltage. In an instrument of the valve type which has been lately perfected only two

rectifiers are used. The secondary of the transformer is split into two coils, which are wound in opposite directions, the inner end of each being connected to the negative terminal of the accumulator, and the outer ends connected through rectifiers to the positive terminal. Readers who are accustomed to wireless apparatus will have no difficulty in making a diagram from this description. In the actual device, the arrangements are still further simplified by combining the two rectifiers in one bulb, this being achieved by providing two plates in the valve, one at each side of the filament. A most important feature of this rectifier is a second bulb with a wire filament in two parts, each of which is connected between one of the secondary transformer coils and the negative terminal of the accumulator. This device regulates the current automatically from 1.12 amperes for charging six cells in series to 1.35 amperes for only one. No ammeter is needed, and the instrument is practically fool-proof. The two bulbs and the transformer are mounted on a base of insulating material and housed in a cylindrical perforated aluminium case.

A MOTOR DUST-CART.

All who try to avoid the passing of dust-carts when engaged in their germ-diffusing operations of collecting refuse will agree that there is room for improvement in this department of municipal activity. Although the motor dust-carts recently introduced do not eliminate every objectionable feature of the horse-drawn variety, the covers with which they are fitted minimise the escape of dust and their low bodies facilitate the emptying of the bins. Other advantages over the older vehicles include much higher speeds and much greater capacities. The bottom of a recent model is only 20 inches above the ground, and the top edge of the side is within easy tipping reach of even a small man. The roof is curved to a big rise in the middle, and is in two sections from front to rear. Each section has a curved sliding-door of sheet steel at each side, which is pushed back when a bin is to be tipped. As in a railway truck the body is of wood, with steel bindings and fittings. A hydraulic ram and pump can be fitted if desired for tipping the body. The pump, which is worked by the engine, forces the oil under the ram until the body is tipped to an angle of 45 degrees, when the rear doors automatically open and allow the contents to slide out. With a wheel-base of only 9 feet, the motor and the chassis are of the usual lorry type, apart from the low height and the small-diameter wheels. The capacity of the body is 2 tons.

A NEW METHOD OF CLEANING SILVER.

As all housewives know, silver or silver-plated articles standing on the sideboard or in

common use quickly become tarnished, especially in a smoke-laden atmosphere, or in a house lit by gas. This is due to the fact that the sulphur of the atmosphere unites with the silver to form a substance, dark in colour, known to the chemist as sulphide of silver. To get rid of this sulphide—in other words, to clean the silver—it is customary to use some form of silver-cleaning powder. However soft and smooth this may be, it has of necessity an abrasive effect, and in course of time all the silver is worn away, and the base metal beneath is exposed to view. An alternative method of cleaning the tarnished vessels avoids this evil. A sufficient number of pints of water to cover the article or articles to be cleaned are put into a large saucepan or other suitable vessel, and an equal number of tablespoonfuls of ordinary washing soda (carbonate of soda) and a strip of aluminium are added. The water is boiled for a few minutes, and the work of cleansing is complete, the silver being rendered bright and shining once more. The secret of the operation is that the aluminium so acts upon the carbonate of soda and the water as to form bicarbonate of soda and a compound of sodium and aluminium, thus setting hydrogen free. This nascent or new-born hydrogen, eager to unite itself with something, seizes upon the sulphur of the sulphide of silver to form (with itself) hydrogen sulphide, and liberates the silver, which thus remains behind. It is obvious, of course, that this method can only be used for articles which are wholly silver or silver-plated.

A CORRECTION.

We greatly regret that in the article on London Government in our September issue the administrative area of the county of London was given as 116,000 square miles instead of 116,000, i.e., 116 square miles; and that the amount of sewage dealt with yearly was stated as a hundred million gallons instead of a hundred thousand million gallons.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, if (a) a reply post-card, or (b) a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card, be sent to the Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh. (If this condition is not complied with, no reply can be sent.) To avoid delay, requests of this kind from correspondents abroad will be forwarded to the manufacturer or agent.

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Chambers's Journal

EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

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CHRISTMAS 1925.

HOW CHRISTMAS CAME TO THE HONEYBUNS.

By HAROLD SPENDER.

CHAPTER I.

TRISTRAM ASKS A QUESTION.

'DO you believe in Christmas?' asked Tristram Honeybun, aged eighteen, and home from school for the holidays, as he looked out through one of the large dining-room windows of his parents' town house in Bayswater, watching the shadows of night creeping down the long street, and the sudden twinkling of the street lights as they were turned on to meet the invasion of darkness. It was the 20th of December, and so there were very few days left before the blessed feast-day of the birth of Christ. The weather had turned very cold; and at that moment flakes of snow were beginning to fall, lit up by the street lamps into a curious distinctness of detail, so that one could watch their magical starry shapes as they drifted slowly through the windless air down onto the pavement.

Iris Honeybun, aged sixteen, and still with her hair down her back, was gazing at these snow-flakes with such concentrated attention of fascinated admiration that, for the moment, she did not hear her brother's question. The young girl was perhaps dreaming of some far-off happiness associated with those white flakes and with those twinkling street lamps—of the Christmas parties of her childhood; of presents and candles, of Christmas trees and crackers,

of cosy fires and brightly-lighted rooms. But at any rate her mind was far away, for she did not answer at once. She turned with that baffling vagueness of youth to her brother, and asked with a disarming softness of voice, 'What did you say, Triss?'

'I said "Do you believe in Christmas?"' the boy repeated insistently, with a youthful sense of the extreme importance of his question.

Iris Honeybun sighed, and, throwing herself into an arm-chair, embraced her right knee with both her arms, proceeding to rock herself to and fro with a vigour which seemed to become a positive peril. 'I used to,' she said suddenly, 'until mother and father quarrelled.'

'I don't see what that's got to do with it!' exclaimed Tristram, pulling at the window-cord with a violence that would have appalled the family butler if he had happened to be present. 'I don't see what that's got to do with it! I mean all the old chatter about Christmas boxes, and kindness, and all that sort of thing. It seems to me just a bit played out.'

Iris gave a little laugh. 'Pretty well played out in this house,' she said.

Tristram moved impatiently and dug his hands deep in his trousers pockets. 'I know

what you mean, Iris,' he said. 'But you know my views about that. It's a pity we can't talk without always getting back to it.'

'Yes, I know!' said Iris. 'You always side with mother, whatever she does.'

'Because she happens to be always in the right,' said Tristram, kicking a footstool with wholly undeserved severity.

'That's what you always say!' said Iris. 'But I don't think she understands father in the least. She doesn't even try to! I think father is awfully good to her.'

'Well, we shall never agree about that,' said Tristram. 'Let's get back to my question—Do you believe in Christmas?'

Iris rocked herself to and fro with a greater energy than ever. Her eyes were getting suspiciously moist, and she was blinking a good deal. 'I try to,' she said—'though it's most awfully difficult, with father living in one part of the house and mother in the other, and us a sort of go-betweens. I don't think it's fair on us at all.'

'Well, at any rate they are honest!' cried Tristram. 'They don't pretend to care for one another when they don't. That's what I call so rotten about this old Christmas idea. Once a year everybody's got to pretend, just like a lot of kids! They all meet and play at loving one another, waste money over presents, and Christmas puddings and mince pies, and crackers and all that bally rot. Why, do you remember Uncle John last Christmas with a granny's cap on his head? It made me feel fairly sick, I can tell you, Iris.'

Iris's lips closed just a little obstinately; and she stopped rocking herself for at least ten seconds. 'I thought it was the first time I had ever seen Uncle John look nice!' she cried. 'He gave me a ten-shilling note that evening, which shows there's something in it that changes people, anyway. He'd never done that before!'

'I expect he knocked it off a charity next day,' said Tristram. 'The weak point about all that sort of thing is that it never lasts. I've been looking at a book of that chap Dickens, called *A Christmas Carol*, which grandmother used to boost so much. I call it stale stuff, quite out of date, not fit for these strenuous days, eh what?' and the boy ended with a laugh, half-cynical and half-jovial, so that you could not quite tell whether he was speaking seriously.

Iris had stopped rocking herself again, and her eyes had grown large with a kind of wonder. She did not seem to be listening to her brother's last words. 'I think it is a marvellous book,' she said slowly. 'A sort of wonderland book; and yet it seems all so true. Last time I read it I couldn't help thinking that—perhaps—'

'Perhaps what?' cried Tristram impatiently. 'What do you mean? You always stop just when you're getting interesting.'

'Why, perhaps that it all might happen again.'

'Happen again!' cried Tristram. 'Why, what do you mean?'

'Why, happen again here—between mother and father. You know what I mean?'

'Oh, I see!' shouted Tristram. 'I grasp the idea! The Christmas spirit bringing father and mother together again! That only shows what a back-number you are, Iris. You forget that they have made a legal agreement. People are not so silly and sentimental nowadays. This is the age of commonsense. If people don't agree, why, they just part, and there they stay, and that's much better than the old shams,' repeated Tristram, again kicking the unfortunate footstool until it slid across the room.

'Yes,' said Iris slowly. 'That's just what Scrooge thought. He thought that he was fixed for ever in his way of life; and then there came the Christmas spirit and everything was changed. Why, he became the dearest old thing—he gave his nephew money—he looked after Tiny Tim. Why, don't you remember, Triss? Even you must love that part of the story.'

Tristram stood erect and spoke with a curious heat. 'All mush and sentiment!' he cried. 'Food for girls! Why, don't you know what happened afterwards? Once at school some of us fellows wrote a sequel to *A Christmas Carol* just for fun. Do you know what took place in my version? Why, Scrooge got over that attack; and afterwards he was harder than ever. His doctor explained to him that his Christmas dreams had been due entirely to bad diet; especially that gruel he took on the night of Christmas Eve. So he cut down his clerk's salary again; took out of his will what he had given to his nephew; and let Tiny Tim die. After that he was more successful than ever; and finally he became Sir Ebenezer Scrooge, Bart., M.P. He had just given his money to the whips to get a peerage when he suddenly died, and was mourned desperately by the whole nation.'

The boy shouted with laughter over his own grim jest, and really he seemed as pleased as a happy author after the production of a successful play.

But Iris's eyes grew still larger, and she sat quite silent, seeming to be looking into the far distance.

At that moment the sound of singing was wafted through the still air; for the falling snow had laid its gentle carpet along the roadway and muffled the rival rumbling of the traffic—

While shepherds watch'd their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The Angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

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'Fear not,' said he; for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind;
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.'

Tristram stopped quite suddenly in his laughter, and for a few moments stood listening to the singing. Then he raised both hands and stuck a finger in each of his ears. 'Oh, it's those beastly waits!' he cried. 'Tell Dennis to go and stop them. Why do you sit there like a dolt, Iris? I can't stand it! They get on my nerves. I call it a perfect shame that the police should allow them to go round blackmailing people with their noise. It ought to be stopped by law. Look here, I'm going to stop it, if you aren't!'

Taking his fingers out of his ears, Tristram moved passionately to the electric bell-push at the side of a big marble mantel-piece and stood pushing it for all he was worth with his released thumb. In a few moments the door opened slowly; and there stood in the opening, his left hand still on the door-handle, a man dressed in the old-fashioned costume of the butler—dark swallow-tailed coat and high black waist-coat; with that air of correctitude which marks the well-conducted steward. This was Dennis, the one man in this establishment who knew precisely what he wanted.

Dennis stood there quite silently, a certain dignity and confidence marking both his attitude and the well-controlled features of his determined face. Dennis had been too long in the family to be frightened by these young people. He had known them as children, ever since the days they were carried in arms, and he was not to be upset by their wayward pranks.

Under Dennis's fixed inquiring gaze Tristram Honeybun visibly wilted. He seemed to grow less arrogant and impulsive; less assured of himself. He looked at Dennis hesitatingly, and then at Iris, as if he now wished that his sister would take over the task.

'Did you ring, sir?' asked Dennis quietly, but rather with a tone and manner as if he were making an accusation.

'Yes, I did; didn't I, Iris?' replied Tristram weakly. 'You see it's those beastly carollers. I—I can't stand them. It's too much for my nerves. Can't you go and stop them, Dennis?'

'Am I to give them any money, sir?' said Dennis, still respectfully but firmly.

'No, no! Not a penny, Dennis! Why, if you do that they will only come again to-morrow night. We shall never hear the end of them. Besides, you know that giving money always does harm. I have learnt that at school, and it's about the only thing I ever have learnt! But why don't you go, Dennis?'

Dennis still paused, and then, slowly closing the door behind him, came into the room. 'Well, you see, sir,' he said slowly, 'it's just a little difficult. The fact is that Mr Honeybun

likes them, but Mrs Honeybun don't. So if I send them away I get into trouble with the master, and if I don't I get into trouble with the mistress. That's how it stands, sir. Now, what would you do under those circumstances, sir?' He put the problem quite impartially, as if he were posing Tristram with a new conundrum from a weekly paper.

'Why, obey me, of course!' said Tristram, laughing at his own jest.

But at that moment Iris jumped up from her chair. 'That's just where I come in!' cried Iris. 'I don't agree with Tristram at all. I like the carollers. I dote on them. I won't have them sent away. I'll have them asked in, Dennis. Do you hear me? If you are going to obey Tristram, you ought to obey me too. I'm only two years younger.'

As she finished, the voices sounded clearly from outside, down the street, as if in answer to her speech—

All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace;
Good-will henceforth from heaven to men
Begin and never cease.

Dennis stood for a moment quite still, and then made a half-turn towards the door. 'Well, you see, sir, it is a bit difficult for a man to know what to do in this house. But as the young mistress puts it in that way I think, on the whole—I'll do nothing.'

So saying, he turned and left the room.

CHAPTER II.

MRS HONEYBUN DINES ALONE.

MEANWHILE, upstairs in the little boudoir-study, picked out in blue and gold, which she had designed for herself twenty years ago in happier days, Mrs Arthur Honeybun was sitting, tired with her work and indulging in a few moments of reflection.

The flap of her bureau was piled with letters which she had written that afternoon—thick letters, and long letters. For Mrs Honeybun was nothing if not a public woman; it was impossible to exhaust on your ten fingers the number of committees to which she belonged. It was currently rumoured among her friends that Mrs Honeybun would certainly stand for parliament if it were not for the unfortunate domestic entanglements in which she was involved. But right across all her ambitions stood the formidable figure of Mr Honeybun, who actually threatened that if she stood for parliament he would appear on her platform and publicly oppose her. That was the rather capacious fly in the ointment of Mrs Honeybun's public life.

This evening Mrs Honeybun was rather more

tired than usual, for she had had a hard day's work. During the morning she had written two articles for the Press. During the afternoon she had attended three committees; and since tea she had written nearly twenty letters. She was an active champion of the rights of her sex, and even now, when women had the franchise, there were many wrongs to be righted. For Mrs Honeybun had a most extraordinarily keen scent for all wrongs outside her own household. She was now engaged in a great crusade for giving the franchise to the women of India, and her thoughts were already ranging towards the Malay Archipelago. It seemed highly probable that if Mrs Honeybun had her way, man would soon become a subject animal on the planet Earth. But it certainly was a most unfortunate spot on the sun of this feminist Millennium that a revolt should have taken place in the very citadel of the crusader herself. For it most miserably happened that her lawful husband, Mr Arthur Honeybun, successful merchant in the City of London, and concerned in affairs on which the sun never set, was most manfully determined to assert the supremacy of his own sex in his own home. That was the little rift in the lute which, slowly widening, had made this domestic music mute. Probably it was this dominant fact which had now once more invaded the peace of Mrs Honeybun's mind, for she had laid aside her pen, leaned back in her chair, and looked around her pretty room. Then she gave a deep sigh; it was as if to say that all was vanity.

She rose slowly, and moving rather wearily towards an arm-chair in front of the fire, picked out a cigarette from a little silver box on the ormolu table that stood by the elbow of her chair, lit it, took a deep puff of smoke, blew it into the air, leaned back, and sighed again.

Perhaps as she looked up at those beautiful rings of smoke, which she knew so well how to blow, she saw through them, in a vista, some picture of that earlier life of hers when her children were young and the disturbing trumpet of fame had not yet sounded in her ears. Perhaps she saw again her young husband romping across the room with a child on his shoulder, or the Christmas tree with the candles lit up and the little people dancing around. For in the midst of her public life Mrs Honeybun had moods of hunger, and these memories would come back.

In any case, her eyes seemed full of sadness as she looked into the fire. But suddenly she pulled herself together, sat up in her chair, leaned across for the evening newspaper lying on the settee, and opened it with a little toss of her head as if defying the memories of the past.

Then at that precise moment there came a knock on the door, and instantly there entered a young parlour-maid, pretty and quick in her movements, and with a curious look of amused

interest in her eyes, now carrying a note on a silver salver.

'Yes, Alice?' said Mrs Honeybun, wearily dropping her paper onto her lap.

'If you please, madam, it's a note from Mr Honeybun,' said the servant.

Mrs Honeybun took the note from the salver and opened it with a sigh. Why did he write so many notes? It was really a very troublesome thing about Mr Honeybun that he had an itch for writing notes, otherwise this arrangement of theirs might be working so much better! For it saved the trouble of two houses; and it suggested a new use for those colossal Bayswater mansions, which are the white elephants of modern London. But every time that Mrs Honeybun received one of her husband's letters she saw the weak points in the plan. These letters shook her peace. They shattered the dream of independence which was so pleasant to her feminine pride. They seemed to carry with them the menace of invasion.

A slight frown passed over her face as she read the note. The frown deepened as she looked up quickly and caught a glimpse of the maid's eager eyes and half-opened mouth, clearly perceiving in a glance that the girl was trying to read the letter over her shoulder.

'Tell Mr Honeybun that I cannot dine with him to-night,' said Mrs Honeybun, a little fretfully. 'I have to address a meeting in Paddington.'

'Yes, madam,' said the servant primly. 'At what time do you wish your dinner served?'

'At seven o'clock, please,' said Mrs Honeybun. 'And I wish Master Tristram and Miss Iris to dine with me.'

'I am sorry, madam,' said the servant, 'but I think the master has asked them to dine with him.'

For the first time there was a flash of anger in Mrs Honeybun's eye. She seemed about to speak. Then she looked up at the maid and saw something in her face that silenced her. No, above all, she must keep her dignity. Arthur had scored a point. She must give it to him. So she seemed to swallow her feelings with a sort of gulp, and looking up with a new serenity, she said quite calmly, 'Very well, Alice, you may go.'

Mrs Honeybun watched the maid leave the room; and then she leaned forward and, gazing into the fire, gave full play to her reflections. Ah, there was the weak point! After that fearful quarrel, in which Arthur Honeybun had told his wife that she must choose between him and her public life, and she had frankly preferred her public life, they had sat down with a frigid calmness which was worse than fury and attempted to plan out their new existence. Instantly they had bumped up against the question of the children. It had been the chief thing that had kept them together; it still

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entangled and involved the separation, for amid all their differences they were both devoted to the children. So they soon found that neither was willing to leave the house where the children lived. And as neither had the heart to separate the children it followed that they must all live in the same house. Why not? It was a large house, with an embarrassing number of rooms; it was possible to provide each of them with a separate suite. So it was planned; and so it was arranged.

The next trouble was the children themselves. They made it quite clear that they were not going to be divided up like a parcel of groceries. The first idea was that they should dine alternately with their father or mother when they were at home. But there they both absolutely rebelled. They claimed the right of choice. So it came about that in some subtle way the division of the parents seemed to hand over the rule of the family from them to the children. There was a shifting of moral authority to the younger generation. Now the parents had to rely upon pleadings and coaxings; they had gradually to become rival suppliants for the favours of their own offspring, for parents cannot have it both ways. If the guardians of youth cannot bridle themselves, vainly will they hope to ride the Pegasus of latter-day youth.

At this point in her eddying thought there was a sudden tempest of steps on the stairs, the door burst open, and in rushed Tristram with flushed and heated face. He paused, and then moved rapidly towards his mother, leaving the door wide open behind him. 'Oh, I say, mother, I'm most awfully sorry about it!'

Mrs Honeybun turned in her chair towards her boy, and as she looked at him a new expression of pride and sweetness came over her face. 'My dear boy! What are you sorry about?'

'Oh, that I have promised father that I would dine with him to-night. If I'd only known——'

'Of course you must dine with your father when he asks you,' said Mrs Honeybun firmly, though her face flushed and she turned her eyes away from her boy to the fire. 'It's most important for boys to obey their father,' she ended, her voice seeming to drop as if the sentiment belonged to her past life.

'Well, you see, it's like this,' said the boy nervously and gently. 'Father's going to take us to a theatre to-night, and I haven't been to a theatre since last hols. Are you awfully cut up about it, mother?'

'No, of course not,' she said, with just a quaver in her voice. 'My only wish is that you should be happy. Is Iris going too?'

'Oh yes! Rather! What do you think?' shouted Tristram.

There it was again! The father bidding

against the mother for the love of the children, and always able to outbid her because he had his evenings free and she had her meetings. How unjust the world was! How cruel to women! What little reward to the true workers of the world!

All this passed through Mrs Honeybun's mind like a flash, and then there came back the old restraint of keeping up a good presence in the face of her children. 'All I wish, dear, is that you both should be happy,' she went on, almost mechanically. 'I wish I could come with you, but I have to go to a meeting.'

The boy looked at his mother with glowing admiration on his face. 'You're absolutely topping, mother! Always at meetings! It makes one feel quite low down. I shall tell father about it to-night. I don't hold with his line of life. It's too soft! I shall tell him so. You can always rely on me, mother, if it comes to that.'

Mrs Honeybun looked up with a little flush of surprise on her face. The tone of the boy was so strangely masterful. His attitude towards her was so much that of a father; she felt for the moment that she and her husband were just two naughty children. 'Your father has a right to his own view,' she said quickly, 'just as I have a right to mine. Always remember that.'

'Top-hole, mother! Now that's just what I want father to say. Shall I try and have a word with him to-night?'

Mrs Honeybun's face quivered. The one thing she flinched from in all these troubles was lest her children should be drawn into the quarrel. How little the boy understood his father. She foresaw in a moment the angry rebukes that would descend on the boy's head. It was splendid of the lad, but it would not do.

'No, Tristram, dear. Just leave it alone, and be happy. That's the best thing for you and Iris. I do so want you both to be happy this Christmas.'

She might well have been taken aback by the look on the boy's face and the shout of laughter that broke from him.

'A happy Christmas, mother, with you and father going on like this? Why, I call that the limit! The very thought of it puts me off my food. I've just been telling Iris how sick it makes me. No, mother, that's one thing I'll back you in. No Christmas for us this year!'

'Back me in?' said his mother, astounded at the phrase.

'Yes, back you!' cried the boy. 'If there's anything I loathe it's shams! What's the good of talkin' of lovin' with you and father sitting like a couple of icicles at each end of the house. Why, those waits have been singing about 'peace and good-will'; and I tell you I couldn't stand it. I asked Dennis to go

and stop them, but he wouldn't. But now I must be going, or else dad'll be baity with me. So long, mother. Cheer up and keep moving!'

Tristram leaned down and kissed his mother hastily, and then, turning, rushed out of the room as quickly as he had come in.

As Tristram rushed away Mrs Honeybun rose to her feet and stood gazing at the door which he had banged to behind him. Her face had grown white and her eyes were glistening. For a moment or two she stood quite still. Then she sighed a deep sigh. 'God forgive us!' she whispered. 'God forgive us!'

CHAPTER III.

MR HONEYBUN SCORES.

WHEN the Honeybun young people joined their father at dinner that evening, in the room which was set apart for his meals, they found him in anything but a pleasant mood. Mr Arthur Honeybun was not one of those men who like being crossed. Least of all did he like being crossed by his own wife. He had been brought up to the absolute belief that a man should be master in his own household. His father had believed in it, and his grandfather before him. It was a continual grievance with him that he had been unable to carry on the family tradition.

He was one of those men who are not so strong as they look. His big nose and clean-cut lips gave little clue to the real texture of the will within. He certainly looked a formidable man. He was that type that figures in books and on posters as the 'business' man. But, as a matter of fact, behind that broad brow there gathered a great variety of emotions—some strong, some weak, some generous, some selfish, some even mean and revengeful.

To-night it was certainly not his better nature that had the upper hand. He was very angry at Mrs Honeybun's refusal to dine with him. He regarded the offer as a great act of generosity. It was the first overture of that kind that he had made since the division of their lives. He had made up his mind to this step very slowly and painfully. It had, indeed, been a kind of move towards surrender—just a glimpse of the white flag.

For you must not suppose that Arthur Honeybun was really happy in his loneliness—or hugged his solitude. On the contrary, he detested it. He was a very sociable man, and he did not at all care for his own company. As a matter of fact he had consented to the act of division only because he regarded it as a kind of punishment for his wife which would quickly bring her round to his point of view. For Mr Honeybun, with it

all, had a high notion of his own attractiveness, and he had fully expected that his wife would soon tire of her detachment. So for several weeks he had waited expectant for an approach from the other side; and it was only when none came that he had sent the maid with his overture.

No wonder that he was somewhat amazed that this approach of his should have received so abrupt a reply.

He was perhaps all the more annoyed at his wife because he had been very successful in the city during the previous fortnight. He had carried out some good strokes of business. Trade at that moment was reviving, and he had risen on a rising market. He had plenty of money at his bank, and he wished to spend it. It was all the more annoying, therefore, to find that he could not make peace at home and enjoy himself after his own fashion.

Now, at this moment, one idea had fully possessed him. It was to win over both the children to his side. He was deeply devoted to his children; but at this moment love was almost merged in revenge. He wanted to gain allies. He knew that Iris was on his side; but Iris was only a girl. It was part of Mr Honeybun's philosophy—the very philosophy that had got him into all his trouble, a philosophy that clashed with the spirit of the age—to regard women as an inferior race of beings. He wanted to win over the boy. He knew that it would be difficult. Tristram puzzled him; he was so independent, so defiant. He could scarcely realise that Tristram was his son. He put it down to the schoolmasters. He was sorry that he had sent Tristram away to school. But now the thing was to win him over; and Mr Honeybun was willing at this moment to go almost any length in spoiling the boy to achieve that object.

So when the two children appeared, Honeybun greeted them heartily and jovially, and successfully concealed his vexation of spirit. Iris responded cordially to this mood, but Tristram was sulky and silent.

'Why, Tristram, my lad,' cried his father to him, 'what's the matter with the boy? You mustn't forget it's Christmas time! No sulky faces at this time of the year.'

'I loathe Christmas,' said Tristram.

'Yes, that's the way he's been talking all the afternoon,' cried Iris. 'I wish you'd tell him to cheer up, father. It makes us all so melancholy.'

'Oh, we'll soon cure him,' cried Mr Honeybun. 'He wants feeding up! That's what's wrong with him.—Take another helping, my boy,' he ended, proceeding to hew a drum-stick from the fat goose which had been sent up from the country especially for that occasion.

'I'm fed up already!' murmured Tristram.

Mr Honeybun stopped in his task, knife and

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fork in the air, and looked at his son rather sternly. 'That's not the way to talk,' he said. 'Very well, then,' said Tristram, 'I'll not talk at all.'

Mr Honeybun paused, with an angry expression on his lips. He suddenly realised that he was losing control of himself.

He could see what had happened. The boy had been talking to his mother. He had come to dinner with his mind already set against his father. It was clear that to quarrel would be to play into his wife's hands. He must take the other line. So Arthur Honeybun gulped down his passion, and decided to play the diplomat—not an easy task for a prosperous city man. He finished the helping, laid the knife and fork on the dish, and leaned back in his chair with a forced smile on his lips. 'Ah, Tristram,' he said, 'I can see what's wrong with you. I believe that you feel this situation as much as I do.'

'How do you mean, father?' said the boy eagerly, not quite understanding the change in his father's mood, and feeling a sudden relenting towards him. For, after all, the soft answer still, even in these modern days, turns away wrath.

'Yes, my boy,' Mr Honeybun said, 'you're quite right. It's not in the spirit of Christmas—not at all in the spirit of Christmas. I feel that myself. That is why I asked your mother to join us at dinner to-night.'

'But she had to go to a meeting!' cried the boy, aflame on behalf of his mother, but already a little on the defensive.

Mr Honeybun swallowed down a gust of anger. Those meetings—always those meetings! 'It is a pity,' he said quietly.

At this point Iris cut in. 'I hate them! I hate those meetings!' she cried. 'I shall never go to meetings when I am grown up. I shall stay at home with my husband and my children!'

'Wait till you've got a husband, old thing!' cried the boy irreverently. 'They're not found on every bush at the present day!'

'I think it was very nice of Iris to say that,' said Mr Honeybun, still on the soft pedal. 'Perhaps if he knows that Iris will stay at home with him the husband will come all the sooner!'

'He'll have a pretty tough job on his hands,' said Tristram with true brotherly candour.

So the talk passed off in boisterous laughter and an interchange of rough, school-life amenities between brother and sister. But Mr Honeybun felt on the whole that he had made progress. His son grew more friendly towards him, for when the talk veered inevitably back to the family crisis Tristram was feverishly apologetic for his mother, pouring out a torrent of excuses.

'I think it's so jolly fine of mother,'
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he bubbled, 'wearing herself out for people; especially as I don't suppose anybody cares very much. Still, it's jolly sporting of her. I wish you'd look at it in that light, father.'

'I like to hear a lad speak up for his mother,' said Mr Honeybun, still quietly. 'It's exactly the part I want you to play, my lad. There's more of Christmas in you than you think.'

'Dear old Father Christmas,' cried Iris. 'You'd dress splendidly for the part, old thing. Why not, Triss?'

Tristram threatened to throw a banana at his sister, and once more the family table was dissolved in the easy boisterous merriment which had been in the old days the note of the house.

So Mr Honeybun very gently and cleverly coaxed his son away from his defiant championship of his mother; and by the end of the evening, after they had gone to the theatre and thoroughly enjoyed themselves over a merry farce, and come back in a taxi-cab and found hot soup waiting for them, Tristram had begun to feel that his mother was a rather unreasonable person to stand apart from a life so varied and satisfying. She began to figure in his mind as a little of a 'kill-joy,' and his father began to take on a more amiable shape as the generous source of so many attractive pleasures. When he called to mind the descriptions of their fathers given to him by boys, his own father began to stand out rather well. In other words, the process of relenting had gone a considerable stage further; and a vague feeling had begun to creep into Tristram's young mind that if this sort of thing meant Christmas, why, there was something in Christmas after all.

So when the time came for a move to bed father and son parted most amiably.

'It was ripping, father!' cried the boy. 'Quite ripping!' And that meant a great deal from Tristram.

'Didn't I tell you so?' cried Iris, with glowing cheeks, as they mounted the stairs. 'Why, he's simply splendid!'

Mr Honeybun sat on in his room smoking a big cigar, quite alone, but with a gentle smile playing round his lips. The grim look of the earlier evening had passed off, and Mr Honeybun was feeling more at home with himself.

Probably Mildred, his wife, would soon come round when she found that both the children were following him.

Meanwhile Mildred had let herself in about an hour earlier with her latch-key and crept slowly up to her room. She felt very weary. She had had a long troublesome meeting, with much heckling and considerable opposition. She had been advocating a scheme of pensions for all spinsters over thirty. For Mildred never did things by halves. She had the fierce logic of her womanhood, and approached politics with

a free and open mind, which is the perilous quality of these new invaders of our franchise.

'Why not?' she said very simply to her audience.

But a large part of the audience had, with equal simplicity, replied 'Why?' The men had been openly hostile, and the women passive. The British Fascisti had put in a stormy appearance, and a group of ex-soldiers had made a confused and noisy appeal that whatever pensions were going should be given to them. Altogether it had not been a very successful gathering.

But now would come her sole evening relief. For since he had come back from school, Tristram had always come to see her after her work was over, and had regaled her with his school-boy talk. She looked forward to that visit with a great hunger, and she did not know herself how deep that hunger was. But Tristram did not come. She waited. Now she read a book; then she smoked a cigarette. So she whiled away the time, now and again smiling at the thought of his coming. Still he did not come.

Then she heard the front door open and close, and the sound of steps on the stairs. She knew that the party had come back from their theatre. She laid down her book, and sat up with eager, expectant eyes. Tristram would surely come in and tell her all about it.

But still she waited and no one came. Then she heard another door open and close; and then steps going up the stairs; and she knew that the children were going to bed. But none of the steps stopped at her door, they still went on up the stairs. Then she caught her breath for one moment. Her eyes closed and her mouth half-opened; and at last, with a sudden surrender of all her courage, she leaned her face in her hands, and burst into a passion of tears.

CHAPTER IV.

MRS HONEYBUN DREAMS.

MRS HONEYBUN went on weeping for some little time. She found relief in her tears. When she had once begun she did not want to stop. It seemed to be the thing she had yearned to do for some time past. No one came to stop her, and that made her cry all the more. She cried because she was lonely, and she felt less lonely for crying, as if the very tears gave her company. There is much virtue in a 'good cry.'

Thus she gradually tired herself, and the very fatigue seemed to comfort her. She felt better for being tired. It was with a kind of luxury of restfulness that she leaned back in her deeply-cushioned chair and snuggled herself

into its soft recesses. Then her hands fell limply onto her lap, and her eyes gradually closed. She ceased crying and lay quiet. As she lay quiet her breathing came more slowly and regularly, and she fell asleep.

As she slept she dreamed, and she did not know that she was dreaming. It was as if her spirit was carried back far across the years; far away from the murk of Bayswater, away from the fog and darkness, into the early spring sunshine of the country and the west.

She was walking in one of those deeply-cut lanes which run between the meadows of Devonshire, and her first delight was the sight of the flowers that covered the great green grassy banks on either side. The flowers formed one mass of colour—blue, gold, yellow, and scarlet; the violets and primroses, the celandines and the scarlet campions, all massed together in their wild, tangled growth. Yet there seemed some kind of system in their beauty, for she noted that the violets formed a carpet out of which the primroses sprang. And what primroses! Great, wide-eyed beauties, grouped in such thick clusters that they seemed to crowd one another, like birds in their nests, with a sweet, cuddling rivalry, lying in their cups of green leaves. Above her was the pale-blue sky of spring, and on her cheeks the warm air from the south.

She was about to pick some primroses, when she realised that her arm was resting in that of a young man, who was looking down at her with deep devotion in his eyes. Then she looked up and saw the reflection of herself in those eyes of his. They were dark-blue eyes; and how well she knew them! For it was young Arthur Honeybun, her newly-plighted lover.

It was a happy thing, perhaps, that her dream was too deep for contrast or comparison. She did not compare this young man with the Honeybun of to-day, for she had forgotten all about her present life. It had disappeared in a mist, and she was back in the happy past. All she knew was that this young Arthur Honeybun—slim, handsome, and keen-eyed—loved her, and she loved him; two very simple things, but they filled her life at that moment, and there was nothing more she wanted to know.

Nature seemed to be there with only one object—just to fill the measure of her joy. It was the pride of her love to believe that all those flowers were smiling at her, that the blue sky was blue to provide a canopy for their happiness, and that the sun was shining just to welcome their joy. For it is of the nature of lovers to harbour such vain fancies. It is their fond habit to regard themselves as the centre of the universe; to imagine that all things are revolving round the sun of their joy. Happy fancies! Happy hours! Would that men had no fancies less harmful, and spent no hours less innocent!

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They sauntered gently down the lane; and then she knew, without anyone telling her, that he was going to say something to her of the utmost importance. Her heart was beating quickly, and she felt her cheek hot. Her gaze was absorbed with looking at the flowers, but all the time she knew that he was looking down at her. Now she heard his voice—that young, rich voice of the youth Honeybun, not the husky, petulant accents of the successful city merchant.

‘I want to ask you something, dearest,’ he was saying.

‘Ask away,’ she said, with an assumed lightness.

‘I want to ask you whether you think you could ever cease to love me.’

‘How can you ask such a thing?’ she cooed back.

Arthur Honeybun gave a laugh, but there was a tremble in his voice. ‘Oh, I don’t know,’ he said. ‘I was staying the other day with an old uncle of mine. He has quarrelled with his wife, and it gave me the hump to look at them. They scarcely ever speak to one another. You’ll think me an awful idiot, but after a few days of it I got an idea that I could not get rid of.’

‘What sort of idea?’

‘Why, that possibly once they too were in love with one another.’ And he laughed uneasily.

So happy was she that she could scarcely follow the winding of his thoughts. She did not connect the idea of an old uncle and aunt with their own happiness. Old people were—old people! But they were young, and youth—is youth; and to itself something immortal.

‘You dear old thing!’ she said. ‘What are you puzzling your silly old head about? Why worry yourself about an old uncle and aunt? Such dull and stupid people! Why, of course, they never could really have cared for one another!’

‘Do you really think so?’ he said.

‘Yes, of course,’ she went on. ‘Because if you really care for one another you never cease caring. “Love once, love for ever!” That’s what I think about it.’

‘How sweet to hear you!’ he said, and, bending down, he kissed her on the forehead. ‘But still, I want you to make me a promise.’

‘What promise?’ she said.

‘That you will always go on loving me, whatever may come between us.’

‘Of course I’ll promise,’ she said lightly. ‘As if anything ever could come between us! You silly old boy! We’re so different from them! They’re old and frowsy, and we—why, we—’ She paused as if nothing could quite equal the vision she saw in her mirror of life.

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But he took her up with a little laugh. ‘Why, we,’ he said, ‘are like the flowers of spring. But then, dearest, the flowers fade, and spring passes, and autumn comes, and winter.’

‘Oh, don’t talk like that!’ she cried, leaning her head on his arm. ‘Why, we’re always going to have spring, you and I!’

‘Of course we are, dear. You’re quite right,’ he said. ‘Always the spring. Spring in our hearts, if not in the sky. Light in our home, even when the skies are gray.’

She listened; and then, somehow or other, the voice faded, the banks grew dim, the light darkened, and Mrs Honeybun woke with a start. ‘Oh dear,’ she cried, ‘it was only a dream!’

She looked round, saw her open desk and the papers on it, the fire burning low in the grate, the pretty, painted boudoir, and realised that she was alone.

For a few moments she sat quite still, gazing into the waning fire. She was desperately trying to clutch the dream before it faded away—trying to rescue from growing oblivion the fragments of that bright vision of youth and hope. But even as she sat there it was rapidly vanishing back into the darkness: and only now and again, as through breaks in the clouds, seen looking down from a great height, did she get glimpses of that radiant sunlight of her youth. But, even so, enough remained to recall to her those happier days, before the shocks of life had battered their hope and faith in one another.

The memories brought to her a great longing and a great hunger. With the longing and the hunger there came for the first time to Mrs Honeybun a faint doubt as to whether she had always been in the right—the first break in her own complacent self-confidence.

She sat there quite still, with open eyes. She did not wish to surrender herself again to sleep. She was thinking hard and trying to remember. She was passing her life in review, and attempting to recall the incidents which had first divided them.

Although her eyes were open, the effort seemed to produce something in the nature of a walking vision. Scenes in her life passed before her, like those moving-pictures which are the triumph of this age.

Gradually, as this process worked, her eyes closed again, and she was back in another scene of her past.

It was Christmas Day in her early married life. She could see again the tall Christmas tree, covered with the little presents and lighted with candles. She could see her two little children, still toddling infants, Tristram and Iris, skipping round the tree in wild delight. What dear little children they were! How

trustfully they looked up to her! How they smiled and laughed at her! How utter and complete their love and confidence! How different from their moods of to-day! Iris was in a little white frock with a scarlet sash, and Tristram in those neat little brown corduroys which his mother remembered so well.

Tristram suddenly stood quite still and cried, 'Where's my daddy?'

The mother smiled, and there was a twinkle in her eye. 'I expect he's very busy to-day,' she said. 'Perhaps Father Christmas will come instead.'

'Father Christmas? Why, I love Father Christmas!' cried Iris. 'I seed him last Christmas, and he was so like daddy except for the whiskers.'

'I think it was daddy,' said Tristram stoutly; 'cos they never come together.'

'Little boys are so clever nowadays,' laughed the mother. 'Sometimes too clever.'

'I don't like clever people,' said Iris. 'I like believing things.'

'That's just like girls,' said Tristram. 'Boys like finding out.'

'Oh you silly dears!' cried the mother, picking them up each in turn and kissing them. 'You mustn't grow up! You mustn't grow up!'

'Oh yes, I shall grow up,' cried Tristram, after he had disentangled himself from his mother's embraces. 'I want to be a man like daddy.'

'If it was always Christmas I'd like to stay little always,' said Iris.

So the infant prattle went on, each vying with the other; Tristram already with the beginnings of that touch of defiance which had now grown over his nature like a tangled creeper; Iris, soft and clinging, anxious to please, loving and large-eyed, grasping in her arms a large ugly doll with one eye knocked out, a few fragments of wispy hair, and a broken nose.

Suddenly there was a loud rapping at the door, and both the children shouted with delight and danced about, for they knew it was Father Christmas. The door opened and Father Christmas came in, very tall and rather stiff in his gait, and dragging after him a sack full of presents. Both the children shrank back for a few moments, surprised and startled, and then Iris laughingly ran towards the old man. Tristram stood quite still, with an angry little look on his small face, and his right hand tightly closed, and cried, 'Why, Father Christmas has got my daddy's boots on!'

The whole scene dissolved in laughter. Father Christmas threw off his mask and revealed Arthur Honeybun, now a little more lined than in the Devonshire lane, and with a little less hair on his head; but the same merry, joyous, confident look in his eyes.

The scene faded. Mrs Honeybun sat upright in her chair, now wide-awake, and she looked round to realise that once more she was alone.

Restlessly she rose and walked towards the door. A mood of repentance was on her. It was absurd that they two should quarrel so. She would go to Arthur at once and make it up. The whole thing was too ridiculous!

She went outside to the top of the stairs. The house was darkened.

She went down to her husband's study. That, too, was in darkness. No light was coming from any of the rooms.

They had all gone to bed without giving her a thought!

She returned slowly up the stairs.

It was cruel of them! Her mood of relenting was already passing away.

A passion of resentment swept through her. She was in the right. They were leagued against her.

Steeped in such sombre thoughts, she crept upstairs to her lonely bedroom.

CHAPTER V.

THE MOGSOMS COME TO BAYSWATER.

LIKE most self-made men, Mr Arthur Honeybun had poor relations; and among the poorest was his sister, generally called Mary by himself and his wife, but known to her own neighbours and friends as Mrs Alpheus Mogsom. The name scarcely did her justice; it was certainly a poor exchange for the title of Mary Honeybun, under which she had passed so many serene and happy maiden days.

Arthur Honeybun did not approve of his sister's marriage. He did not like the name of her husband. 'Mogsom' seemed to him about the limit of the name to which a Christian woman should submit, even as a payment for the protection of marriage; but, apart from that, he always thought that his sister Mary could have done better. In his view all that she had to do was to wait, and then she would have risen with his rising fortunes. He would have been willing to act generously towards her. For Arthur Honeybun carried in his own breast a picture of himself as an extraordinarily kind and benevolent person, pouring out benefits widecast over an ungrateful world. It was a continual pain to him that the world did not seem to recognise the beauty of this picture.

Mary was one of those who most signally failed to rise to this height of appreciation. After living on her brother's bounty for some years, she actually grew tired of the position. It was not that he was hard on her, or exacting in return. But Mary was a sensitive woman; and she always imagined that she saw in his

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eye a sense of the bountiful part that he was playing. That seemed to her to upset the relations of sister to brother. She craved for independence.

She was slow to go against her brother's will, and she held out for a long time. It was not until she had turned thirty that Mary came to the conclusion that it was better to wait no longer. Waiting, too, had its dangers.

So it was that when Mr Alpheus Mogsom presented himself, and made his proposal in due and respectful fashion—though perhaps in a tone somewhat devoid of poetry, and rather too business-like in its expression—Mary Honeybun rapidly came to terms. For Alpheus Mogsom at that time bade fair to be a prosperous man. He was a small jobbing builder, and he gave the family to understand that there were no limits to his ambition or his capacity. Now, builders sometimes build fortunes as well as houses. After all, there is a romance in building. The very word raises visions of castles not merely in Spain, but also nearer home. We have all known builders who have risen to greatness; and although some of them have crashed again, we think rather of those who have risen than of those who have fallen. It is an amiable preference.

Now, hope is the very atmosphere of courtship; and so while Alpheus Mogsom was courting Mary Honeybun, he was extraordinarily hopeful—so hopeful that Mary was infected with his hope; she too, for the moment, had firmly believed in palaces and castles. The little house in Fulham to which he asked her to come as his bride seemed to her in those days only the gray forecourt to the lordly mansion which she hoped to inhabit later on.

Arthur Honeybun allowed his resistance to be gradually sapped and overcome. He did not like it; but, after all, we cannot get everything we want in this world, and it looked as if he might be saved his annual allowance to his sister. It was in those earlier days when Mildred left matters to her husband, and, after all, it was his affair. So Arthur and Mildred gave their blessing to the match, sent along a silver crumb-scoop as a wedding-present, and gave them a wedding-breakfast in a Bayswater hotel. While Arthur Honeybun fidgeted uneasily on an uncomfortable seat in the church at Lancaster Gate, Mildred sat reflecting in silent misery on the sacrifice of so handsome a sister-in-law to a man with such large hands, and clad in such an ill-fitting suit of clothes.

But that was all very long ago, and now the Mogsom family had multiplied exceedingly; and all the visions of castles and palaces had long since disappeared. Building had not flourished of recent years; and it had turned out that, after all, Alpheus Mogsom was not a genius or a master-builder. Like many builders, he had

'fancied himself' as an architect, and many of his subsequent tenants had most unreasonably complained of the shape of his rooms and of the situation of his staircases. He had been accused during the proceedings of the local borough council of being a 'coffin-builder,' and that had not done him so much good as some might have expected. For there was growing up an unreasonable feeling against people who built cheap and sold dear. Yet, as Alpheus Mogsom often bitterly remarked, his critics did not seem to build anything at all, whether cheap or dear.

'They may say what they like about my 'ouses,' he said confidentially one day to a fellow-builder, 'but I reckon a rabbit 'utch is better than no 'ouse at all.'

The sad thing was that the great British public did not seem to agree with his view; and so this Christmas the Mogsom family was by no means in a very good way. There were six children, ranging in age from sixteen to two; and the little house in the little street off the King's Road was very crowded and very noisy. It was the tragedy of the Mogsom children that they would have been far happier if they had not cherished hopes of benefits from rich relations. Charlie and John, for instance, the two elder boys, of sixteen and fourteen years respectively, had always been encouraged to expect that they were going into their uncle's office. But when Arthur Honeybun had heard of this he had coldly remarked that he had no use for relations in his business. So the lives of these two boys had been soured by the excess of their early hopes. Otherwise John would have been quite happy enough in the drapery shop in which he was working, and Charlie in the little lawyer's office in Gray's Inn. But both had dreamed larger dreams; both now found themselves 'cabin'd, cribb'd, confined' by the limits of their actual life. That was not a very happy element in the household.

Thus it was that the Mogsom family gravitated round the central star of the Honeybuns, perpetually distracted by its attraction. They were sometimes deeply disturbed by some sudden interposition of Arthur Honeybun, some tyrannical beneficence; but more often sulky and angry because he did not seem to take any interest in them at all.

Already, at this Christmas time, the effect of this disturbance was visible in their preparations for the feast. There was the question always fascinatingly absorbing as Christmas drew near—up to how much Uncle Arthur would remember them in his presents; or whether he would forget them altogether. For experience had shown that Arthur Honeybun could not be exactly relied on either way. Sometimes he would send every child a 'tip'—a pound for the elders, and ten shillings for the youngers. But at other times he would send nothing. It

would all depend on his mood and his memory. This uncertainty affected the whole family. It would have been better, perhaps, if no 'Uncle Arthur' had existed at all. His very presence on the planet seemed to create in their minds a vague unrest, a fever of uncertainty. For such is our life here that a haunting possibility of good luck seems more torturing than an ever-present certainty of trouble.

'If I was quite certain sure,' said Charlie, fingering his extremely dirty purse, and counting out the little store of sixpences that had been hoarded out of his pocket-money for his Christmas presents—'if I was quite sure for absolute certain that uncle would remember us, then I could buy mother that silver brooch she looked at in the jeweller's window the other day. But as I am not certain, I can't—and that's all there is to it!'

John was more daring, ignoring the fact that on a previous Christmas he had banked on a present which had never come. 'Well, I shall take it for actual granted,' he said. 'Then I feel sure that it will come for exact certain.'

The four smaller children danced round the room, shouting at the top of their voices, 'Hurrah for Uncle Arthur!' For they had a vague idea that he might possibly hear them, and that that jubilant and friendly outcry might somehow help them.

Their mother sat sewing, looking on rather sadly, and wondering whether she could really dare to go up to the big house in Bayswater and tell her brother Arthur how great their hopes were and how beautiful they looked. Then her heart sank, for she remembered how she had been snubbed when once she had opened the subject with him, and drawn the conversation towards Christmas. She had told him in a moment of indiscretion how much they were looking forward to it.

'I don't like children to take things for granted,' he said curtly, and there the matter ended.

She had felt hurt to her very soul; and yet she remembered that afterwards some big presents had come that Christmas, and so her pain had been worth the while. But Mary Mogsom was as proud as she was poor, and she did not feel that, for the wealth of all the Indies, she could open the subject again with her brother.

Alpheus Mogsom had done very badly that autumn, and this was a very lean Christmas for the Mogsoms generally. Mary did not talk much about it, but she sighed as she watched her children. It was very doubtful whether she would be able to afford a plum-pudding for Christmas Day; and certainly she could not buy them a Christmas tree, much less waste money on all those glittering little spangly ornaments in which the children's hearts delighted. Holly was dear that year, and she did not see how she

could get any for them, although they prattled about it incessantly, and kept telling her how they had seen the scarlet berries in the fruiterer's shop over the way, and the silver mistletoe, and the almonds, and the apples, and the oranges, and all the other little delights of the Christmas season. No; she would have to cut up some strips of coloured paper, and perhaps she might be able to make them a few mince-pies. For, indeed, it was difficult enough to feed them anyhow. There were those two growing children, Bobby and Ethel, aged ten and eight, who came mid-way in the family; and the two toddling babies, Brideen, aged four, and David, aged two. How much they ate! She had got into the way of looking at them anxiously at tea-time, and wondering whether their appetites would ever be satisfied. Then their clothes and their boots! Why, they seemed to grow out of them as soon as they were bought; and the method of handing on from one child to another, though so obvious an expedient, never appeared quite to result in a proper fit. Luck always seemed to be against it. The boots that pained the feet of John were too large for the feet of Bobby; while the frock that made Ethel look spindle-legged reached the ground with Brideen.

So matters might have gone on, and that Christmas might have passed like any other Christmas, with a deeper gulf slowly widening between these two families, if it had not been that on that very evening, three days before Christmas, little David had come running to his mother all hot and fevered, and laid his flushed cheek languidly against her bosom. Full of alarm, Mary Mogsom had carried the boy up to his little cot, secured a doctor after infinite hurrying to and fro, and within two hours had come to know that the child was seriously ill. The doctor shook his head. He could not yet tell what it was. But it was probably something infectious; and he strongly advised Mary to send the other children away from the house. He might as well have advised her to send them to the planet Mars.

When Alpheus Mogsom himself came in, with that hang-dog look which he wore in times of adversity, the news seemed to break some spring of patience within the man.

'What about that brother of yours?' he said roughly. 'Isn't it near time he did something!'

'Oh, Arthur's always very good,' said Mary; for she would not hear a word against her brother.

'I daresay,' said Alpheus. 'And now's his chance of being even better.'

'What do you mean?' asked the poor, harassed mother.

'Hasn't he got a blessed palace up Bayswater way, just for him and his wife and the two young 'uns?' growled Mr Mogsom. 'Isn't there room for the kids there, I should like to know!'

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'If Arthur knew, I'm sure he'd help,' said Mary, plunging with fear and trembling, but still faithful to her brother's reputation for benevolence.

'Well, why not go and tell him? Isn't there a telephone across the way? What's the good of sittin' there with your hands in your lap?'

Mary Mogsom rose, her cheeks flushed. 'Certainly, Alpheus, I'll tell him, right away,' she said, and she moved towards the door.

There was a curious defiance about her attitude; as if she was determined to show that her husband was wrong and she was right about her own brother.

But it was not Arthur Honeybun who was speaking at the other end of the telephone when she at last got on to the number. It was the voice of her sister-in-law, Mildred, and Mary at once became very nervous. For she knew little of Mildred, except that she was a great lady and had always seemed very splendidly dressed when she met her, and extraordinarily anxious to get her a vote when she really wanted something more substantial.

So it was that with much trembling and doubtfulness Mary poured forth her pitiful story of the child's illness and the doctor's orders and her powerlessness to carry them out. She did not even dare to make any proposal as to their going into the Bayswater house. She only asked Mildred, as woman to woman, what she could do? Could she give her any advice?

Then, to her immense surprise, came an astonishing reply. 'Oh, do let me have them!' Mildred cried. 'It's just what I want! Send the whole five! If they haven't been with David, there's no danger of infection. I'll get beds for them,' she hurried on. 'We'll manage somehow. Ask Arthur? Oh, he's out at business. It's no good worrying him. I'll send the motor for them. Get them ready at once. What a happy Christmas we shall all have!'

As Mrs Mogsom put back the receiver, and leaned back from the telephone, she almost gasped from sheer amazement.

Surely the world was really far better than she had ever imagined!

CHAPTER VI.

BRIDEEN EXPLORES.

IT was Christmas Eve.

Mr Arthur Honeybun had returned home from the city; he was enjoying his lonely evening meal. On the whole he was fairly well satisfied with life. The children, it was true, had gone out that evening to a party of their own—a dance. They had asserted their independence, and would not be back till late. But, 1925.]

on the other hand, they were not dining with Mildred. That was one point scored. He had, at any rate, detached them from their mother.

Strange that such an achievement should give pleasure. But so closely are our feelings intertwined that if we will not derive satisfaction from love we must draw our water from the other well. Hate becomes very rapidly a kind of nourishment.

Arthur Honeybun put down his knife and fork, leaned back in his chair, and gave a sigh of satisfaction. Dennis the butler moved noiselessly to a position behind his master's chair, and silently refilled the emptied glass. Honeybun had not wished for any more wine; but, finding his glass filled with his own best Madeira, he drank it. He now felt warmer and more amiable.

He began to reflect.

How unreasonable women were! Here was Mildred, the luckiest of wives and most fortunate of mothers, a woman whom most of her sex would envy. Yet how she had wrecked her life!

He had asked only one thing of Mildred. She was to give up her public life. Why not? She had plenty to do at home. Lonely women—spinsters and widows—they could do what they liked with their lives. But wives? Clearly their first duty was to their husbands. Mildred, for instance, had promised to obey him. She had disobeyed him. She had broken her word.

'*This freedom!*' Why, this was not freedom, it was license! It was sheer neglect of obvious duty; at any rate he could not be accounted an accomplice. The children could not accuse their father.

He looked up at the index figure of the date displayed in large lettering capitals on the mantel-piece calendar—DECEMBER 24. Yes, it was Christmas Eve. The date somehow made him uncomfortable. 'Peace and Goodwill.' Shepherds watching their flocks!

He could not wholly banish from his mind that unpleasant speech of Tristram's—'I loathe Christmas!'

Yes, the children did accuse. They accused both. It was very awkward—and very unfair of them. But there it was. It was just like this new generation. They had no proper respect for their elders.

Whose fault was it? Certainly not his. Entirely Mildred's. How obstinate she was! Why did she not give way? It would, of course, be gross weakness for him to give way. He would be sacrificing a principle. He could never do that. Nothing could make him do that. Women never understood principles.

So Honeybun sat there over his wine, feeding his hungry heart on hatred; telling evil with every assurance that it was really his good;

hugging to his breast the tempest of his soul. How laboriously we strive to make havoc! How eagerly we embrace ruin!

Arthur Honeybun took a cigar out of his case and slowly lit it. As the pleasant fumes rose to his brain he began to see life a little more cheerfully. After all there was something to be said for independence. He was master of the house—or at any rate of his own side of it. He could call his soul his own. He could, for instance, sit here and smoke in peace. His eye shifted lazily round the large warm room. Since his wife's secession he had risked some changes. He had, for example, shifted some pictures to new places. There was that little Corot. He had given it a place on the sunny side of the wall. Little fancies of an emancipated manhood. Slight in extent—but how precious!

He turned his eyes towards the door. Something was always going wrong with that door. It would never remain shut for long. Now, for instance, it was slowly swinging open. Yet he could swear that it had been fast shut only a few minutes before. He must get the carpenter to see to it.

But now it had swung completely open, and into the room there stepped a very small figure—a little girl in bright blue pyjamas, carrying a large doll with staring eyes. She stood and gazed at Honeybun. 'Hullo! It's Uncle Arthur!' she said very slowly.

Thus addressed, Arthur Honeybun leaned back in his chair and blew a cloud of smoke, for all the world as if he had seen an enemy and wished to interpose a smoke-screen.

'I'se Brideen!' said the figure in blue pyjamas by way of explanation—as if her uncle did not know only too well. Then she came nearer to him. 'I want 'oo to see my doll, what Auntie Mildred's gived me.' She confidently laid on his lap the very large meditative object that she was carrying.

Honeybun had at last achieved some slight recovery of dignity. 'And what on earth may you be doing here?' he gasped.

'May I get on your lap?' was the only reply; and there was no arguing with a command so courteously framed as a request.

'But I thought you were in Fulham with all your brothers and sisters?' fairly groaned Honeybun.

'We're all here!' responded Brideen with a comforting nod.

'All here!' It was a cry of the heart.

'Yes, ain't it fun?'

The Mogsom children were often sadly guilty of such vulgarities of speech—and Arthur wincingly recognised this one as a final proof of identity.

'Yes, David got the fever—and so mummy rang up auntie—and auntie says, "Come 'long." So we comed.'

She capped this veracious summary with a

reassuring nod, which almost seemed about to remove her large head from her little body.

'All in this house?' cried the hapless master of his own house, fresh from a survey of his own sovereignty.

'Yes; there's Charlie and John in one room, and Ethel in another, and Bobbie and me in another. And it's all so clean you can't think.'

But Honeybun could think.

His great life scheme—to keep the Mogsom family down in Fulham—had been shattered all at once.

So this was Mildred's counter-stroke!

Here they were, a garrison in this citadel; already established and entrenched. Doubtless supported by Mildred.

'But what are you doing down in the dining-room?' he now faintly asked.

The young thing was totally unconscious of any note of wrath in his voice. She nodded to him confidentially, and dropped her voice to a whisper. 'Just explorin'.

'Exploring what?'

'Auntie's house.'

'But it's my house!'

'Yours? I thought you was dead.'

'Me dead?' he inquired, regardless of grammar. For the idea seemed to him atrocious, insolent. He dead! And the world going on as usual?

'Aren't you really dead?' She spoke with a flattering air of personal interest, as if the subject really interested her. She stroked him with her hand.

'Can't you see I'm alive?' He now spoke with some irritation.

'What do people look like when they're dead?' was the little person's slow inquiry, delivered with scientific calmness.

'Why did you think I was dead?' he replied evasively. For it suddenly occurred to him that this was a part of Mildred's infernal plot.

'Well, nobody said nothing about you. That generally means people's dead.'

Honeybun gasped. There were two sides to this life of independence.

'But if I was dead, why did you want to see me?'

'Don't dead people like to be seen?'

'How should I know? I'm not dead!' He spoke defiantly.

Brideen began to straighten out her little body with a view to descending from his lap.

'Then I must go and wake up Ethel and Charlie, and John and Bobbie, and tell them all about it.'

'But why?'

'Because they all think you're dead, and they were very sorry about it.'

Well, I'm glad to hear that at any rate.'

'It was all 'cos of their Christmas presents.'

'What?'

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'They said you couldn't give them Christmas presents 'cos you was dead.'

'But I'm not dead!'

'That's what I want to tell them. So dood-bye.'

She began to move towards the door.

'Are you going to leave me?' he said. For somehow, on seeing her go, a great sense of loneliness and desolation swept over him. After all, the child was company.

'You see, I'm really in bed,' said the child.

'How's that?'

'Well, I slipped out and comed down here. But they all think I'm in bed.'

'How on earth have you managed to escape?'

'Cos of Christmas stockings. They're all filling the Santa Claus stockings in the kitchen.'

'How do you know?'

'Cos I peeped!'

'How on earth——'

'I slipped downstairs just to see if Santa Claus was really and truly comin'—and then I seed them in the kitchen, through a chink. So I comed back—and then I seed a light here, and comed in. That's how it was.' She nodded reassuringly.

'Really, I must scold auntie——' he began, but the words died on his lips.

The little person leaped with joy. 'Oh do! Do come and scold auntie! I do want to see you scold auntie!'

He gazed at her in astonishment and perplexity. It was certainly a strange desire.

'But you mustn't really,' she went on gravely, 'cos it's my fault, not auntie's.'

Brideen took one step outside the door—and then suddenly she turned and ran back across the room to him. She buried her head in his lap and began crying. 'I'se frightened,' she said. 'The stairs is all black. Brideen can't go up alone.'

'Be a brave child.'

'Carry me, uncle. Carry me upstairs. Like as you did at home, last time you come.'

Deplorable precedent! Miserable weakness!

But there was nothing for it but to go with Brideen. For Arthur Honeybun had a very soft spot for children; and this child was now thoroughly frightened. She clung to him and sobbed convulsively.

'Oh, uncle! Do carry me! Do carry me! It's 'cos of Santa Claus. I don't want to meet him!'

'But he is a dear old gentleman.'

'Auntie says he don't like naughty girls; and I've been so naughty!'

'It was a bit naughty of you to get out of bed.'

'Yes; that's why you've got to carry me.'

So he carried her, pickaback, in the old, old fashion of carrying, very slowly and gently up the stairs.

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There was a light at the top of the stairs. They could see it glimmering; it sent a faint sheen down the dark well of the staircase, where the electric lights had been shut off by careful hands.

They could hear voices. Brideen's little body trembled.

'I'm sure it's Santa Claus. He'll be so cross wiv me.'

The voices grew louder. Brideen began to supplicate. 'Please, Santa Claus, I'm so sorry!'

'All right, old girl,' sang out Honeybun, 'he'll forgive you.'

His voice was quite changed. It had a new ring. He crept up the last staircase on tip-toe. The voices were coming from one of the bedrooms at the top, and one was shrill with fear. It was Mildred's.

'Oh! Where is she? Where is she? I left her comfortably in bed! Oh! What shall I say to her mother?'

Before Honeybun could say anything, Brideen piped a reply. 'I'm tumming; I'm tumming. Uncle Arthur's bringing me!'

They were at the door of the room. Arthur Honeybun paused with his burden, and stood gazing at the scene.

Mildred and Alice were standing at the foot of one of the little cots. In the other, by the window, little Bobbie, aged ten, was slumbering peacefully.

Alice, who had been enlisted for Santa Claus, was standing with her arms full of portentous stockings, fat and swelling, like amputated legs afflicted with monstrous tumours. She and Mildred were evidently at the first stage of their Santa Claus pilgrimage.

Then Mildred suddenly caught sight of her husband carrying Brideen. She turned and eyed him fiercely and angrily. 'Oh, Arthur! Why did you take her away? How cruel of you—how cruel!'

Arthur let the child slide down from his back, and stood facing his wife, smiling, but still defiant. He was too proud to defend himself.

But Brideen in her little blue pyjamas tripped across to Mildred, and began fondling one of her hands. 'Please, auntie, don't be cross with uncle. Please!' She clung to her aunt. 'Please, I did it myself—all by myself,' went on Brideen, as if she was reluctant to lose the credit of so bold a deed. 'I wanted to explore,' she explained. 'That's why I gotted out of bed.'

'Take it as you like, Mildred,' said Arthur doggedly. 'The kid's right.'

'Really and truly?' asked Mildred, looking down at her with eyes that were now less hard.

'Oh, do just what you like about it,' he said. But insensibly his voice seemed to be returning

to the old notes of their early wedded years. 'She came hunting for me in the dining-room—just like Iris in the old days.'

'Like Iris,' repeated Mildred more softly.

A silence fell on the nursery, while Mildred slowly picked up the little thing and kissed her. Brideen opened her little arms and threw them round Mildred's neck. 'Kiss him too, auntie,' she said; 'he's not been naughty, like me.'

'Hasn't he?' said Mildred, slowly leaning to the child. 'Are you quite sure?'

'No. And he isn't dead; least he says he's not.'

'Dead!' echoed Mildred with a cry of fear. 'Who taught you to say such dreadful things?'

'You never told me he was alive.'

Arthur Honeybun moved a step nearer to the two. His eyes were just a little moist. 'Would you mind very much if I was dead, Mildred?' he asked.

'Oh, Arthur!' she cried, and hugged the child more closely.

'Give him a tiss, too,' echoed Brideen; and her voice was already muffled with sleep. 'Give him a tiss, too; he's very good.'

Arthur was quite near now. He was stroking one of Mildred's hands. 'We've been great fools, Mildred. Children teach one a lot.'

Mildred slowly carried the child across the room and put her in her cot. She covered her up with the little blanket. Then she stretched out a hand behind to Arthur. 'Come—look!'

she said. 'Isn't she like Iris when—when—she was little?'

'Yes; and when—when—we were young.'

She turned towards him with both hands stretched out. 'Arthur!' she cried, 'we are still young enough to love one another.'

She slid into his arms.

Then, as they stood there, the voices of the Christmas carollers came up from the street:

'Fear not,' said he; for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind;
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.'

There were voices on the stairs.

'Do you like that song any better to-night, Triss?'

'It's pretty rotten.'

'Oh, Triss; let's look in and have a peep at the children.'

'I don't mind.'

They were at the door of Brideen's room. There they stopped quite still, gazing in wonderment at the scene before them—their father and mother so lost in this new discovery of one another that they were unconscious of their children's presence.

Tristram was the first to move. 'Let's go down,' he whispered; 'they'll like to be alone at first.'

'Do you like the song now, Triss?'

'I could sing it myself.'

THE CALL—NEW YEAR'S EVE.

BUGLER, what is the call ye sound

Through the mystic hush of the air?

Stir not the depths of the brooding calm

That hallows the earth like a prayer.

'I sound for the days that shall come no more,
For a ship that drifts from its mooring shore;
I sound for the fights that were nobly won,
For the good complete, and the good begun.
I sound for the hopes that have conquered
fears,

For the joys that memory still endears;
And I sound for the failure, the sin, the
wrong,

That silenced ever earth's triumph song;
For the waste of days, and the petty aims,
And the self that deafened the finer claims.
'Tis the 'Last Post' rings through the
midnight gloom,

While the dead year slips to the past's gray
tomb,

And I sound for the time that has ceased
to be,

And is gathered into eternity.'

Bugler, sound ye a call again,

Through the quiv'ring hush of the night.

Shatter the depths of the holy calm,

And awaken the utmost height.

Sound for the days that are yet to be,
For a ship that starts on an unknown sea;
Oh! sound for a quest that shall seek and
dare,

For a will to conquer earth's weight of care.
And tell of a vision, newly born,
That shall pierce the mists, to the waiting
morn.

Sound for the breaking of cankering chains;
For a brother love scorning the ancient
gains;

For a purpose, knitted through all the hours,
In union finding unbounded powers.

'Tis 'Reveille' now ye shall call to earth,
Till our hearts awake to a strange, new
birth;

Ye shall sound for a time that is yet to be,
That shall lift us nearer eternity.

G. HADGRAFT.

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THE FAN-SHAPED COACH.

By G. APPLEBY TERRILL.

CHAPTER I.

I CONFESS that I should have been pleased enough if the Chevalier de St George had ascended the throne of Great Britain as the result of the risings in arms, of the late year 1715, which were made for the purpose of putting him there. For when I was a boy I was taught to have affection for his House (and I was presented both to his uncle, King Charles, and to his father, King James); and, although I had never set eyes on the Chevalier by 1715, and, in the busy, voyaging life that I pursued in the years when he was changing from a little child to a man past twenty, had given but the scantiest thought to him and to the question of whether he was like ever to be called home from abroad to wear the crown that had been his father's, I yet had heard sufficient of him, from divers of the many persons I met with, to set me very much in his favour.

From temperately-speaking men (as distinct from frothy fellows) who were friendly to him, I learnt that he was a prince of much true piety, of most excellent honour, and of the very finest bravery in battle, which three qualities would ever incline me to wish success to any gentleman possessing them. And from like temperately-speaking men among his opponents I seemed never to hear worse of him, as a man, than that his understanding was very dull and slow, and his humour very silent, oft melancholy. Now, since a man doth not choose his headpiece and his humour for himself, I saw no reason why I should feel aggrieved against the Chevalier for possessing the kind which he had. And as for politics arguments against him being our King, well, I never took heed of politics—even when, with my voyaging finished, I was settled down upon my estate of Blore March, in Staffordshire, and was become, somewhat to my surprise, a Justice of the Peace.

I did not ride out to strike a blow for the Chevalier in the events which have made the closing months of 1715 months to be remembered. I deemed myself bound in honour not to raise hand against the King who was on the throne, George of Hanover. Whether I should have rode out, had I been free, I very honestly cannot say. I think that I should have. Yet two things, when I reflect, make me doubt of it to this day. One thing is that, from first to last, I had not much belief that the risings could accomplish anything, save the ruin of the gentlemen engaged in them. The other thing (which, I fear me, hath a very selfish
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look) is this. In 1715, by the September of which I was forty-five years of age, I lacked any true appetite for a perilous enterprise of insurrection, being come to pleasant days of ease and comfort, after a life that had been pretty full of hardship and danger.

I was put to the sea in 1682, when I was twelve years old, and orphan of my parents, being taken into the King's ship *Robert* (then in commission), a first-rate of the fleet, commanded by my uncle Assheton. In due time I passed through two fairly notable battles with the French, that near Beachy Head in '90, and that of Cape de la Hogue in '92. Some months after the latter, having no liking to fight against our driven-forth King, James, which I was doing by fighting the *monsieurs*, I gave in my officer's commission, and joined a private discovery voyage to the coasts of Patagonia. Being arrived back from this in November '95, after twice coming very near to losing my life—once from a sickness, and the second time from our vessel being wrecked on its passage home, at St Jago, Cape de Verde—I turned to merchant-trading. And for the next seventeen or eighteen years I made divers long voyages in one and another of the ships which I had an interest in, being a capable ship's master, and thinking to help my affairs to prosper by voyaging thus—though, what with the wrecking of several ships under other masters during the period, and with other losses, I had made little profit by the end.

In 1700 I myself was shipwrecked again—upon one of the islands of the *Ladrones*, where I and those that lived of my ship's company stayed three parts of a year before we were taken off by a Portuguese vessel. In July 1704 I came to extremely bad feeling with the Chinese at Canton over a question of harbour duties (which species of tax, I confess, would sometimes put me in a hot temper); and, they seizing me when I was ashore, I was thrown into one of their prisons, and kept in this captivity for five months, never knowing but that I should be killed by these people within an hour. The offices of those excellent friends of mine, the Portuguese—they of Macao—eventually procured my release.

I was in other dangers and difficulties besides these; wherefore it will not be hard to understand that by the time I was come to the year 1713, in which I inherited the great estate of Blore March, and a considerable fortune with

it, from my uncle Alost (died February 6th, 1712-13), I had had more than enough of that thing which the romance books and novels do call 'adventure.'

'Twas in the latest summer of '13, I being but recently landed from (as it proved) my final voyage to Chinese seas and back, that I walked into the house of Blore March as its possessor. I sat me down to smoke a first pipe beneath my roof; and, having given some grave thought to my uncle, who had sat here before me, I reflected, then, that I was come into a strange, quiet world, very different from the world of sea-tempests and wranglings, with a little fighting thrown in, which was all that I was accustomed to.

Reflecting thus, with my land around me, and my youth gone, I felt, of a sudden, inexpressibly glad that everything pertaining to turmoil and danger seemed fallen behind me, and that only quietness seemed before me. I felt that all I desired from life, to maintain me happily content, was to pass my years in walking and riding about my land, learning of tillage and such unknown matters from my men, and perfecting my knowledge of such, and seeing my estate prosper as under my predecessors, with my tenants—whereof, counting the wives and children, there were above an hundred and fifty—happy in their lives. And—except for a very considerable particular that I shall come to anon (and save that I maintained, and even greatly increased, my holdings in certain ships—also to be spoke of later)—I was enjoying the fullest content in following my existence thus, when, towards the end of September 1715, the first breath of what was afoot for the Chevalier drifted to us in Staffordshire.

To begin with, it was nothing more than a report that a nobleman in Scotland, the Earl of Mar, had banded certain of his friends together and very boldly declared for the Chevalier—and sundry of my neighbours with whom I had formed acquaintance (some of them not unfavourable to the Chevalier, some much against him) and I conversing of the new-come report, we all had no other opinion than that the Earl of Mar had acted in the maddest way, disast'ring himself and his friends together.

When, however, in the course of days, the news came in hot-pace that my Lord Mar, from being at the head of a fistful of friends, was now at the head of a big army (thus 'twas said), and had took Perth and divers other Scottish towns; together with which news were bruits that various English gentlemen (they who subsequently were commanded by Mr T. Forster, of Ederstone) were *rendezvousing*, or already had formed a force for the Chevalier, in Northumberland or Cumberland, or a little beyond the Border—when such news and bruits came in, then, as I suppose was natural enough, it was thought by the more susceptible of my neigh-

bours that there was vastly more in the business than we could even yet estimate, and that we might well expect to see all Scotland and England flame up for the Chevalier, and King George go sailing off for Hanover. But I and many others did not alter much from our opinion that the Government was sure to prove too strong, soon or in a little while, for its adversaries. And even when, after an interval, there came the extraordinary intelligence that Mr Forster, with a much smaller force, had routed, in wildest disorder, somewhere near Penrith, a Government army of above fifteen thousand men ('twas declared), under Lord Lonsdale; whereby matters looked to assume a pretty rosy colour for the Chevalier—even then, I (with others agreeing with me) could not get it out of my pate that the risings were but an untrustworthy flame that the Government would presently tread out. And—no need to say—I was not weakened in my misgiving by later tidings that my Lord Lonsdale's army—so called—was an army of constables rather than anything else; since, though it contained some troops of militia, it was made up largely of honest *Posse Comitatus* folk, who, with extreme good sense, took to their heels upon seeing some of Mr Forster's men draw their swords.

Ay, I have some doubt that, had I been free, I should have rode forth and put a bit of white in my hat, and cried 'Hey-y-y-za! for King James!' (the Chevalier), as more than one of my neighbours did upon sure news of Mr Forster having a force in the field, and having the Earl of Derwentwater and various such considerable gentlemen with him. Ay, I doubt. None the less, I verily was unrestful and chafing through the long weeks of it all.

I would move about my fields, striving to employ my thoughts with the good harvest crop lately taken from this one; and with the question of whether I should plough up yonder one (twelve acres of grass) against next spring—but my thoughts would go falling-off to the gentlemen who, more like than not, had cast away *their* fields (that the Government would sequester), and probably their lives, by being out for the Chevalier. I truly had no wish to cast away my life or my fields. But it was not my habit to keep out of danger when persons who were of my way of thinking anent the matter concerned might be very pleased to have my help in the danger. And—whether I should have entered the game or no—I chafed vastly at not being able to please myself in the business. Yet I had only to look back upon certain meetings which I had had with King George—upon one meeting in particular—to see most clearly that I should be the shabbiest fellow in the world to please myself—if pleasing myself meant that I should fight against him.

Long before this disturbed year of 1715, in 1680, when I was a child of ten, I was taken

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by my uncle Assheton, one December day, murky and very rainy, into King Charles's palace of Whitehall. My uncle told me that he wished to present me to a young stranger Prince—then visiting the King—with whom he, my uncle, had some acquaintance. And in one of the presence chambers Mr Assheton led me to a short, smiling young man of about twenty, who, when I had kneeled and kissed his hand, took me gaily by the ear and said something foreign, that I knew not the meaning of; but afterwards my uncle told me that this pleasant young Prince, after saying that I looked a rogue, had asked me, for fun, whether my schoolmaster or my uncle Assheton did beat me the harder.

Now this Prince, who received me thus amiably, was Prince George Louis of Hanover, who, some four-and-thirty years later, became George the First, King of Great Britain.

I was to meet with him again ere that—though long after our first meeting. In the autumn of 1707, having occasion to see a German banker, and learning that he was gone to the higher Rhine country, to the army commanded by the Elector of Hanover, I journeyed thither, reflecting idly on my road that this Elector of Hanover was that Prince George Louis who, many years ago, had nipped my ear in Whitehall.

At the very end of my journey I came to dispute with a Hanoverian military officer, over the stabling of our horses, at an inn. He being of vigorous temper, and I much the same, he slashed my cheek with his riding-rod, and I his with a stirrup-leather, almost in unison. Whereat he pulled out his sword, and I my sea-hanger (which in those days I carried in preference to a more polite blade); and I doubt not that we should have made the sparks fly prettily in that Rhenish stable-yard had not our intentions been stopped by the sudden entering of some considerable officer, accompanied by numerous attendant soldiers, who, in a very fury, had us instantly arrested.

Pondering, in the next hour, that things might go very uglily for me, and being able by this period to speak the ordinary German tongue well, I spoke with the officer of the soldier-jailers who had charge of me, telling him that I was known to His Serene Highness, the Elector, his commander—and broadly hinting that I was a person of much more distinction than was disclosed by my passport. Of which the immediate effect was that I was given paper and pen, that I had asked for; and the officer undertook to deliver to George of Hanover the letter that I purposed to write—which thereon I wrote, begging to recall to His Serene Highness my uncle Assheton, and myself as a child that His Serene Highness had received in Whitehall.

Within two hours I was conducted very
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civilly to the Elector, in a house not far away, finding him very changed in appearance from the young man of twenty-seven years before, whose smiling face I remembered plainly—his face now being pouched and lined and vastly ill-tempered looking, plump enough withal, yet much older seeming than I had expected.

Looking at me, a tall, burly man, very browned, he—as was natural—knew me from no one. But he had some recollection of my uncle Assheton having brought his boy nephew to him at Whitehall; and when I asked, under favour, to recall to him that he had held my ear and named me for a rogue, he nodded after a moment, with some slight good-humour about his mouth, saying that now he quite remembered this, and that the rain was beating hard upon the windows at the time—which verily it had been.

Then, asking me of Mr Assheton, and moving his head sadly when I told him that he was two years dead, he turned to my affair, and said that I must not strike any officer of his, because it 'was not good,' but that, this time, he was very pleased to free me from arrest. With which, shaking his head, not unamiably, to stop my thanks, he dismissed me.

Knowing what sharp fate may come to a man, especially if he hath but a citizen's coat on his back, for drawing on an officer in war-time, I considered that, as like as not, George of Hanover had stood between me and death.

When, as King George of Great Britain, he came to London in 1714, I failed not, in gratitude, to ride down from Staffordshire and procure a new presentation to him at one of his early levées. And he remembered me well over the seven years that had passed, giving me several pleasant words in German before I bowed from him to make room for another.

Within a few weeks—though I scarce can think that King George had any finger-tip in so small a matter—I was appointed one of the Justices of his Peace in Staffordshire.

I might have proved myself a very breaker of his peace, but for that matter in the Rhine country. Because of that, I truly could not go out against him.

Moving about in my fields in October, and then in November, days, perhaps keeping my eyes at times upon the vast, lovely prospect that I had to the west, by south, of me, showing the hills of Wales, I would much occupy myself with wondering what latest news evening might bring of my Lord Mar's and Mr Forster's campaigning to the north—news that would be sent by some of my neighbours, or brought to me by some of my tenants, or, most copious and untrustworthy channel of all, would be carried to me by my stablemen on their return from the alehouse. Faring about in my fields thus, I had little expectation that I should be drawn

any closer to the events that were on than I was then.

CHAPTER II.

THERE was a girl—a young Spanish lady—at Cheripe, near Panama, that I had thought to wed when I was a young man.

She died.

I never cared two nails for a woman after that—for very many years. Indeed, what from memory of the one that was gone from the world, and, anon, from reaching a time of life when an unmarried man is apt to consider himself of the sort that goes through life unwed, I never gave thought to the subject of caring for another woman—until I had been some three months at Blore March. Then, commencing a little before Christmastide, 1713, the thought manifested itself, and steadily increased, in my mind.

'Twas this thought (being the 'particular' that I said just now that I would come to) which prevented me from deriving full content from my life at Blore March. To be honest, had I not deemed, through the best part of two years, that the thought (seeing what lady was concerned in it) could lead to nothing—wherefore, I told myself, I should be as foolish, if I let it sorely trouble me, as though I let myself be troubled by yearnings for some paper maid in some romance book—had I not deemed this, the thought would have distracted me very completely and very anxiously from my fields.

But before Christmastide '13 I was three-and-forty; and the lady whose face had fastened in my mind was of most considerable youth, not above seventeen, I would have said.

I confess to have stopped and looked at myself in a long mirror soon after I had seen her—with a sense, as I stopped, of it being plainly unfitting that, in this great house of mine, there was no lady to gaze into this mirror, far more suited for her diversion than for mine.

I saw myself as a spare-faced man despite the burliness of shoulder that I carried with my tallness. My hair, which was my own, unpowdered and fastened in tiewig manner—for I hated perukes and such fancies—was pretty dark still; only here and there was a thin line of silver. My face had the brown from sun and sea that I think 'twill never lose; and my eyes were somewhat markedly bright blue—the which had caused several persons to ask me ere this whether, pray, it was indeed true that following the sea did turn a man's eyes sea-colour, since mine were 'most extreme blue.' (And I believe that there is something in this supposition; for I think that my eyes were more gray than blue when I was a child.) Looking at myself, I debated

that, with Blore March and my money behind me, I doubtless carried guns enough for most women's hearts, providing these ladies were not rich, or over young. But—and I shook my head decisively—I carried no armament for bringing down the flag of the young lady I had begun to think of; who would look for some brilliant young spark to come into her life, and would not care, in her youthfulness, whether he were rich or no (unless, in the latter case, her relatives forced her from him to a rich man; a thing I would never countenance). This young lady, moreover, was unfriendly to me, to begin with.

She was the sister of my immediate neighbour, young Sir Charles Brueton de Haye, of North March, baronet—whose lands and mine touched with so indefinite a boundary line at one place, on the north edge of Blore March, that, in my first conversation with my late uncle's attorneys, upon my inheriting, I was told of a roadway and a field that were disputed between the two estates, which road and field I might lose to Sir Charles Brueton de Haye, did I take the situation too easily.

With a very reasonable wish to lose no territory, if 'twere mine, and knowing nothing then of my neighbours, I instantly asked the attorneys to test the matter at law, and to make a sharp fight of it (unless this might prove foolishly wasteful of money). This course they entered upon, and the fight was but in its early stage when I had my first sight of my neighbours, who came only at intervals from London to Sir Charles's seat of North March.

'Twas near the disputed roadway, of a dull December afternoon, that I saw them—I coming out of a wood on my land, they standing on a field of their own, looking at the roadway, and speaking of the enemy, I doubted not.

I stood and pulled off my hat. Sir Charles, after a hint of hesitation, pulled off his hat fairly civilly. Then, since he offered not to speak, I went on my way, carrying my hat for a little. Before me, in the dimness of another wood that I soon entered, I saw the picture of the two very plainly as they had faced me from their field—he a youth of twenty-one or so, slight, personable of feature, with a heavily-powdered peruke and a delicate straw-hued coat, a cloak on his shoulders, and black boots on his legs; she, Mistress Brueton de Haye, looking of the youthful years that I have told of; slight, dark-cloaked and neck-scarved against the cold humidity of the afternoon; her hat black and unlooped; her eyes and face and hair all colour and beauty below her black hat; the face slender, pink of cheek; the hair red-gold colour, much nearer gold than red, and of the bright, clear look of the very metal when 'tis polished; her eyes—whereof I had noted the sweet hue before anything, though she stood eighteen or twenty yards from me—of a rare

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colour, that I had seen but once or twice before, with all my wanderings. They were the blue of that little viola flower which is often called the violet.

They, for all their sweet hue, looked at me with very level unfriendliness. For, of course, though this young lady and her brother had never before seen me, both knew me at once—as I knew them—and had not I attacked them at law? I reflected of that with considerable regret whilst I made my way down a wet woodland path, seeing the picture of my young antagonists as I walked; but I felt 'twould be the better course not to interfere with my attorneys, but to have the matter fought out. Afterwards—if I won—I could go to the extreme length of making a gift of the field and the roadway to Sir Charles if I cared to. So no harm need be done.

I met them again that week—on the road to Drayton; they being on horseback, two more ladies and a gentleman with them; all making a company pleasant to see, the ladies being most prettily garbed in riding-coats and laced, looped hats—her hat being well-nigh all black, though, showing the brightness of her hair. I, on foot, uncovered and stood aside for them, Sir Charles saluting me. But she, though knowing 'twas for the ladies, and especially for her, that I stood at the road edge, looked before her as though I was not there. My only other sight of her in that December was outside the church at Drayton on Christmas Day. But I knew then that she did not see me—she being about to enter into Sir Charles's great coach with the two ladies and the gentleman that had been with her previously. Sir Charles, however, who had lingered to speak with the Parson, met me face to face, and, saluting me, spoke a word of the weather with very decent mien.

Some mornings after, one of my men told me that Sir Charles and 'the young lady his sister, Mistress Henrietta,' had drove away to London, where they were like to remain for the rest of the winter. The tidings gave me a little blow of disappointment. Indeed, they so took from the pleasure with which—as ordinarily—I was facing the affairs of the day, that they gloomed this day for me. For even at this early time of my acquaintance with the face of Sir Charles Brueton's sister I had begun to think very frequently of her, verily.

In the evenings, pacing up and down, smoking my pipe, in front of one of the big fires which warmed my house, I would ponder for a space on matters of my estate; and perhaps, for a little, on bygone December nights that I had passed at sea—cold, tempestful nights, or warm and calm, much according to the latitude—I would ponder thus; and then, very surely, I would think for a time of Sir Charles Brueton's sister, with her eyes of violet hue, and her red-gold hair, shown bright against a black, or well-nigh black, hat. I would think of her

with her brother and their guests—whereof, doubtless, several were with them—a happy-spirited society, I could be sure, in North March house now, separated from me by woods and fields and darkness, yet but two straight miles from me. I would wonder what diversions they were at; would wonder whether Sir Charles and I would soon fall into such acquaintance that (with each of us ignoring the law matter) he would invite me to his house, and present me to his sister.

Thus the sudden news of their setting out for London, which postponed for months the chance of a closer, neighbourly acquaintance, rendered me quite shrewdly disappointed. During the next ensuing day or so I could have found it in my heart to leave Blore March for a little while and visit London myself. But there, where doubtless Sir Charles's sister and he would be in a very sparkling and modish circle, I should find it extremely difficult to advance my acquaintance with him. My elderly self—roughened of manner, of voice, of visage, by many adventuring years—standing amid the delicate and youthful company that he would favour, would verily prove of no interest to him. Besides, what good if it did—since his sister, Mistress Henrietta, as my man had called her, was so near being a child, compared with me, and so rich of beauty, that every one must laugh at the drift of my thoughts anent her, did these thoughts become known?

So I stayed at Blore March.

In the early spring of '14 they came back to North March—the news of their intent to arrive by a certain day preceding them by some weeks, and setting me to look eagerly enough for the day. But their visit was a short one—perhaps because of the considerable rains. I saw her but once—in a coach; she looking from the window, and knowing me from no one, or making as though she knew not who I was and even knew not that she saw me.

I saw her brother thrice or four times, on his land, near the edge of which I confess I often went. And the last time, facing each other across the disputed roadway, but making no reference to it, with each of us careful, I think, not to put boot on it, for fear of assuming proprietorship, we spoke for above ten minutes—of spaniels, whereof four were with him, of horses, and of the quality of the soil in this part of Staffordshire; parting with amicable salutes.

Two days after, to my great regret, I was told that he and his sister were set out for London—though they were like to be many days in getting there, from the roads being soft. Sir Charles did intend, I was told also, to buy a very light little flying-coach for these journeys. And later I heard that he had done this.

Before they returned to North March, in the summer, the law matter was decided in my favour; and 'twas plain when I met them, all

of us on horse on the Drayton road, that they felt bitterly of this. As I passed her—I hat in hand, ahov in my saddle, with no air of victory, forsooth!—her eyes, of such violet blue, gazed straight and angrily into mine, not knowing me in a manner, yet challenging me as to which of us should look in steadiest enmity. Perceiving which, I verily would not fight her at it, but looked before me, knowing withal that her brother had given me the very coldest of acknowledgments, that scarce amounted to a notice of me.

I had debated, since winning my ground, that an offer to Sir Charles to divide it equally with him would be an excellent way to settle the matter between ourselves, with no sting left on either side. But after that cold greeting, I thrust the project from my mind. I was not going to seem vastly accommodating to a lad of half my age, who showed himself unrespectful, whether I was deep in love with his sister's face or no. That was no habit of mine.

And—though I wished otherwise—I gave him but a short, clipped salute on the ensuing occasions when our paths met; on some of which occasions his sister was with him, with perhaps a company of others; she unseeing of my bow. His salute would match mine—and I know not when our greetings would have improved in warmth, had I not encountered him, after a space, in a street in London, whither I had gone to wait upon King George at his levée which I have spoke of. Upon this meeting, as is the habit of persons when they encounter where they did not look to, he and I recognised each other with more heartiness than customarily (which our case certainly needed); and we stopped and spoke for a minute of the aspect of the town, very full.

From London I journeyed west to Bristol to see an old friend, the master of one of the vessels that I had an interest in. I cared nothing for sea-trading by now; but, as I have said before, I had increased my holdings in ships—having even totally bought one extremely fine vessel, the *Adela*; though my present journey was not to her master, she being, indeed, on the other side of the world. The reason why I, wearied of sea things, had money in ships was—if 't be worth telling—that thereby I thought to aid sundry long-known friends, merchants and sea-masters, to better their fortunes—and I thought that I should not lose much by the business.

From Bristol I rode by easy stages back to Blore March; and very enjoyingly I trod my fields and my wood paths after many weeks' absence from them, within which weeks I had trod, in Bristol river, a ship's deck, and smelled pitch and salt cordage, and thus had come very close to my late life—and had felt very happy that I was done with it.

My satisfaction to be home was much added

to by my learning that Sir Charles and his sister were expected to be soon at North March—and when they came, and he and I encountered, ahorse on a road, we pulled up our horses and conversed with very reasonable civility.

From then, and onward through the year '15 down to the time when all was becoming astir with the risings, my acquaintance with Sir Charles Brueton continued much thus—a minute or so of civil converse on occasions, and nothing more. My acquaintance with his sister was little nearer a beginning. Midway through the summer of '15—most of which season they passed at North March—she took to noting my bow, when she rode by me with her brother, by a little bend of her head. But never did Sir Charles, when she was with him thus, rein in to speak with me. And should I be near the road-way against his land, to which I very often walked for a sight of her, for a word with him, which I sought because of her (though verily I could find no hope that anything would be led to)—and should she and her brother presently approach, with spaniels about them, she, ere her brother came to pass a word with me, would saunter aside, as though she had said to him, 'I will leave you two to speak together.'

Thus—and very purposely, I could not help deeming—was a presenting of me avoided.

Since the avoidance seemed wilful, I did not ask Sir Charles to take me to his sister—considering that anon he would find himself bound to, unless he would assume the position of very openly affronting me. Moreover, I had no wish that, at this time of semi-affront regarding her, he should guess the colour of my thoughts anent her—whrch would make me look a very baffled figure.

But it happened that on a sunny July day, when I met him riding alone, and should have expected his sister to be with him, I asked him, in natural manner, of her health. And thenceforward—believing that I disclosed nothing more than common courtesy—I inquired of her when she was not with him; he replying in ordinary fashion. I suppose, withal; that on the several days when she sauntered apart, leaving him to speak with me, my eyes drifted towards her when they should have been on Sir Charles's face; and it may be that my words to him were a little absent at moments because my mind was engaged with her—who, in this summer of 1715, had reached nineteen years of age (so my friend, old Squire Oliff had told me—proving me right to the year in my first appraising of her years). At this age of nineteen she seemed, in a way, less separated from me by years than when I first saw her—she scarce out of childhood then. But I had no hope, that I could see.

I must suppose, then, that in various ways I revealed something of my thoughts; for the matter came up, to my very astonishment, amid
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kindred matters which Squire Oliff told me one evening, late in August, when he had rode across to smoke a pipe and drink some of last year's October ale with me.

I discovered that Oliff was much set against the Bruetons on my account; and he told me things that I certainly had not suspected of—which things, however, having the bright colour of youthful raileries, caused me none of the anger which Oliff had looked for.

Oliff, indignant-faced above his ale-cup, had questioned me in this manner. Pray, was it not time that some one told 'Mr' Brueton (Oliff's loose, country term for Sir Charles) and his pretty sister that I, their neighbour Assheton, had not been the sort of merchant that sat tight in his shop all his days—which they, though they easily could have learned differently, did appear to think—from what Oliff had lately heard? Was it not time—asked he—that they were told that I, who had fought as a sea-officer, had passed all my days as a sailor rather than anything else? Whereas—quoth Oliff—it had come to his ears that Mr Brueton and his sister did laughingly call me 'Tom the Teaman,' and wondered whether I did always give good weight of tea.

At this—to Oliff's own surprise—I laughed. 'Twas such a pretty, youthful, unkind quip! I could see the faces of the two—hers with its eyes of violet, and its red-gold hair about it—laughing, maliciously (because of my law victory), merrily, over the quip. And what grave faces they had kept before me!

It was strange, if a fact, that they should believe I had seen no more of the world than from my shop or warehouse door. Yet I could much understand this; for I had talked not of myself to Brueton, and very little of myself to other neighbours (save Oliff) whom I was more intimate with; which other neighbours, moreover, were no close acquaintances of the Bruetons. No one in Staffordshire knew much concerning me, except old Oliff, who had known me when I was a boy, and had seen me at intervals of years in London—and he rarely visited the young Bruetons; finding (he was wont to say) their house sad without their father, who had been one of his friends.

Ay, I laughed—seeing the laughing young faces, so straight-featured, and generally cold, to me.

Then cried Oliff, somewhat ill-pleased with me for my unlooked-for laughing: pray, was it not time that the Bruetons, who thus snuffed me for a teaman that pinched weight, were told—if they had never heard it—that I stood better than they for family, seeing that my mother was the Lady Bridget Alost (married the Honourable Francis Assheton), daughter of the second Earl of Dereham, whose forefathers, and Mr Assheton's, too, were full barons long before any Brueton de Haye was a baronet?

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Said I, baronets were not made in England in those early days, I did believe.

Which, together with the warm strength of the October, put Oliff in a hotter fume, so that he inquired without ado: pray, did I know that Mr Brueton had said to more than one person that he believed 'Tom the Teaman' was after his sister, but verily 'Tom' shouldn't have her if he were thrice as rich as he was; for, though he (Mr Brueton) called his sister 'Mrs Teaman,' to anger her for frolic, he meant to see her make the greatest match, for her face was worth it?

This was truly a pulling aside of the curtain!

I turned my eyes from Oliff, and stared through an open window at a space of grass in the yellow light of the low evening sun, and marvelled that my young neighbours had so fathomed me, and so composed their demeanour before me that I little guessed of 'Tom the Teaman,' or, verily, of 'Mrs Teaman.'

And then, for one or two reasons, I felt extremely glad that I had been found out. Here was the scene finely cleared for action—mused I, turning a clay pipe in my fingers. The young lady was even used to being named 'Mrs Teaman,' and there seemed some advantage to me in that, despite that the name angered her, and that, doubtless, she laughed very much in her anger. And then (and I straitly questioned Oliff on this) it seemed that Sir Charles, in fleeing that I should not have his sister, had not set my age as a mark against me. Something in my favour, that! And actually, on this evening which might have dismayed some men, I experienced my first little, though 'twas but little, hope of Mistress Brueton . . . I would give the young twain action, now that the decks were cleared for it! I would speak in very direct fashion to Sir Charles when next I met with him; would bid him ask me anything of myself that he cared to know; and would ask him whether he found any reason which should justly keep him from presenting me to his sister.

But on the next three occasions that I saw him (his sister with him twice) he was riding with sundry persons that were his guests at North March. And then came the news of the uprising for the Chevalier; and soon I heard that Sir Charles, being a captain of the North Staffordshire Horse Militia, had ridden with his troop to join one of the forces that the Government was raising.

CHAPTER III.

MOVING about in my fields in October, and then in November, days, I had (as I have told) little expectation to be drawn any closer to the events which were on.

The first occurrence of anything contrary to

my anticipations (though it counted for nothing at the time) was the arrival to me, on Sunday afternoon, November 6th, of a warrant, with which, I found, I, as a Justice of the Peace, was to have conducted the arrest of a near neighbour, Mr Sabine Thorntoun, 'in case he should join with the conspiring persons in arms in Cumberland'—some of the Chevalier's people, no need to say.

The warrant was well-nigh a month late in getting to me—through the bearer of it having had a most grievous fall with his horse, from which he had lain without his senses in a cottage for above three weeks, he told me, appearing very sick yet. And Mr Thorntoun had slipped away to join Mr Forster's army many days before I saw the warrant, I was extremely pleased to know.

There had been many preventive warrants of this nature flying about the country, but this was the first that had come to me; and I examined it with some curiosity, noting that I could have called upon the nearest militia to aid me in the arrest, and could have taken Mr Thorntoun to 'any convenient jail.' Then I put the warrant in my pocket, and anon laid it away in my writing-case.

And during the ensuing days, in which, hot-pace and persistently, by far the most important news yet came to us in Staffordshire; namely, that Mr Forster, Lord Derwentwater, and various lords, and others, with a Scots-English army of excellent numbers, were marching into Lancashire, and like to fight a pitched battle with one of the King's generals (Mr Wills, 'twas believed) at any hour—during those days I thought at times with considerable envy of Mr Sabine Thorntoun, who was playing his part in these brave matters—brave matters, however they should end.

On Friday, a little before dinner, some of my men, labourers and stablemen, ran to tell me that a clamour was everywhere that the 'rebels,' as they called them, had beat the King's men, and burned Manchester; and in a little while Oliff, who had hand-galoped over to give me much the same tidings, was telling me that the actual report was that Forster had swept to the winds five or six strong horse regiments and Preston's crack regiment of foot, all under Mr Wills, and had carried Manchester by one vast assault, led by a Scots gentleman, Lord Charles Murray.

Oliff and I drank a glass of wine to Murray and Forster. 'To brave men, and hang politics—and Whigs!' quoth Oliff.

But soon after dark there came a new report, denying everything.

And on the next day, Saturday, some very different news reached us; it being that Mr Forster's army, which ('twas said) did not amount to two thousand men, was gone for refuge into the town of Preston, with everything looking very black for it, since the King's generals were

chasing after it like hounds. ('And no bad name for them—meaning no more than that,' quoth Oliff, who was with me for an hour.)

Thinking very heavily on this news—though truly I never had expected much better—I walked that afternoon to the roadway by Brueton's land, though with very little hope of seeing his sister, for sight of whom I went there. I had not seen her since Brueton left; but I knew that she was at the house still; with her aunt, a Lady Nair, dwelling with her for company, I had been told.

I have not expressly said yet that throughout the days I was passing in my fields, pondering of the campaigning, she held her great place in my thoughts—for this, if it needed telling, could be better understood at this stage of what I am saying. In my fields, whether I was labouring to fix my thoughts upon my land, or letting them pay off to the wide prospect and the Welsh hills, or letting them have their drift and fall right off to the campaigning, she, with her eyes of violet hue, with all the sweet qualities of her face, was moving here and there with my thoughts, now showing herself clearly, now dimly, now clearly again—always with them.

Well-nigh daily I went to the roadway—finding the great field beyond, with woods at the far edges of it, across the grass of which she and her brother had frequently walked with their spaniels, empty and desolate. I looked to find it desolate this afternoon as I set out for the roadway.

It was a dull, most cheerless afternoon—cold, silent, with the atmosphere so motionless as I rarely had known it to be. Mists were hanging over the ground in places, and specks of moisture, very near to snow specks, settled upon my cloak at times.

Thinking of Preston town, and of the gallant back-to-the-wall fight that Mr Forster's men doubtless would choose to finish themselves by, I could have wished very easily that I was with them—foolish, well-nigh sinful, though the wish had been. It were much prettier to end thus, thought I, than to live to be mocked of a young lady, who with little doubt would continue to mock me, however hard I might strive to change her mood—and presently would wed with some youth that she would liefer speak love to than mock!

Truly, what with Preston, and Mistress Brueton, and (maybe) the curiously gloomful weather, I was very out of spirit on that Saturday afternoon.

And then, when I had been by the roadway but a moment, I saw her. She came from the skirt of a wood, and began to pass along the field. She had two very young spaniels on a string; and they, straining and crawling to follow some scent, were drawing her aside as she walked—drawing her towards the roadway; she not looking at this, but to a distance, as in

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thought, and seeming not to heed that she was being drawn.

When she was not far away I moved with a scrape of my heavy boot, lest she, who was unaware of me, with her face much from me, should be startled to discover me when close. She looked, and, though gathering the dogs somewhat, continued on, so that she would pass me. She bent her head to my bow, and then looked directly at me from not many yards off. And a complete new turn to my thoughts—astoundment and the veriest consternation for her—was caused by the aspect of her face, as I saw it now. Her pretty colour of cheek was so nearly gone that she looked white. Indeed, methought that the only pinkness in her face was that close under her eyes, which, I was instantly convinced, had come from heavy weeping. Her eyes, of their sweet violetness, regarding me for an instant, looked larger in her face than I had ever noted; and her lips had a similitude of a droop, strangely like that of an old woman's lips, though verily they looked young enough.

She hesitated in a step—I was sure—while our eyes were meeting. She had meditated to ask me whether I could give her latest tidings from Preston, I knew. But she thought better of it; and, firmly drawing the spaniels to a straighter path, she passed me, holding her cliin cocked a little, as though to inform me that if I believed to have discerned misery in her face I was vastly mistook.

That her misery was for her brother, who had seemed so much her companion, I could not doubt. Yet I felt sure that he was not killed, or even wounded. For 'twas understood in our neighbourhood that the North Staffordshire Horse Militia had not yet been within miles of a shot—whereof there was some laughing. 'Twas possible that they would be sent against the enemy at Preston—and I supposed that this was the cause of her suffering. I looked after her, wishing that I might speak some comfort to her, but not daring to go to her to tell her that I deemed foot rather than horse soldiers would be employed to storm Preston—which was a very reasonable belief.

Presently—she gone from my sight—I turned homeward, feeling that (sheerly for her sake) I ought to have spoke with her, assuring her that she grieved much beyond cause. For, whether Horse Militia were employed or no in the assault on Preston, which must be looked for, the King's soldiers were like (alack!) to overpower Mr Forster's men by force of numbers and of better equipment with no great trouble, and consequently with little loss of men.

Through Sunday, the next day, November 13th, I scarce remembered Mistress Brueton as the young lady who laughed, or was angered, anent 'Tom the Teaman.' That was too inconsiderable a thing to be thought of beside her
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face as I last had seen it, with its pink clouds by the eyes, and its drooped lips; and when, very late at night, some of my men brought me news of Preston—that there had been the desperatest battle during the past night, with the King's soldiers beaten back, and part of the town afire—I hoped with all my heart that none would bear the news to her to wreck her night's sleep.

Then, lighting my pipe, and drinking a glass of wine to the brave boys at Preston (with the intensest hope, though, that they had not hurt Brueton), I gave deep thought to the position of these same lads and their leader, Forster, wondering whether, and trusting that, they had now made a chance for themselves to cut their way through to, say, Scotland, to find safety with Mar's army (this very day engaged in a big, muddled battle, though I could not know this).

Ah, also I did not know that by this hour 'twas *actum est* with Forster and his lads—that, during this Sunday, their surrender had been agreed on, and that within a few hours all, save those who had escaped out of Preston, would be prisoners of Mr Wills, King George's general!

I knew nothing of this till I was roused from sleep, a little better than three o'clock, on the Tuesday morning following, by my butler, whom someone had waked with the tidings. Being verily in no mood to sleep after this, I dressed in part; and presently drank a little ale and ate a crust; then smoked, and, in my sorrow for Forster's people, hurled bitter maledictions at Mr Wills. Then, with the commencing of daylight, I pulled on my boots, and, with my head aching, walked forth into the cold, still grayness of the day.

Anon—though with no object at this hour—I turned to make for the roadway by Brueton's land. I had gone not many paces towards it, when I stopped sharply, lifting my head. I had thought that I heard something most strange on that little road (private, and rarely used)—the rolling beat of several horses' hoofs. Ay! 'twas that I did hear now. Three or four horses—and—? Ay, there was a cart or a light coach behind them. I could plainly catch the sound of it. I stood, hearkening. Those nags were covering the ground!—thought I. Fast voyaging—but the road was pretty hard. Fast voyaging!—thought I, vastly perplexed. And then there was a thin, far-travelling 'crack!' with a great jarring, dragging sound; and a woman had shrieked—very clearly.

Swiftly, despite my boots, I ran to the road.

CHAPTER IV.

THE first thing that I was conscious of seeing as I stepped out of some bush-border on to the road was a coach, which was by far the prettiest I ever had beheld. Quite small, with its

curved roof seeming to stretch to twice the length of its lowest base; with its front and back sloping deftly, prettily inward all the way down from roof edges to base, it looked, sideways to me, for all the world like a part-opened, thick-stemmed fan standing against the sky, leaning a little because—as I saw next—its back wheel-bar was broken, with the wheels tipped towards each other.

Painted a deep blue colour, with red here and there, as the daylight was fully broad enough to show, this little coach was, I knew, one of the kind built for match-racing. Marvelling, in my first instant or so of seeing it, as to how it had got upon my roadway, I did not connect it with the little flying-coach that I once heard Sir Charles Brueton had bought, and, sometimes since, had heard of the speed of, though I never had seen it. Now, however, looking past two horseboys in jockey-caps, who were busied with the traces and reins of four horses which they had freed from the coach, I saw, beyond, Mistress Brueton standing, and her brother with her.

Between my stepping into the road and my seeing them, scarce any time had passed—and in the moment that I first looked towards them it seemed to me that Sir Charles suddenly moved in a most queer way, as though to go behind a horse out of my sight. Then—perhaps from knowing that I had seen him—he moved from the horse rather than to it, and gave me a nod of his head, drawing off his hat for an instant in honour of his sister.

He was not in militia clothes, as I should have expected, but in a simple, dark journeying-garb, with a tiwig on his head. I noted that his face appeared somewhat curiously pale; and then, looking rather at his sister than at him, I descried, with much inward astonishment, that she was well-nigh as white and unhappy of face as on Saturday afternoon last past—despite that here she had her brother back from the war. I instantly discovered myself thinking that no coach mishap could, of itself, distress her to this degree—and withal, methought, in her gaze at me, which was very long, there was something . . . ay, verily there was! . . . something of great apprehension—as though 'twas an ill thing, and she knew not how ill, that I had discovered her brother and her.

Now, I had seen uneasy situations and apprehension in many parts of the world—and perhaps I was swifter to perceive signs of such, and to appraise the signs, than most men. Whether or no, I knew confidently now that much more than the coach was amiss here—that something else was pretty wrong indeed. It was so hard to think of any circumstance that should render Mistress Brueton alarmed to see me, and make her brother minded to dodge behind a horse, that all I could hit on (and it seemed just possible) was that Sir Charles, being new to war, had followed the

cautious example of my Lord Lonsdale's men, some short time since, and had run on sight of the enemy—which conduct in a militia officer brigaded with an army was like to bring very bad punishment on him.

It was very difficult to credit that my young neighbour—always proper enough in bearing heretofore—should mislike musket fire and sword cuts to such an unlucky extent. Yet, in the moment's reflection that I gave to the matter, I could strike on nothing else to account for the signs I had discerned. Sir Charles—thought I—was in mind to make haste to London to get under the protection of powerful friends who would take his side against the military people, who perhaps already had sent in pursuit of him—and, being brought to a stop for a time, he, and his sister, too, had no taste to see me, who, for all they could tell, might already have come by knowledge of his case.

Thought I, these young persons might be no worse for an older pate to advise them—and I went very readily towards them; though, so far from snatching at this chance to meet with the lady that I so long had desired to speak with, I would rather have slipped off among the trees; for I wore no neckbands—only a kind of foot-pad's scarf; and I had no hat, and my hair, uncombed from my pillow, was part out of its riband, and about my eyes. And, worst of all, I was not shaved.

I perceived—and secretly smiled a little, thinking on how these twain had formerly masked their thoughts before me—that Mistress Brueton's and her brother's faces went very straight and calm and careless before I was quite reached to them. But she was breathing markedly beneath her cloak; and in her cheek, as she looked aside at a horse that had stamped, I saw a little beating movement, which no one could have misread the uneasiness of.

Sir Charles met my eyes with a touch of a smile on his lips, though it was no happy one. When he spoke I found that his voice had a queer, quiet sound. A weakness from fatigue, perhaps from sickness, too, thought I—for his face, at close quarters, looked utterly weary; sick also.

'Here are intruders on your road, Mr Assheton,' said he, trying to be light.

'Oh nay,' I answered. 'Did not I ask you to use it as your own? I wish it had served you better than to break you.' I moved some paces with a careless air and surveyed the broken wheel-bar. 'You have no other light coach?' I asked.

'No,' replied he.

'And I have nought but a thing heavy as a ship, that was my uncle's,' I said. 'So you were best go ahorse, if you are in any haste—and do go alone.' (By which last I made reference to his sister.)

'Ay, I think it must be horse—if I can

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master him,' he said. 'My arm and leg are hurt—and turned stiff since I rode in this morning. But it may be I can master him.' He spoke, however, with a plain reluctance which seemed more than hurt limbs did warrant. And his sister, thinking me intent with the wheel-bar—and verily I had no thought to spy on her—looked swiftly at him, shaking her head and moving her lips, for no, he must not go ahorse.

At once turning my eyes from her, and seeking to occupy them for a moment, I brought them to the coach doorway. The door being some inches open, I saw part of the coach's interior.

I was surprised to discern a curious plenty of lady's cloaks—Mistress Brueton's pretty cloaks, of course—lying in a heap with a number of small, silk-covered ladies' boxes, violet of hue, sewn with silver; the whole being mixed with some heavy travel-wrappings, and all taking up some space in the little coach. I was surprised but for an instant, though. Then I recognised a trick that I had seen played before—and played with astonishing success more than once. Mistress Brueton—who wished not her brother to go ahorse—had intended to journey with him; and presently she would have covered him with the cloaks and wrappings, belike setting some of her pretty boxes atop of these, and opening them, and playing with her ribands and her letters which they would contain. And should any soldiers or constables, or road-watching persons of any sort, look into the coach, they would see but a lady voyaging alone thus; and—doubtless with the horseboys primed to say easily that only a lady was there—they probably would be content, unless (if actually they were looking for Brueton) they recognised his sister. Then, indeed, 'twould be *actum est*.

Thought I, this mode of travel made things look deadly wrong—though it might only mean that Brueton had no road-pass (without which a man travelling, in these suspicious days, was like to be hindered, and even arrested, on his journey); or that, if he had a pass, he wished to leave no trace of his road by showing his name to the constables or the magistrate's *posse* that would be pretty sure to stop a horseman at places.

I looked at Brueton. I was not inclined to hang in the wind over this morning's matter. If young Brueton was in bad difficulty, the sooner things were advanced to a clear understanding, the better. I moved nearer to him. There was no need for the horseboys (who had gradually gone some little way off with the horses, and still were busied with them, and moving on) to hear our converse—however much they knew.

'Have you a pass?' I asked. 'They'll question a horseman.'

It was very plain that my words hit him. His face, by his eyes, twitched. He answered

my look as though to inquire what business this was of mine. Then he changed his intention, and played light, with a touch of a smile again. 'No,' he said. 'And I got home very amusingly without one.' 'Twas the gayest thing, Mr Assheton. We were four times barred of our road, called on for passes—I and they that were with me. And we rode the pigs over into the ditch every of the four times, man! We were half-a-score strong, you see.' And then, quite of a sudden, he lost his smile—as though he deemed to have spoken too much. He looked along the little road, glanced at his sister, then slowly pulled a long, laced kerchief from his pocket, and touched at his face with it. I saw that there was something of sweat on his face, despite the considerable cold of the morning. This sweat seemed extreme evidence of his uneasy state, for all that fatigue and some pain might have helped to it. And, apart from a very natural eagerness that I felt to serve his sister through him, I at once felt a vastly increased wish to serve *him* in his distress—this lad of a neighbour of mine, who had been a sorry fool in some manner.

I determined to advance things at fastest pace. If, in the strangest fashion, I had read signs all wrongly—well, 'twould only mean that I should look a very fool. I was quite pleased to run the hazard of that. 'I think you are in no condition now to ride men over, Sir Charles,' I said; 'since you are alone and stiff from hurts. I can write a pass for you—I've that authority. But I well-nigh think it will be better if I get on a horse and share your road with you—and do the talking to those we meet with.'

I saw amazement in his face. His lips were parted with amazement at my unlooked-for words. Yet there was much in his face that seemed to tell me that I had not misread any signs, but was in the right channel. 'Look you,' I said, 'I am a Justice of the Peace—and I am very ready to oblige a neighbour, and a lady, his sister, whom perhaps I should oblige thus.' I took not my eyes from Brueton, though I had spoken of his sister. 'Look you,' I said, 'you can do much worse than to have a Justice riding with you, helping your road.'

I had heard his sister—close to us—take breath very sharply, in surprise, when first I spoke of riding with him. Soon thereafter I heard her take another, sharper breath, with plainest apprehension in it—because I had said (perhaps with marked weight) 'Justice of the Peace.' I *knew* 'twas because of that—and knew that she, believing now that I was aware of everything, did think that I was leading up to say that I did intend to hold her brother under arrest. And from seeing in Brueton's face a hint of dismay, and then a look as though he would spring upon me, taking the place of his first amazement, I knew that his thoughts

were the same. So, very wary for a spring, or even for a pulled-out pistol, I kept my eyes on him and strove to shape my words more assuringly. 'You can trust me for a true neighbour in this,' I said. 'I'll force a road through for you if't can be done—which I think should be easy enough.'

I saw his mien turn a little better. He scanned me—thinking in a way, I could perceive, of a certain helpfulness that might come from my height and breadth of shoulder, and face—which was no softer than most sea-captains'. But he scanned me very doubtingly, and then gave a sudden show of that peevishness which you will find in a tired, hurt man.

'Pray, why should I need you to force a road for me?' he asked.

I shrugged my shoulders; looked aside at the coach, leaning like some strange great blue-and-red fan athwart the cold morning sky; then looked again at him. 'I scarce know the best way to say it,' I said; 'but to my eyes there is some trouble that may make you glad of a swift, unhindered road.'

He moved an arm quickly, with a very angry light in his eyes. 'On my word, neighbour Assheton, you're a vastly peeping, unwanted fellow!' said he, breathing fast.

'Oh ay; we'll speak of that later,' I said easily. 'How long can you afford to stay anchored on this road? Let's think of that.'

He eyed me, still very angrily. Then he put his kerchief to his face again, whereon was new sweat visible. I moved my lips to bid him sit for a minute on the grass by us, but ere I could speak he looked at his sister; and doubtless her eyes gave him some message, for he pulled off his hat, and, going back a pace and making his bow to her, said, 'Mistress Brueton de Haye, pray give me leave to lead my neighbour, Mr Assheton, to you.'

I made my bow, lacking hat, lacking neck-bands, lacking all seemingly tidiness, with my heart feeling to beat harder than ever before in my life. I was forty-five years old; but in this moment I was being made known to the lady whose sweet face had been in my thoughts for well-nigh exactly two years; whose voice—save that a few minutes since I had heard it cry out—I might say that I never had heard.

Verily, as I lifted from my bow, and she, rising from her courtesy and lifting her eyes from roadward as she rose, looked full into my eyes when she stood—verily, then, with us two giving each other our first acquainted gaze, I felt glad as a boy. And answering—though with no rude boldness, truly—the straight, natural gaze of her eyes, of their lovely violet hue, I could almost have forgot the affairs of her brother, standing near us, had not her eyes, for all their naturalness, contained a distress and other qualities that told of her thoughts of her brother.

Very fully she looked at me, seeming to choose what her first words to me should be. And then, with a little beat, such as I had noted in her cheek, visible by her mouth now, she said, sweet-voiced, very simply, 'Sir, my brother is in extremest peril of his life.'

'Madame, by your favour,' I said, and smiled a little for her reassurance, 'tis a very common thing for a young man. I can't think it ever does much harm to him, if he will but ride fast and lie quiet till the cloud is blown over. I have asked your brother to carry me with him on his road. I believe 'twill be best. Would not you advise him to this, madame?'

I had seen her face show much surprise at my easy speaking; had seen—I verily believed—the littlest gleam of new-born comfort in her eyes. But upon my question, her eyes, looking at me, became very troubled and doubting; and I was aware that she drew breath in an unhappy way. She looked, with her red-gold curls agloss below her black hat, at her brother, who stood, frowning a little towards the horse-boys and horses (now at a stand forty yards off), saying nothing. Then her head moved again; and her eyes, in her well-nigh white, sweet face, were meeting mine once more; and there was that straining little beat by her mouth, as though soon she must burst out into wildest tears—though her voice was admirably steady.

'Sir, 'tis so hard for me to say,' she said. 'If I do say wrong, if I do say "let my brother go with you," and you are stopped on your horses, and he is took—his life *can't* be saved!' She shook her head for that, looking at me the while; then looked along the road, her eyelashes (dark as if her curls had been black) moving.

I nodded my chin pensively. In truth, things seemed deadly wrong. And I was silent for a moment, reflecting on my Justice of the Peace *status*, wondering what 'twas worth to help me bully my road through to London with young Brueton. I deemed it was worth a lot; and, verily, I was no new hand to bullying my road to places, having found much practice in bygone years, when my passport lacked sanctions that should have been writ on it. Besides, thought I—and I whistled under my breath—I would horse a dozen of my men as a kind of *posse*, that need be no more gentle, if necessary, than Brueton's late companions, which he spake of, had been. (These companions, I presumed, had bolted with him from Mr Forster's muskets.) . . . Ay, with my Justice ship and my *posse*, I should get Brueton through.

'Madame,' I said; 'Sir Charles, also. By your favours, have you any other way left for the journey than by a big, slow-paced coach, in which Sir Charles would lie hid under cloaks'—the breath of surprise, which was well-nigh a speaking, which she drew at that, and a mutter from Sir Charles, paused me for an

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instant—'than by coach,' said I, 'or by Sir Charles going ahorse—taking some of his landmen with him, if you like—but liable to be stopped at that? Have you any other way?'

'No,' I heard Sir Charles say. And she shook her head to me for no. At which, 'Madame,' I said to her, 'you have shown me truly that 'tis hard for you to advise; and I think 'twould be little fair of two men to seek an answer from you. So, if I may have your leave, I will settle this with your brother.' Whereon, turning my face to him, I said, 'Brueton, your life is hanging on it. That card is shown—plain. Come you down to my house, and I'll horse you and a dozen of my lads, and we'll set off. And,' said I very hearteningly, 'I can't think we shall be the easiest people in the world to stop.'

He was regarding me with certainly no anger in his face now—with friendliness, so far as his indecision and uneasiness would let him show it. Holding his hat, with his tie-wig pushed to one side, he was wiping his forehead and temple with the kerchief, his arm giving a nasty, quick tremble twice or thrice as he did this. I knew it was his unhurt arm, from the other, which he had not used for drawing off his hat, being held with noticeable awkwardness—so 'twas plain from the twitching that he was very broke; so broke that doubtless our converse itself was telling on him badly.

'I am very obliged to you, Assheton,' he said, low-voiced, with a hint of a smile. 'I deem you are vastly honest, and unbelievable kind to Mistress Brueton and me. But—but——' and then, just as an ague will take a man, his peevishness took him. 'But this is no better than windy talk when you're safe on your own ground, man! Don't you know there's blackest danger for *you* in this, if you go, like a thick-pated fool? Why, if some of them which are bent to lay me—Wills's soldiers—are got in front of us—but I believe not a man of them is—they'll be like to hang you up to a tree, and hazard it, for finding you aiding me! There's death-danger in this, my dear Assheton. How would you shape when you saw that coming at you, horrid—looking certain death—making your vitals seem *being pulled out of your mouth* . . . and your body seem being pulled to the ground . . . so that you scarce could stand? . . . How'd you shape? You don't know what *that's* like—I doubt? I do!' He moved a little, limping of his foot, and leaned his back against the coach. 'I do!' he said, brokenly, peevishly, almost in anger with me, one of his arms and a leg twitching badly.

I smiled. I could not help it, for all his suffering; and maybe something in my mind was telling me that a smile would help to steady him. 'Sir Charles Brueton, man!' I

said. 'Why, you're not hesitating from me for that, are you? For fear I'll not shape well in a stiff pass? Oh come, man,' I said, with some impatience; 'I was getting my hat blown off by French cannon bullets before ever you were born. And I don't think there was a year 'twixt then and my coming here to Blore March when I didn't meet some sort of danger, asea or ashore, in some part of the world—uglier danger than cannon bullets, of times. So I can't think that I'll run away and leave you to shift for yourself if we see a redcoat—if that's what you're mistrusting of!'

He was giving me the veriest stare of astonishment. Yet I could see that he was tending to believe me fully—perhaps because it was suddenly plain to him that there were imprints about me (apart from my sun-darkened, sea-browned complexion) which vouched for my words. 'But, Assheton,' said he—'I thought—'twas said—. The lawyers—over this road—and some other people—said you were a merchant. I *have* heard it thought, and said by some, that you have been on sea-passages. Ay, I have. . . . But I knew not how true . . . or how far . . . or thought of danger.' He wiped his face, very weakly; then smiled at me with some brightness. 'On my word, you look a man for danger, Assheton!' said he.

'I am no man to stay on this road looking for danger, when I know not what's coming behind you, Brueton,' said I. 'You've delayed here enough—and so have I, if I am to be with you. Now, come to the business. Will you try for it with me and my men?'

He looked past me to his sister. Then, looking at me, he moved from against the coach, nodding. 'Ay,' said he; 'and I hope you may get me through.' Then turning, and opening the coach door wide, he took out a little leather box, that could go behind his saddle—his money and such things in it, doubtless.

'Tis from my house that we'll set off,' I said. 'I've horses enough—no need to say. Yet call to those boys of yours to go home and saddle a horse for you against your coming there. No harm in their not seeing too far past their noses.'

Which order he gave (meaning not to go back to his house, of course); and I faced his sister, her eyes coming to me at once. 'Madame,' I said, 'will you make your farewell with your brother here? Or will you most greatly honour me by coming with us to my house to see him up in the saddle?'

'I will come, sir,' she answered.

And forthwith we stepped from the roadway and made across a little space of grass, heading for the wood, through which a path led down to Blore March house—I instantly discovering that Brueton limped most sorely; whereon I took his box from him and set my arm beneath

his to aid him, finding him very ashake. 'What are the hurts?' I asked.

'Carbine balls,' said he. 'I think one is still in this other arm. I don't know. I've had no leisure for a surgeon.' He smiled a shade. 'It doth ache extremely—perhaps 'tis bound too tight.'

'I'll look to it before we're away,' I said. 'Better a half-hour's delay for that than to ride any slower from you being in pain.'

But verily I was nearer to whistling than to speaking, for his saying 'carbine balls.' Twice hit—that had not quite the sound of running from the enemy.

'You know of wounds?' he asked, looking curiously at me. 'Ay, but I suppose you would, from what you told me a minute past.'

I nodded, aware that his sister, on my other side, also was looking at me. 'Ay, I've played surgeon—and wounded man, by way of a change,' I said. And then I turned my thoughts to two points that were best cleared up with no more waste of time. 'Where do we ride for—London?' I asked.

'London? Nay! What good is London?' he said, his arm giving a kind of impatient quiver in mine. 'I must get over the sea. From Hull, or from some Lincoln harbour where I can find a ship. For the coast there, by the Humber, we were making.'

'Brueton!' I said, well-nigh angry, for his sake and his sister's, 'twould have been the maddest thing, man! You would have been stopped and held till any one that wanted you could find you—if you had asked for a passage in a ship. Don't you know that every east England port down to London is sure to be stopped tight now that the Chevalier's things have exploded up—to catch any of Forster's men that have got clear of Preston? Some are clear, I was told—and they'd all go east, to get to sea, knowing that the Lancashire ports, and all the nearest Wales harbours, are stopped beyond any hope.'

'Nay, I had not looked for that,' he said, his arm twitching in mine. And I was conscious of having heard his sister, by me, take a sharp breath such as she had more than once taken this morning. 'Then I cannot tell where to go!' Brueton said, in a half-hopeless way.

'I can better tell if I know the state of your matters,' said I, thus coming to my second point. 'To London, if you have high friends there, may be the right course. But see, I know nothing, Brueton—save I think you left your regiment without leave. I must know the whole to act my best for you.'

He gave me a queer stare, his eyes strangely dismayed. 'Why, I think I have believed that you saw all of it, since you saw so much,' he said. 'If you haven't seen—why, I expect you'll turn against me for knowing!'

'Fiddle-faddle, boy!' answered I.

He wrinkled his forehead—hesitated; and then his sister spoke. 'Sir, my brother put off King George's coat and went across to the Chevalier's side—to Mr Forster. My brother is one such as you spake of—that escaped out of Preston. He escaped out on Sunday evening—and Mr Wills, that was his general before, will greatly hope to have him caught, and then killed, for changing his coat.'

'Twas a pretty surprise indeed that she gave me by these words—and twice as dangerous as ever before did Brueton's state appear. And yet, in a way, all seemed very plain and easy sailing now. 'By your leave, madame,' I said, 'Mr Wills is welcome to his hopes, for I think he will get nothing beyond them. I think we shall beat him—and there's no man I should be happier to disoblige than that fellow. But truly it must be sea, not London, for your brother—and the farther to sea the better, perhaps.'

'I thought to go to France, or to wherever I shall find the Chevalier himself,' said Brueton.

'Oh nay,' I said. 'Strive to save North March. The Government will take it from you if you go to join with him. If you keep from him there's a bare chance that you'll save it. . . . And since 'tis sea for your brother, madame,' I said, turning my face to her, 'here is the fortunatest thing that could be. I have a ship, all cleared for sailing to America, and thence to the China seas, in a port that will scarce be watched. This very week, madame, I was to write a letter to her master bidding him sail. No need for a letter now, since I shall take your brother to her and put him aboard.'

I felt Brueton pressing my arm against his body in a glad, trembling way, which moved me very considerably by the piteousness of it. 'Assheton, you are a very friend to me!' he said. And his sister, giving me a sight of her eyes for an instant, then passing me to walk before us—for the wood path, which we had entered upon, had narrowed—said, 'I do thank you more truly than I can tell. . . . I had thought to have my brother near; but now I am glad that it will be far—America—China seas; for he will seem very secure from enemies. . . . I thought him no better than dead when the tidings came—was't Saturday?—that Mr Forster was in Preston with small hope left; for I knew my brother was with him.' (Whereby she made me think of her face as she walked with the spaniels that afternoon.) 'I believe I have scarce slept since. I believe I have had no true hope till in these last minutes.'

'All is true hope now, madame,' I said, gazing in the dim light of the wood, at the red-gold gleam of her hair betwixt her black hat and her slim dark-cloaked shoulders as she walked before me. 'By to-morrow night I should get your brother to the port and into my ship. Then

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away to the wide seas—fair seas that he will enjoy to look on, madame; and, beyond them, he can go to land and dwell in one of the towns that I will tell him of, while you do write to him of what is being done for him here. 'Tis a fair prospect, madame.'

I saw her head move in assent; felt Brueton's arm hold mine the tighter. Then asked she, 'What is the port that you ride to?'

'By your great favour, I will not tell you, madame,' I answered; 'so that, if any persons come to North March asking for your brother, you can say, untroubled, that you know not whither he is gone.'

She turned her head the veriest shade, looking through the trees. 'I deem you do think very wonderfully for my brother and me,' she said; and then held on her way silently whilst Brueton told me a little of Preston.

He had been in the regiment of a Scottish gentleman, one of the many with Mr Forster—the Brigadier MacIntosh. And through Saturday night, defending (it seemed) a kind of barricado across a street, he had been in as intense a fight as any man could wish for, getting his two wounds and caring no whit, with Wills's men, who were striving to carry the streets of the town, being beaten back everywhere, and accomplishing nothing save setting fire to houses—and drawing out of the town at last. But on Sunday morning, with another of King George's generals, one Carpenter, joining Wills, with some strong dragoon regiments, Forster and several of his lieutenants had no thoughts but to parley anent surrender, though 'there were hundreds of Scots men and many English (Brueton among them) that would have fought on to the last.' Brueton knew well enough that surrender meant his death—within a few minutes of Wills getting him; and 'twas the long parleying of that Sunday which 'put the trembles' into him. But towards evening he and others spoke with 'some honest Preston girls,' who later 'got them out,' telling them where to go to look for horses—which presently they found. And he, with the others sharing many miles of his road (after which they scattered), rode for North March.

CHAPTER V.

IN the library at Blore March Mistress Brueton chose to remain with her brother, rather than go to another room, whilst I looked to his arm—which matter, having given him a strong cordial, I swiftly worked at, finding the wound very simple, with the carbine ball gone from it.

I most thoroughly vinegared the place (for all Brueton's wincings), stopped it, and bound it, and withal saw to his leg, which had nothing worse than a ball-chipped ankle, in not above eighteen minutes—during most of which time

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his sister sat away in the window, very white, with a little glass of wine by her that she would not touch; she looking sometimes down at the horses gathering outside, sometimes at her brother, and sometimes at the sea-shells and weapons and pieces of China ware (very delicate and pretty) which were about the library; I having brought these things back from my voyages.

She spoke no word for a long space, wiping her eyes with her kerchief every now and again—by which 'twas very evident that now her brother seemed, in a manner, safe, his going far from her did begin to weigh upon her hard.

Therefore in my talk of distant lands to Brueton—which he led me to by asking, betwixt digging his teeth into his lip, where this weapon and that, which his eyes rested on, came from—I strove to bring in little tales that were droll and to be laughed at—and she, listening, presently brightened (I knew without looking much—which I could not); and once I saw her smile, holding back her tears. And by the time that I had put the sponge and bowl out of sight, and Brueton was in his coat and both stockings again, she was standing near us, much happier, looking down at a little China basin which was between her finger-tips—one of some that I had begged she would accept for her own.

And 'twas then that, in speaking of a laughable coming to blows that I had had with some of the East India Company's people, near Canton, who accused me of intruding on their rights, I said, verily with no proper heed of what I was saying, 'It was a matter of tea. I was playing the teaman then, true enough.'

Whereat her cheeks coloured to a great spreading pink, and thence to deepest pink; and her eyes, lifting from the China basin to me for the briefest moment, had, methought, some reproach in their sweet violetness—as though I, after befriending her brother and her, had seemed to back-stab. Whereon I, suddenly fearful that she should bethink her that she was 'Mrs Teaman,' turned my eyes in considerable consternation to her brother, finding in his face the first colour that I had seen in it that day; and a very flame-cheek red it was—up to his temples. Upon which, deeming openness best, and laughing, I said, 'Oh ay, man, I did hear of "Tom the Teaman," and what of it—save 'tis a merry name that I hope you'll stick to? Why,' quoth I, catching view of myself in a very bright silver bowl on the table beside him, 'why, with my face so brown that I might have washed in it, I think "Teaman" no bad description for me.'

At which I heard her speak, she seeming now to have some reproach in her voice—though a very strange, unlooked-for reproach, it being as if she did slightly censure me for appearing to speak ill of my face. 'Pray, sir,' said she, 'is the saying true that following the sea doth change

one's eyes to sea-colour? For I have always thought your eyes very sea-blue.'

'Oh, nicely turned!' said Brueton, his lips laughing, his face much comforted. 'Assheton,' said he, looking up at me, 'you'll find we're swordsmen enough in wit—when we're not too frightened to show it. You have only spoke with Mistress Brueton when she is frightened.'

'Nay, brave enough now,' I said, going to my escritoire and taking from it a bag of money and some papers that would prove me a Justice. And, with a swift thought coming to me that it might not be ill for Brueton to pass as a prisoner (though not in his own name) at times on our journey, I took from my writing-case the warrant, prescribing 'any convenient jail,' which had been sent to me for arresting Mr Sabine Thorntoun.

Then, having learnt from Mistress Brueton that she would remain for a time at North March, since her aunt Nair was lying somewhat sick there—and having advised her to send express for her uncle, Sir Moreton Nair, baronet, then in London, in case she should be much disturbed at North March by persons coming to question her of her brother—I left her for brief moments with Brueton whilst I ran to my bed-chamber to thrust my face into a bowl of water (with no time to shave), to drag a comb through my hair, to swathe on a fair white cravat, and to get into a good coat—that, on the road, I should seem more like a Justice than a pirate (which Brueton, when I had hurt his arm smartly a little since, had vowed in jest I had been).

CHAPTER VI.

BRISTOL was my port. My ship the one I have spoke of, the *Adela*, 1400 tons, her master, Captain James Nagle, a faithful man—who, moreover, owed me a thousand pounds. Of my ride to Bristol with Brueton there is very little to tell—which means that it had all the fair fortune that I had believed 'twould have. Yet, anent my belief of this, I can but confess that during the first ten miles which we covered after leaving Blore March I found myself with an anxious heaviness which verily I would not have let Brueton perceive, for fear of depressing him badly. It had come to me that, under Providence, it was utterly my doing that he was out here with me on the road for Bristol, and that if anything befell—which easily might be—I must take all the blame for it. If he were caught and shot, I must stand (if I lived) before his sister as the man who had persuaded her brother to his death.

But after these early miles, since folk were proving very ready to look on us as a *posse* with a prisoner, my spirits rose steadily. I had eight lads with me (deeming that more might arouse suspicion), each with a stout cudgel behind his

saddle and the secret of the business in his noddle—for I thought it best to tell them all; and from the first I had played—and I meant to continue playing—on my idea to make Brueton look a prisoner. I tied not his hands; but a rope went from his horse's neck to the hand of one of my men; and we bound a big scarf about his face, causing him to look to have been cudgelled, and concealing his face very nicely. Indeed, so suitable an appearance did we make, with Brueton thus prepared, that, towards evening, as my company rode slow, climbing a hill, three country women, standing to watch us, said loudly of Brueton: 'Poor fellow!' and anon, presuming on their sex, sent a generous hiss after me, which did make my lads grin mightily.

The roads were not bad; and, though the gray sky threatened heavy snow, little came down; and I thought that, by riding clean through the night, we easily should reach Bristol by next afternoon or evening (Wednesday). But we discovered the greatest difficulty in getting a change of horses—the more so from that I steered aside from larger towns—and could change but two or three of our horses at a time, which spoilt our pace. With this, and with deeming that I should give Brueton some rest—at an alehouse a little below Tewkesbury—for part of Wednesday night, 'twas Thursday morning before we were come within striking distance of Bristol. And 'twas soon after daylight of this morning (up to when the mere showing of a paper bearing my title of Justice had brought us, with extraordinary ease, through every demand for passes) that I deemed it advisable to make use of Mr Thorntoun's arrest warrant that was in my pocket.

We had come into sight of thirty or forty horses grouped about outside an alehouse, with the equal number of soldiers, some of these sitting on benches, drinking and shouting, others walking idly here and there on the road—horse militia, Brueton told me at once, but he believed they would not know him, even if they saw his face, for they were not a Staffordshire troop—Gloucestershire men, 'twas very probable. We discerned two officers—nearer us than any—standing in the middle of the road laughing with a serving-girl, and seeming pretty far in their cups by this hour; and they, upon some word from their men, looked very straight at us (being steady enough in a way). And then—partly, I was sure, because of their cups, and of a wish to show the girl what rare bullies they were when they had the sword on—they acted in a manner which was needlessly aggressive, and no less awkward for us for that. One of them gave an order to some of the troopers, who therewith turned several horses across the road to bar us—and he stayed by the girl. The other officer walked to a horse and mounted it, and, two of his men also mounting

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their horses, they rode at walking pace towards us as we came.

Now I, that had been a King's sea-officer (and no disrespected one, I believe), was verily not the man to be awed by a half-tipsy militia officer that I had disturbed from fooling some humble girl. And, swiftly deciding on my action, and telling my people to halt in a cool manner in a moment, and moving my horse forward, I looked pretty unwinkingly at this officer (a young one) as we drew in our horses, facing each other—pretty unwinkingly, for all that I should be forced to adopt an unpleasant ruse of war, and lie to him.

'You, sir,' I said sharply—and his face went a very crimson at my tone—'I don't know who you are, sir, but if you've any men sober I shall be obliged by four of them and a corporal to go with me to Bristol.'

He gazed at me in blankest surprise, his mouth half-open, his tongue twittering rapidly behind his teeth—all formidability and upstirred anger blown clean out of him. 'I can't give you men of my troop, sir,' he said, with much of a stammer.

'You can,' I said—and I meant to try for them; for, in the moment when it had occurred to me to make the boldest front by asking for soldiers, I had seen also that if I could get them they would look a fine guaranty of my company being above all possible suspicion, in case we met with other soldiers 'twixt here and Bristol. 'You can,' I said. 'Look you, I am a Justice with a prisoner.' I took some papers from my pocket, pulled the warrant for Mr Thorntoun from them, shook it open, and thrust it to the militia officer, with a very ill-tempered mien, which implied that he should have perceived all this without proof, he taking the warrant obediently enough, and setting his eyes to it. 'It hath come to my ears,' I said, 'that the prisoner's friends may try to take him from me before I reach Bristol. My lads have cudgels, but I should be far the better for five armed soldiers.'

'I've no standing to give them. I should have to answer to my colonel for't,' he said, very doubtfully, eyes on warrant.

'What of that, save he will tell you 'twas proper to give them, on demandment, to a Justice?' I said angrily. 'Surely you do see that far? I will give you a receipt for them, victual them, victual them for their road back to you, which they can take to-day. Whither shall I send them?'

'Tewkesbury,' said he. He looked from the warrant to my company, halted a short distance away, then looked at me, then at the warrant again. 'Why do you bring him from Staffordshire to Bristol?' he asked (the warrant showing that Mr Thorntoun and I were of Staffordshire).

'I did not chase him down and break his head in Staffordshire,' said I (which was pretty

true). 'I think, sir, a man may run out of Staffordshire, and Bristol seem no bad place to take him to when he is caught. . . . Well, sir,' I said then, 'I think, in addition, that I am not used to be questioned by young officers, so I will say no more than this: I shall be obliged if you will give me the soldiers. If you won't, I shall be vastly obliged by your name. For I shall see to it later which of us is right in this matter.'

He tightened his lips, very mixed in temper and mind; drummed on his saddle with his fingers, frowning at the warrant, and then said: 'Perhaps you were best have your way, sir. So write me a receipt.'

Which I did, without getting from my horse, writing upon part of a letter with a leaden pencil.

And from then I rode free enough of anxiety—keeping the pace good, with my troopers and corporal ahead of me, and my lads and Brueton behind me (for verily I risked not that one of my lads should, with no meaning to, let slip anything to a trooper)—and I had the satisfaction to find myself militarily saluted, instead of stopped, by sundry officers of two more troops of militia, which might have been very dangerous, that we passed on our road—these various militia (I afterwards learned) being come up from Devonshire, where trouble had been looked for.

We reached Bristol (old city of church steeples and cramped streets that I always have had great affection for, and used as a port whenever I could) at half after three in the afternoon. Immediately I gave quittance of service, and money, to my corporal and troopers, putting them into a comfortable tavern, whence they were not like to stir to follow the rest of us with curiosity. Many streets beyond them I took a similar precaution with my own lads (honest though they were); and at a third inn Brueton and I stabled our horses. The rope had been taken from his horse's neck before we entered Bristol, and the scarf from his face so soon as we had put a street between ourselves and the soldiers—so that we came to this inn looking most ordinary. And from it we sauntered in the coolest manner to the quays—I receiving recognition from several persons that knew me; being, indeed, twice forced to stop to shake a man's hand; though none of this conceivably could hurt us—and we took a waterman's boat, and were away in the comfortablest fashion down the river to the *Adela*, up the side of which we presently climbed. She could have been dressed for sailing within two hours—she was so ready. But, with darkness now falling, with little wind, and with the tide soon to be against her, neither Nagle, her master, nor I dared face the hazard of her setting-out—even though we should bribe the best pilot in Bristol to help her.

But the next day, very memorable to me,

as marking the successful conclusion of the business—Friday, November 18th, 1715—she was away, with the sweetest breeze freshening for her, by ten of the morning—bearing Brueton, incomparably more fortunate than several poor soldier lads that changed their coats, and were found in Preston by Wills; and anon to be very fortunate again, seeing that, by the exertions of his relatives, he was allowed back into England after five years, with no more punishment than a fine of twelve thousand pounds.

I went seaward in a sail-boat to watch the *Adela* fair away down the Bristol Channel, presently seeing Nagle clap on her top-gallants, for all the fast-freshening breeze, and her pace become very pretty. And verily, in my interest for her, I brought two honest sail-boat men into considerable danger—for we, in our sail-boat, had a very sharp hour or two beating back to shore.

Having sent an express to Mistress Brueton with tidings, I passed Saturday and Sunday in Bristol, my ears alert for any sound of the arrival of pursuers that might have got upon the track of Brueton and me—though I could not think that any harm could ever be done him now. I was well-nigh sure that the Government would not go to the business of sending a ship after him.

For part of Sunday I took a holiday from my alertness—believing from the nature of this holiday, that Brueton would not suffer by it. I passed some hours in the interior beauty of that church which I, who have seen churches in many parts of the world, do always hold is the fairest, loveliest church that a man can be in—the church of St Mary Redcliff, Bristol.

On Monday afternoon, with nothing heard, I set off with my lads for Blore March—and, strange though this may seem, it was not until I was on the road thus that I gave any really grave thought to the circumstance that, although I had not gone out to fight for the Chevalier, I had put myself so deep in the business by what I had lately done that I could look, with considerable reason, to be punished as badly as any man in the Chevalier's affairs, if my conducting of Brueton's escape was found out—which was a very possible thing to happen.

My lads, for all their goodwill towards me, and towards their own safety (which I had impressed on them they were risking in the business), would be sure to talk when they got back to their cronies. More serious than that was the receipt which I had given to the militia officer, pretending that I had Mr Thorntoun—who was I knew not where. That receipt might start an inquiry which would lead to my death. I was very sure that by law I could be put to death with no trouble for helping Brueton; and verily I knew not whether the Government would be eager to have this done, or would be inclined to leave me my life. That little else would be

left me, if I were apprehended and put to trial, I could be very convinced. I should be sent to imprisonment, or, most like, sent abroad and sold as a slave; and Blore March and my fortune would be taken from me.

Though I had given little heed to these things when they edged at my mind during the kind of excitement which I felt on my journey to Bristol with Brueton, and during the great satisfaction which I experienced in the immediate days after he was got to sea—now, when the excitement was past, and I was become used to satisfaction, a sober view of my situation sent my spirits very low and dark. A passing thought that, since I had been a very dishonest Justice to King George in my late actions, the best thing for my honour, and probably for my neck, would be to write His Majesty a letter of the facts before aught came out, I let pass, and quickly. The letter might start some sort of a dogging chase after Brueton. Moreover, it might never reach the King, but be stopped by some of his ministers—who would look to me. By it I might throw away my life, when perhaps I could have saved everything by keeping quiet. This matter was too black for playing carelessly with.

Too black!—thought I, riding along, some way behind my men. Ay, too black! For some miles my spirits were more low and sombre than they had been for many years. Black suffering seemed before me—with all the fairness of life irretrievably thrown away. And then, knowing full well that the real meaning of my thoughts was that, if the Government took hold of me, I should be dragged away from Mistress Brueton—never more see her in this life; knowing this, and studying her face with its sweetness, her eyes with their violetness—she seeming to be before me, against the black horizon of menace—I suddenly found myself rallying fast from my hideous lowness of spirits—from my cowardice, as I called it now. I had served her, who loved her brother, very well in this business. I had put the pink back into her cheeks—I could be sure; had made her happy again. Therefore I was very glad I had done the perilous thing which I had—and I'd do it again for her, happily! With which, telling myself that there were many odds that the receipt would lead to nothing, and that my lads' talk would reach no dangerous ears, I shook up my horse, and rode very pleasantly.

CHAPTER VII.

I WAITED upon Mistress Brueton, straight from my horse, riding to North March house before going to Blore March, on my return—finding her very happy to see me for her brother's sake, of whose putting to sea she fain would hear fullest news from me—finding her

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looking, indeed, the happiest young lady in the world as she listened to all that I told her; and finding anon, in a moment of quietness that came to us after my speaking, that her eyes were set on my face with such deep gratefulness and kindness, because of what I had done, as I could not have expected to see, though I had known that her face would be grateful—finding, withal, her words of me verily kind when she presented me to her uncle Nair, who presently came in from riding. That I let slip not a word to her of my doubt of my own safety, there is no need to say.

The next afternoon, with no intent to go to her house that day, lest I should seem to return thither over-quickly, I walked near the roadway which so often I have spoke of; presently perceiving her coming, a dark figure against the snow which powdered the grass, with divers spaniels. She was a dark figure at first—but soon her face, its pink all come back in these days of her brother's safety, was very discernible—with the hue of her eyes, and her smile which was telling me that she readily would speak with me.

We talked, I walking with her; she telling me that certain men from some county Lord-lieutenant had visited North March that morning searching for her brother ('twas the fourth searching-party that had come there since I took him off). But, said she, she had not sent for me, since her uncle Nair had sent them away fairly easily. And then, she asking me of what part of the seas I did think her brother was got to now, we spoke much of his voyage, and then conversed a little of various things; she telling me of when she was at school, I telling her of where I was in those years; so that I walked with her much above an hour.

The next afternoon we met in this manner, and on each afternoon that followed; so that—though I scarce could let myself believe so much—it began to be as though we both did look to see each other thus, without either of us saying that we would meet. Twice I walked with her to North March house, and on the second of these times I chanced to speak to her uncle Nair—she having left us together for a little—on my prospects of being arrested and put on trial, which I had no cause to think diminished by lapse of a few days. Whereat Nair, a big, hearty, often plain-speaking gentleman—after saying that it already had been in his mind that the outlook was like to take an awkward aspect for me, though he had seen no good to fidget me by telling me what I surely knew—turned his eyes on my face, and asked with complete suddenness, 'Do you look to marry her, man?'

'Man, I've loved the sight of her for two years,' I said. 'But I can't think she would ever look at me in earnest.'

'Nay, I'm not so sure,' said he. 'The women
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of her family have a way to look where they fancy for a husband, and they have a way to take some stout fellow that's no weak reed—as her aunt (that I run off with) took me. So I'm not so sure. And see, man, here's the point of it. If you are seized on to be tried for your neck for aiding Brueton, it may help you vastly if 'tis shown that you but aided the brother of the lady you are to marry—which any proper man would do. See you that, man?'

Whilst I was silent, pondering for an answer, she returned to us, wherefore, no need to tell, no more was said. But I was to discover next day that Nair had spoken of the matter to her after I was gone. On this next day, at afternoon, it was snowing somewhat, with a very cold wind, so that, as I stood by the roadway, I could not be sure that she would come. But she came—came quickly with the spaniels, through the grayness and the slight falling snow, as I hurried to meet her. She smiled, but I found that her face, sweeter than ever, had something strange about it—her cheeks going deepest crimson when we were near; and then, in the course of a minute, changing from crimson to pink, then well-nigh to whiteness, then back to crimson again; and her eyes with their sweet violetness, with their sweet look of familiar acquaintance with me, which the last few afternoons had given them, were, none the less, very troubled. And I found that she was not ready to talk, and that she knew not whether she would go a little way with me or no. And, verily, I was mystified and troubled. And then, of a sudden, looking at me, with a little beat by her mouth (that I had seen one day before), she said, 'Mr Assheton, my uncle hath told me all that you may suffer for helping my brother. . . . I had not thought of this since you came home. I think because you have made all seem secure, and danger passed—since you came. . . . My uncle hath told me that if you are took, and do say that you are to marry me—that may help you much. . . . I pray you say that. Why, I would not have you think to say other than that, to help you. I would not . . . for mine own happiness. I could not be happy any more if you suffered great ill for aiding my brother and me. So I pray you say *that* instantly if there is occasion.' She turned from me—little white specks of snow on her red-gold curls—drawing at one of the youngest of the spaniels, which was on a string.

'Madame,' I said, going a step to her.

'No, I pray you! No words of it,' she said very quietly. She looked back at me, tears in her eyes, smiling a little with trembling lips, the beat most plain by her mouth. 'I should fall down in the snow and cry, from what I have said, if you did keep me to talk now,' she said, very earnestly. 'I pray you let me go home alone—coming no step with me.'

I bowed my obedience to her; then stood,

holding my hat, while she went, the spaniels moving this way and that on the snow as they went with her, and looking very dark against the snow. 'Only a word after you—by your kindest favour, madame,' I said. 'You will speak with me a little here, or at North March, to-morrow? I humbly beg that.'

She moved her head—a gleam from her curls lighting in the winter grayness—in assent; and I stood till she and her spaniels were passed beyond trees and quite hidden. [And of the matter which had led her to speak as she had spoken, unhappy-cheeked, ready to cry, this afternoon, I can say here—though I think 'tis known well enough—that I never came into any questioning or trouble for my helping of Brueton. That my men's talk—if they talked—reached no dangerous ears is plain; and with regard to the militia officer and the receipt, there was a very strange circumstance, which came to my knowledge after a while; namely, that Mr Sabine Thorntoun, whose name I had made such use of, having been one of the sundry persons who escaped from Preston, fled to his brother's house in Herefordshire; and, being captured there very soon, and taken to London (where he was sentenced to the American plantations), was actually led, on his way from Herefordshire to London, over some miles of the road that Brueton and I traversed, a few days previously, on our journey to Bristol. Whether this circumstance had something to do with my immunity, by muddling any inquiry which the militia officer may have set going, I cannot say. But I think it not unlikely. In any event, I must look upon my experience, anent this dangerous matter, as being a curious example of the bare-faced hazard a man may run—the better, I deem, if his cause be rather good than bad—and come off scot-free.]

There was snow again on the afternoon following that which I have just told of—not much; only a little floating-down of flecks from a misty gray sky; and since there had been but little fall in the night, and none in the morning, the

snow was not deep on the ground, to hinder a lady from walking. And I, going to the roadway, believed that I should see her—which presently I did; a slight, dark figure, with the spaniels, which came from beyond the trees . . . and knew of me being on the roadway, but came not to me—moving instead slowly on the skirt of the trees, stopping now and then to watch the spaniels scraping eagerly for some creature they could not get—nor would she wish them to get it, I knew—well knowing her nature by now.

I went very quickly to her. She looked from me into the trees when I was close, her cheek gone crimson as yesterday, her mien as though—for all that she had come—she would she had not, and would readily cry for yesterday's words. I knelt down in my boots in the snow to her, taking her hand which held the smallest spaniel's string—he getting away from us. And forthwith I told her of my thoughts of her, that had been with me these two years, and were such, now that I had spoken with her and walked with her, that I knew not what I should do to pass my life, for the loneliness and wretchedness that would be in it, if she would not be with me for my life. I made entreaty that she would let her words of yesterday be real—that she would tell me, in very truth, that I should marry her.

I held firm—though, verily, with no unkind hardness—to her hand in mine. And, having spoke swiftly, I looked at her—pausing on a breath, my heart beating to a wild tune now that I had asked her this and was facing her answer. For, though she had seemed kind to me, it might all have been for the service I had done her brother and her—and she could not be looked to to pay the price I was asking her now, unless she had some little wish to pay it. She looked down at me, her face all pinkness rather than crimson, her eyes, of their wondrous violet hue, having tears. But her face and her eyes were happy; and, with the littlest, sweet smile, she nodded for that she wished that I should marry her.

CHRISTMAS BLOSSOMS.

THE year is a-dying, and droops on the wing,
Yet the boughs are in blossom as though it were
Spring;

The snow by its magic hath fashioned a spray
On each twig that was barren and bare till to-day.

The bowers of Spring-time all blossom anew
'Midst the rigours of Yule, with the frost for their
dew;

Old Winter doth garland our woods in a night,
And we dream of the orchards in Summery white.

Though frail in their beauty these petals of snow;
Though they scatter before the first breeze that
shall blow;

These flakes, by the zephyrs so easily spilt,
Will provide Mother Earth with a flowery quilt.

O transient beauties we mourned in the fall,
Ye are living and warm 'neath the snow of your pall;
The year is a-dying, and droops on the wing,
But the boughs are in blossom with promise of
Spring.

FRED W. BAYLISS.
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THE PARROT.

By H. GLYNN-WARD.

PHASE I.

I.

'I HAVE seen,' said the captain, 'many beautiful things. The sun setting behind the Golden Gate of San Francisco; the reflection of a flight of flamingoes flying over a lake in South America; the colours of the Buddhist temples along the Irrawaddy; the jungle back of Sierra Leone as it looks after the rains. But never, no never, in all my travels have I seen anything one-half so beautiful as the garden at Templeton Manor in June!'

And he looked at Marianna as he spoke, which was not surprising considering he had come all the way home from foreign parts to look at her. Marianna blushed, as she had been brought up to do when young men looked at her—and this happened whenever a young man came within hail; and an old one, too, for that matter, for she was a sight worth looking at, with her rose-leaf complexion, her deep-set sparkling eyes, and her dark, glossy ringlets falling so primly, early-Victorian fashion, on each side of her demure little early-Victorian face.

She sat on the chintz-covered settle by the window, sewing at her embroidery, with the wide skirts of her prettiest summer dress spread out all around her, a lavender-sprigged muslin, much flounced, a fichu across her bosom fastened in front with a large cameo brooch. Captain Richard Allardyce sat in a straight-backed chair opposite, watching her, and her aunt, Miss Jane Templeton, played propriety, and watched them both.

The captain was right about the garden. From the window in the parlour, where he and the ladies sat, you could see straight down a gravel-path bordered with flowers and apple-trees behind them, and at the end of the path, which had rose-covered arches over it here and there, was a green lawn with a mossy old sundial in the middle.

So you had an impression of looking down a vista of brown and yellow gillyflowers, late daff-a-down-dillies and narcissus, polyanthus, apple-blossom, and over all the scent of lilac, from the great bush to one side of the window, flooding the room; the drowsy hum of bees in the air, and the sunlight making patches on the new red carpet with the flowered border that had been obtained through Uncle William Simon, who was a high-up official in the East India Company.

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The captain looked across the patch of sunlight at Marianna and said, with that quizzical uplift of the right eyebrow which was peculiar to him, 'I have brought you home a present, Miss Marianna, something that has been with me through many a voyage, and which I hope and trust that you will prize as dearly as I do myself.'

With that he went out of the room to fetch it, leaving the ladies all agog with expectation.

'Oh, Marianna, my love, what a fortunate girl you are!' exclaimed her aunt. 'Twill be a monstrous pity if you do not look favourably upon his suit. Such an *elegant* swain! So handsome!' She sighed, thinking doubtless of her own dim romance.

Now Marianna had no intention of thinking otherwise than favourably of the captain's suit; the memory of his blue eyes had lit her dreams ever since he had bidden her good-bye before his last voyage. But she did not choose that her aunt or the captain or any one else should know this. So she tossed her proud little head and pursed up her sweet red lips. 'La, la, aunt, to hear you talk one would think he was the only man in the world! Richard Allardyce is pretty well, but for my taste I am not sure that I do not prefer Mr Mortlake!'

'Fie, Marianna, for shame! Mr Mortlake is old enough to be your father! 'Tis his money attracts you, heartless girl!' Aunt Jane shook both her finger and her ringlets at her niece, and would have gone on with the lecture had not the captain returned, carrying with him a large bird-cage containing a gray parrot with a short, square, red tail. It was set down on a little round table amid screams of delighted admiration from the ladies.

II.

'I have trained him to talk like a companion,' said the captain; 'and he's such a wise old bird that I really believe he knows what he's saying.—Now, say something pretty to the ladies, Polly.'

The parrot, however, took no notice and remained silent, albeit he condescended to let the captain scratch his head.

'I got him from the bo'sun of a Dutch barquentine one time we were hove-to in the harbour of Rio Janeiro in Brazil, and the Dutchman told me he had got him from a native in Sierra Leone, so he has sailed the world a bit and seen life. Now I have

brought him to Templeton Manor to settle down.'

The two ladies expressed polite interest, and promised that every care should be taken of a bird that had sailed so far in the company of a captain of the queen's navy. Then suddenly, in a sepulchral voice—'*Gorblast my soul!*'

The poor man was horror-struck, and looked helplessly across at Marianna, but she, naughty girl, had hid her face behind her fan, so that he could not tell from her shaking shoulders whether she were laughing or shocked. Aunt Jane was overcome, nearly swooned, and had to be revived with smelling-salts and such like. Captain Allardyce scolded the offender, and vowed the wretched bird had kept bad company before his time, but the next remark that Polly essayed was even worse than the first.

'*Oh, Marianna, how I love you!*'

At this, Aunt Jane fairly picked up her skirts and ran into the garden, leaving the two discomforted and alone. But now the demeanour of Richard Allardyce underwent a subtle change. He came and stood in front of the girl, though he could see nothing of her face behind her fan. 'You heard what he said, Marianna? 'Tis true,' he said in his bluff sailor way.

Slowly, very, very slowly, the fan lowered itself until it allowed the girl's dark eyes to peep over the top. What she saw in his sea-blue eyes caused her to smile at him, very sweetly and tremulously. 'But, Richard, this is so sudden,' she murmured.

But whether it was or not, he took it for permission to sit down beside her, gather her, lavender-sprigged muslin and all, into his strong arms, and kiss her rose-bud lips and dancing eyes.

'*Pretty Poll! Pretty Poll! Give poor Polly a bone, then!*' said the parrot; and he went on talking like a blue streak. But nobody took any notice of him.

III.

It was a few days after the wedding invitations had been sent out that Mr Mortlake came on the scene to upset the course of true love. A tall, dour man, with plenty of money and an indomitable will. He had long since determined that Marianna Templeton and no other should grace the head of his table.

A waste of words for Squire Templeton to assure him that a match with Richard Allardyce had been arranged.

'Gadzooks, sir, it shall be disarranged!' was all the answer he got.

So it came about that Mr Mortlake strode into the parlour one day when Marianna was in a peevish humour with her Richard, some trifling lovers' quarrel that was only made for the sweetness of making it up again. And it amused her, flirt that she was and accustomed to men fighting for her favour, to be as sweet as sugar

to Mr Mortlake, who was clever enough to seize his opportunity.

Richard, not so clever, chose just the wrong moment to forbid his betrothed ever again to receive Mr Mortlake. Whereupon she set her teeth, and was sweeter than ever when Mr Mortlake called the very next day. So sweet was she that Richard, coming upon them unexpectedly, found Mr Mortlake's arm where his should have been—round his beloved's waist.

He, poor simple sailor that he was, knowing naught of the cursed contrariness of the female of the species, never dreamt that the offending arm was as little to Marianna's taste as to his own, and, in truth, had only been allowed when his step was heard, just to show him 'I can do as I please!' He flung out of the room in a rage, and Mr Mortlake departed with a sardonic smile on his face.

IV.

It was no make-believe quarrel that took place next time the lovers met. Aunt Jane met her niece running upstairs in tears, and hastened down to the parlour, to find Richard Allardyce pacing up and down as if he was on his own quarter-deck with a troublesome crew below; but no trouble at sea would have brought that curiously hard look into his kind blue eyes. All was over, he told her, and he was going to sea again. Nothing she could say would alter his decision.

'But, Richard, Richard, this is terrible! Oh! believe me, Marianna loves you!'

'*Oh! believe me, Marianna loves you!*' said a toneless voice beside them. It was the parrot, picking up the end of the sentence and adding his prayers to hers. But the captain only looked at the bird sadly.

He was as good as his word, and went to sea again. Marianna sobbed her heart out while she waited for him to come back or send her word. It was hard to say which moped for him most, she or the parrot. In the first few weeks after his going, the bird refused to eat, and sat ruffled up on his perch, staring with unblinking eyes in front of him.

It was a long time before Aunt Jane could pet him back to health again. Sometimes when Marianna was in the room, he would rap out '*Where's Richard?*' in a flat, toneless way that was uncanny. It was like the voice of conscience, and she used to fly from the room with her handkerchief to her eyes. Then he took to saying '*Richard's gone to sea, gone to sea, gone to sea!*' over and over again.

But Richard Allardyce neither sent word nor came back, and in due course Marianna Templeton, without the least intention in the world, found herself married to Mr Mortlake. She made him a dutiful wife, but her beauty faded and the sparkle went out of her eyes. She died soon after her first child was born.

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with her love for the other man lying like a lead weight on her heart.

v.

Many long years afterwards, Allardyce came back to the Manor, a fat old admiral, with bushy white whiskers and a red face, to see the parrot, who said '*Shiver my timbers!*' and put out his head to be scratched, just as if Richard had been gone for twenty minutes instead of twenty years.

Gentle Aunt Jane and other contemporaries had long since been gathered to their fathers, so there was no one present who remembered that there had been a love affair between the admiral and Marianna Mortlake. But the parrot remembered, and suddenly came out with '*Oh! believe me, Marianna loves you—hoo-oo, hoo-oo!*'

Whereupon the admiral said, 'Tut-tut! God bless my soul!' and took a pinch of snuff, and stumped out into the garden all alone, down the gravel-path between the roses, that leads to the sun-dial at the end. On this, leaning for a moment, he read 'Gather ye roses whyle ye may, Old Tyme is still a-flying.' A belated bit of advice that gave him no more comfort than the parrot had done. So he stumped back again, and called for his carriage and went away. What must be, must be.

vi.

There were nearly always children at the Manor. When one lot grew up, they in their turn brought their babies home to visit or to live—sons and daughters, nephews and nieces, and grandchildren, they all came home to the Manor some time or other. And they all grew up looking upon the parrot as a family institution. He used to say funny things to make them laugh, and fluff out his feathers and turn somersaults on his perch. He seemed to like the sound of baby laughter.

'No, I really don't know exactly where he came from,' the mothers and fathers would say; 'we only know that he has been here always, ever since *we* can remember! . . . Oh yes, we are quite sure he knows what he's saying. He always swears so shockingly when we have tea-parties, especially when there are clergymen present; we think he does it on purpose!'

At times the parrot would scream fearful Spanish oaths, or strange words that sounded like Dutch; or he would tell of '*A choppy sea and a cloudy sky! We'll have a storm before morning!*' Days, sometimes weeks, would pass by when the parrot would keep his silence, and then, most unexpectedly, he would ring out at the top of his voice, '*Eight bells! All's well and lights burning brightly!*' Upon which the family would congratulate themselves and say, 'Polly's himself again—what a mercy! We thought his talking days were over!'

When the children grew up and became
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mothers and fathers, he still knew them as they had been, and called each one by his or her own name, much to their children's delight. '*Hullo, Ethel! Hoist your slacks and let's get to work!*' or '*Good old Freddie! Give us a quid, old man, do—hoo—oo!*'

Every now and again, someone heard him calling sadly, '*Richard's gone to sea—gone to sea—gone to sea!*' like a refrain. But they had forgotten who Richard was.

PHASE II.

I.

ON very hot midsummer days, they used to take the parrot out to sit on a perch by the lilac bush. The lilac still smelt as sweet, and the view of the garden from the parlour window (but they called it the drawing-room now) was just as beautiful as in the days when he first came to Templeton Manor. He had watched the world roll on a good many years since then.

The children wondered what he was thinking about when he sat hour after hour on his perch, immovable, unblinking. Perhaps of the sun-baked, steaming forests of his own native jungle back of Sierra Leone; maybe of the storms he had weathered round the Horn, or in mid-Atlantic; perhaps of sailors' songs and the clink of glasses in the galley, as the good ship lay heaving in the tropics. Spanish wines or Schnapps from Holland, good old English rum and Burgundy, the parrot knew all the songs that went with each.

Perhaps he was thinking of the many-coloured natives that lined the shore of some far-away port as they watched the ship dock, or the sing-song gabble of Lascar crews at the windlass. Who knows?

After the daffodils and wallflowers are over, down the gravel-path, come masses of larkspur, with a wide border of pinks shedding their fragrance on the air; and after these the roses are at their best, and the mignonette.

All these could the parrot see from his perch under the lilac bush, and he watched their blooming and their passing, even as he watched the generations come and go. Up that gravel-path came, one hot summer's day, another Marianna, of the Yorkes, a distant cousin of the Templetons at the Manor.

She had come, a poor relation, to pay them a long visit, and this afternoon she wore her best dress, for there was to be a tea-party. Her best dress was a pale blue organdie, with lace at the neck of the tightly-moulded bodice and a lace fall down the front; the sleeves were tight and shaped to the arms, with more lace falling over the wrists. The skirt was pleated from the knees to the ankles, and the upper part of it was gathered loosely round and tied behind to form

a sort of loose bustle. The skirt had a little train to it, of which Marianna was very proud; she swished it as she walked. She had very glossy dark hair, done low on her neck and waving softly over her ears.

She came into the drawing-room through the open window with her bunch of roses, and there she stopped short, staring. The first of the guests had arrived and stood there, with his back to the mantel-piece, looking at her. For the space of perhaps a minute—a minute that seemed a year—they stood stock-still like that, just looking at each other. It was not only that his eyes were the very bluest eyes that she had ever seen, but a queer sensation had petrified Marianna for the moment. She felt as though all this had happened before. Hurriedly she pulled herself together.

'How d'you do?' she said, a little breathlessly, because her heart was beating so. 'I think you must be Mr Allardyce from India? I know they were expecting you this afternoon!'

'I beg your pardon,' the young man said, as he came forward with outstretched hand. 'You must think I have rotten manners and all that, but, do you know, I had the funniest sort of feeling that I've met you before somewhere!'

But close on his words came Mrs Templeton, bustling into the room with her daughters, and conventional greetings put an end to further intimate conversation.

II.

The Templeton girls were always a little jealous of Marianna, because she was so much prettier than they were, and attracted all the young men. On the tennis-lawn or in the hunting-field, in the drawing-room, or at dances, it was just the same—always a little knot of admirers wherever Marianna was. Her aunt prophesied a bad end for her.

'You're a heartless little flirt, Marianna,' she would say severely. 'You just encourage a man for the sake of seeing him dangle after you. One of these fine days you'll do it once too often; it isn't always the girl with a lot of admirers who gets the best husband. I've known many a flirt end up an old maid!' And she looked fondly at her own two, while Marianna tossed her head and pursed up her pretty mouth.

'Oh, Marianna!' cried out one of her cousins, 'do you know that when you make that face, you look so like that funny old picture of great-aunt Marianna Mortlake in the dining-room? If you parted your hair in the middle and wore ringlets, you'd be the image of her!'

The parrot chose this moment to call out, 'Where's Richard?'

"Where's Richard?" indeed! remarked Mrs Templeton irritably. 'What are you blushing for, Marianna? I don't suppose Polly is thinking of Dick Allardyce!'

'But I'm not so sure, mamma,' put in one of the girls. 'When we took Dick to see the parrot, it was quite *extraordinary* how he seemed to know him! He lowered his head to be scratched, and said "*Shiver my timbers!*" just like he does to his oldest friends. Really he seemed to *know* Dick Allardyce; we all noticed it.'

In spite of all the chaff, there grew out of that first sight of one another, and grew quickly, something that was no mere flirtation between Marianna Yorke and Richard Allardyce of the Bengal Cavalry, whose great-uncle had been an admiral, he who had first brought the parrot to the Manor.

He spent most of his time where she was, and in a surprisingly short while after that first meeting, their engagement was announced.

'You know I have nothing but my army pay,' he told her anxiously; 'but I'm to get my captaincy after Christmas, and you must come straight out to India directly I cable. Do you think you can wait for me till then, Marianna?'

She smiled slowly into those blue eyes that looked into hers with such tender concern.

'Dick, I seem to have been waiting for you so long already,' she said, 'that I would go on waiting all my life, if I was sure you wanted me!'

And he drew her dark head down on his shoulder and told her with kisses, for the thousandth time, how much he wanted her.

III.

All through that golden summer, they made love in the garden; and the parrot caught glimpses of them out of his wise old eyes, and preened his gray feathers happily.

The roses faded and gave place to the phlox and the tall hollyhocks, and presently the chrysanthemums began to bud and there was a chill in the morning air. The parrot no longer sat out under the lilac bush, but stayed in his cage in the drawing-room, where they lit the fire early to keep him warm. It was nearly time for Richard Allardyce to return to India; his leave was almost up.

There was much talk and excitement about the Hunt Ball, which was to be held at the Town Hall, and at which the whole county was to be present. One, Sir Harry Preston, who was the most-sought-after young man in the district, came to call at the Manor the day before, and somehow prevailed upon Marianna to save three waltzes for him. Which, everyone must acknowledge, was tempting Providence for an engaged girl.

But, engaged or not, it made little difference to Marianna's numerous admirers on the night of the ball. They buzzed around her like flies, and she laughed and danced and flirted with them all, to the obvious discomfort of Dick

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Allardyce, into whose kindly eyes came a hard look as they met hers across the room.

Truth to tell, she was lovely enough to turn any man's head, with her mocking smile and sweet, sparkling eyes that contradicted it, a flush on her delicate little oval face, and dark hair piled so high on her head that the weight of it seemed almost too much for her head to hold without drooping a bit, like an anemone in the wind. Admiration was the wine of life to her, exhilarating, necessary; she had ever drunk deeply of it, and could not stop.

IV.

The morning after, of course, came the reckoning.

'Tell me, Marianna,' Richard asked, standing stiffly with his arms folded, 'does this Preston fellow mean anything to you?'

How could he know that the cold, hard look in his eyes chilled her heart so that she had to say things to hurt him back again, things she never meant? O man, will the generations teach you naught of women? She glanced at him, and looked away, not deigning to answer his question.

'If you loved me as you profess,' she replied, 'you would trust me.'

Manlike, he said exactly the wrong thing at the wrong moment.

'If you're going to marry me, you'll not let him or any other man—fool round you any more. And,' he went on, rather as if he were giving orders to one of his own troopers, 'you'll begin by breaking your appointment to ride to the meet with him to-morrow! You'll come with me to Whaddon Chase, instead!'

Marianna stood facing him, her fingers drumming on the table. How could he know, from her cool exterior, how she was aching for other tones in his voice, for his kisses, for the feel of his strong arms about her? That she longed to be able to whisper to him that all the Prestons in the world meant not so much to her as the little finger of Dick Allardyce? How could he guess, mere man that he was, that one little right word would change the flashing anger in her eyes to tears?

'I am not one of your troopers, Richard, to be ordered about! And I never break appointments!'

On the instant there was a scream behind them from the parrot. Following close upon it came, in his toneless voice, '*Oh! Marianna, how I love you!*'

If only she had laughed, all might have been well. But she was too near tears to laugh, so she just said—'Silly bird!' and went rather quickly out of the room. Richard stood immovable by the fireplace.

The parrot rocked himself to and fro on his perch. He seemed to be labouring under a stress of some sort. Presently he leant forward

and said, in a sepulchral hoarse whisper, '*Oh! believe me, Marianna loves you—hoo-oo, hoo-oo!*' It was the best he could do, poor bird.

Even preoccupied Richard looked up, startled. Then he laughed mirthlessly. 'Oh no, she doesn't, Polly; it's just that she wants me to play with, same as all the others!' With that he too went out of the room, leaving Polly huddled up on his perch, head sunk into his neck feathers.

V.

Not that Marianna ever thought of it all as anything but a passing quarrel, bitter enough while it lasted; but that it would pass she never had any serious doubt.

The next day, hounds met for the first of the cub-hunting, and, true to her word, she rode to the meet with Sir Harry Preston.

It was a brilliant morning in late September, and the sun lit up, gaily, the red coats of the huntsmen and the eager faces of scores who came to see, if not to participate in, the ancient sport of kings. The hounds gave tongue, and everyone talked and laughed in the very best of humours—all but two, whose hearts were as heavy as lead, though they also talked and laughed.

But within an hour, all was changed. People with shocked faces gathered in little groups about a field: men had turned pale, some of the women were sobbing audibly. There had been a terrible accident . . . young Richard Allardyce . . . that nasty hedge with a ditch beyond it, at the bottom of the twenty-five acre field below the Manor. . . . Yes, they were carrying him there—it was the nearest house. . . . A doctor? Of course, there had been one on the field, but—well, it had been instantaneous. That was a mercy, no pain. . . . Poor boy, so full of fun and life! Going to be married soon, too! Poor Miss Yorke, so sad for her! So altogether shocking for everyone! . . .

They carried him up the gravel-path, past the lilac bush, four men—hats off, muddy boots, set faces—and, laying him gently on the sofa, covered him with a sheet. And the parrot watched it all.

By-and-by came Marianna, with a face like marble and staring, tearless eyes. She knelt by Dick's side, who had once been warm and passionately tender, and tried to remember his blue eyes as she had loved them best. She stayed there, moaning a little, and the mid-day sun made patches on the carpet beside her. It was that same carpet that had come from the East India Company long ago, through Uncle William Simon, but the flowered border was very faded now, and there were still damp marks of muddy boots. . . . Poor little Marianna! They had difficulty in taking her away—they, who did not understand!

The parrot kept chanting, '*Richard's gone to*

sea—gone to sea—gone to sea!’ in a dirge-like way that got on the nerves of the whole household. They stopped it at last, by persuasion and bits of apple; but the bird was mopish, and did not speak again for many months.

Marianna never married. She fulfilled her aunt’s prophecy and remained an old maid, very quiet, very sober, in fact a little prim. She taught various nephews and nieces in return for a good home and a little pin-money—for the rest of her life.

PHASE III.

I.

IN these days, the children laughed more than ever when the parrot tried stiffly to turn somersaults for their benefit. He was getting so old, and his red tail-feathers were scraggy. He used to sit for hours and days and weeks without speaking now, and once somebody saw him fall off his perch, a most disgraceful thing for a bird to do.

He righted himself at once, of course, and looking round in a dazed kind of way, said, ‘*Poor Polly! What’s a matter, Polly?*’ But, as father said, ‘It’s a sign of age, Polly, a sign of age! You and I are getting old!’

Whereat Polly must have smiled to himself, having been old when father was first brought into the drawing-room to be exhibited to admiring relatives in his christening robe.

He had seen many fathers come and go, attain the headship of the house for a time, then pass away and give place to a successor. Whence they came, whither they passed, who knew? They came and went even as the ships in the harbours, as the captains on the ships, and the cooks in the galleys. Polly remembered every one.

II.

The present master of Templeton Manor was the father of three children, a boy and two girls, Pamela and Marianna. The latter strenuously objected to her name as soon as she was old enough to criticise it.

‘Fancy saddling a girl with an ugly, outrageous name like that!’ she cried. ‘I’m just going to be called “Marie.” Please remember!’

‘My child,’ was the paternal answer, ‘there have been Mariannas in the family ever since Queen Anne’s day, when a Templeton brought home a Spanish wife who thought the English names were ugly, and so invented a combination of them for her first baby.’

But the girl had her way, of course, as she always did. In time it was only the parrot who called her Marianna. She was as dark and vivacious as her sister Pamela was fair and serene. Marianna changed her mind half-a-dozen times in as many minutes, habitually said

what she did not mean and meant what she left unsaid, laughed and sang, teased and tormented the life out of her family, who, nevertheless, felt the house empty when she was not there.

Pamela was placid and inclined to be stately; she spoke slowly, and thought well before doing it. ‘As unlike sisters as ever I saw,’ people said.

‘Pamela takes after her mother’s side, but Marianna is a real Templeton,’ the father would reply. ‘You can see her likeness in the old pictures on the walls. There is that old painting of great-great-aunt Marianna in the dining-room, for instance, the one with the ringlets; she was the toast of the county in her day. That was soon after Queen Victoria came to the throne. Our Marianna is absurdly like her!’

But ultra-modern, short-skirted, up-to-date Marianna of 1923 objected to comparison with what she called the early-Victorian, simpering, beringleted Marianna of the early forties. So she bobbed her hair. This was when she was about eighteen. And she was more like her than ever.

III.

Round the time when the lilac bush by the window was filling the air with its scent, Mrs Templeton gave what her daughters called a tea-fight. On these occasions the parrot nearly always said loudly, ‘*Let us pray!*’ So many people gathered together reminded him of the time that some bygone Templeton of a religious turn had held prayers in the drawing-room. Only once, because the parrot had sworn at them obscenely and horribly, and they had taken care to have prayers in another room after that.

Marianna came in late as usual. She had been golfing, and her cheeks were still rosy from the spring winds. She stood for a moment, looking into the hubbub of laughter and talk, and people passing teacups and cake, and wondered whether she should join in or escape to her own room. As she stood there, she found herself looking into the eyes of a man on the other side of the room.

She didn’t know who he was, had never seen him before, yet it seemed quite natural for him to be there, smiling a welcome at her, and she smiled back at him. It struck her that he had the eyes of a sailor, with a hint of Scandinavian blue in them, also an expression that made her heart beat faster. She turned her back on him and began talking to someone else.

But not for long. Pamela was presently beside her, saying, ‘Marie, the Allardyses have brought their cousin over, the one in the navy; he’s a commander or something—rather swish! You remember, they are always talking of Dick Warden, who did so well at Zeebrugge? You’ve

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got to come and say "How d'you do" to him!

And next moment, Marianna found her hand in his, warmly held. He was still smiling at her.

'Isn't it beastly hot in here?' she said, snatching her hand away. 'Do you like parrots? Come and see ours. He won't talk—he's too old; and he hates strangers!'

The commander laughed, and followed the girl over to the corner where the parrot sat, immovable, on his perch. 'Hullo, Polly!' he said cordially.

'*Shiver my timbers!*' the parrot answered immediately, bending forward his head to be scratched. '*Here's Richard!*'

'Well, upon my word!' exclaimed the man. 'How on earth did he know my name was Richard?'

'Why, that's the first time he's spoken for months,' cried Marianna. 'He must be mistaking you for one of us!'

'Perhaps he's prophetic!' said the man, softly, looking down at the girl as he scratched the parrot's head. The girl blushed, and was furious with herself for doing so.

IV.

'*Eight bells! . . . All's well and lights burning brightly!*' the parrot sang out with conviction.

'By Jove!' laughed Dick Warden, 'he must have belonged to a sailor-man one time, that's clear!'

Marianna, having recovered from her blushes, looked shyly up at him under her curling black lashes. There was something in the tones of his voice that stirred her all up inside. She found the same thing, in a more intimate degree, in his eyes, but they were looking into hers with a more serious expression now.

Then he said suddenly, 'Come, let's get out of this—into the garden!' and she led the way, obediently, without a word, feeling a little as though she were living in a dream. Or had she been dreaming all her life and only just wakened up? They went down the gravel-path to the sun-dial, and leant on it, tracing with their fingers those time-old words, 'Gather ye roses while ye may, Old Tyme is still a-flying,' half-grown over now, and yellow with moss and lichen.

'Do you remember——' the girl began presently, and then she stopped, knitting her brows in a puzzled way.

'Do I remember what?' asked the man.

'I don't know! I've forgotten now what I was going to say. I suppose I had that funny feeling one sometimes has for a moment—that everything has happened before. They say it's one half of your brain working before the other, or else it's indigestion!'

This time the commander did not laugh. 'I 1925.]

remember all kinds of things,' he said slowly; 'but I never remember being bowled clean over by a slip of a girl like you before.'

Voices called to them from the house. 'Ah! my cousins going, dash 'em! When can I see you again? To-morrow?'

But Marianna had disappeared.

V.

'I think you're the luckiest girl alive,' Pamela was saying, a few days later. 'A pearl and emerald ring at your age, with Dick Warden thrown in for luck! Just *imagine!* . . . And, he being a sailor, you won't ever get tired of him! Most of his people are in the army, but I believe he had a great grand-uncle who was an admiral, so perhaps he'll be one too, one of these days! How perfectly lovely it sounds—Admiral and Mrs Warden!'

'Oh, chuck it, old thing!' said Marianna, happily. 'I love the way one of his eyebrows goes up when he smiles; don't you, Pam?'

'Yes, but I should think his eyes could look pretty alarming when he was cross! So *you'll* have to mind your p's and q's, my child. You've met your match at last! No fooling round with other men now. Dick wouldn't stand it, I can see!'

At this, Marianna sat up. 'I'll live my own life; don't make any mistake about that! *I'm* not going to turn into an early-Victorian doormat, to be ordered about by any man!' she finished up, getting a little mixed. By which you will see that she needed spanking.

VI.

She needed it sorely enough later on, when the first flush of shyness had worn off, and her normal state of wilful waywardness had begun to assert itself again. There was an occasion when they had a quarrel, one of those lovers' quarrels that assume mountainous proportions for the two concerned, and sound so silly to outsiders.

Marianna sitting jauntily on the edge of a table, one leg swinging, hands in the pockets of her mauve silk knitted jumper, cigarette in her mouth. Richard Warden standing in front of her, arms akimbo, eyes very serious, mouth sternly set. A modern touch in that old-world room of a thousand memories, sweet with the scent of pot-pourri and lavender, bright with chintzes and sunshine. Even in the carpet, the same that had come through Uncle William Simon from the East India Company, there still glowed faintly some of the colours that had once delighted the heart of Aunt Jane, but it was now threadbare in patches. The parrot sat on his perch by the window and watched them.

'Look here, little girl, I can't have you accepting presents, even if it is only a box of

cigarettes, from all these young chuckleheads, now you're engaged to me, you know! You'll cut it out, won't you? Promise!

The girl tossed back her curls and looked up at him with flashing eyes. 'I'm dithered if I do!' she said curtly.

Never before had anyone tried coercing Marianna without suffering for it, good and plenty. She was far too pretty and far too clever to come out anything but triumphant in battles with her equals—and she had not yet met her superior. Now it was a battle of wills. 'How I shall hate you,' she was thinking, as her eyes challenged him, 'if you master me! But oh, how I shall despise you if you don't!'

A colder look came into those blue eyes that had looked so kindly down at her. 'I think you will find, Marianna,' he observed quietly, 'that you will hurt yourself far less by doing what I ask you in the beginning. You will have to in the long run, you know!'

This was sparks to gunpowder. She stared at him with teeth tightly clenched and all the rosy flush gone from her face. 'I think you'll find, Commander Warden, that you can't command Marianna Templeton!' She struggled with the ring on her slender finger. 'Here, take your ring and command someone else with it!' She threw it at him, and bounded off the table towards the window, standing open.

'Do you mean this, Marianna?' the man asked shortly.

Her heart was pounding, and with every throb it said to her, 'No! No! Of course I don't mean it; why can't I say so? Why can't I tell him that I love him more than ever at this very moment?' But the words would not say themselves. All that came was, 'Of course I mean it! I hate you now, and I hope I shall never see you again! Good-bye!' And she turned and went through the window, out into the garden.

VII.

Richard Warden stood looking after her, twisting the ring between his fingers. He stood like that, for some moments, lost in thought, until the movements of the parrot caught his attention. The parrot was dipping backwards and forwards on his perch, lifting his wings up and down, quite evidently labouring under some unusual excitement. Perhaps the old bird was going to have a fit, thought the man, absently. He shrugged his shoulders and walked towards the door.

'Oh! believe me, Marianna loves you—hoo-oo, hoo-oo!' It was the voice of the parrot behind him. The man stopped with his hand on the door-handle. Strange! Like the voice of conscience—perhaps as true. Queer coincidence, anyway! He wondered vaguely who had taught the bird to say that. Awful thing if

she did love him after all, and just out of a childish fit of cussedness. . . . Fancy Marianna, his little girl, marrying someone else!

'Oh! believe me,—' the parrot again. Was it his fancy, or was there really a note of entreaty in that flat, toneless voice? He took his hand off the handle and walked back to the bird's perch.

'—Marianna loves you—hoo-oo—' the words died away into a sort of hoarse whisper, and the bird sat huddled, with its bright eyes fixed on the man's face.

'Upon my word! Well—upon my word!' the man said, nonplussed. He felt a little creepy down his spine. 'I've a good mind to take you at your word, old sport. I'll have another try, for your sake!'

VIII.

He found her laughing and talking (rather more wildly than usual, he noticed) with her sister and two other men on the tennis-lawn. He wasted no time at all in words, but just picked her up in his arms as though she had been a baby, and without taking the least notice of her protestations, furious and otherwise, carried her, struggling wildly in his arms, back to the drawing-room sofa. There he kissed her, pinioning hands that would have prevented him, till she cried for breath.

'You're a dashed naughty little girl, and I'm going to spank you unless you say you're sorry before I count ten. One—two—'

'Let me go, you brute! How dare you use force on a woman like this!' More struggles.

'Three—four—five—'

'Richard, let me go—please let me go!' This last tearfully.

'Say "Dick, I love you more than ever," and I'll let you off the spanking!—six—seven—'

'Dick, stop! I—'

'Eight—nine—' She lay supine in his arms, quivering all over.

'Dick, I—'

'Say it!' His lips were so close to hers that there was scarcely room for words, but they came in the faintest whisper, '—love you . . . more . . . than ever!'

IX.

The parrot was losing vitality. There was no doubt about that; and the family was very much disturbed about it. No one ever heard him speak now, and he had quite lost his appetite.

'I really don't know what the bird lives on,' Mr Templeton remarked in a worried way. 'He was sitting there all huddled up when I came down to breakfast this morning, and I stroked him, but my fingers seemed to sink right in. He's nothing but a mass of feathers with a few bones in the middle!'

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'Well, I do hope to goodness he'll live until after the wedding, anyway,' said his spouse; 'it'll be such an upset if he doesn't! Marianna is so fond of him, and so is Richard, too, for some reason!'

The wedding could not be till mid-November. They were all very particular about Polly's cage being protected with blankets through the cold nights, and there was a fire in the room all day. Polly lived on, but at the beginning of November he caught a cold and coughed himself to pieces. They tried every remedy under the sun, but they could not shut their eyes to the fact that Polly was dying.

'It's just as if he *wanted* to live till after the wedding was safely over,' one of them said. 'I don't know what else is keeping him alive!'

The bride and bridegroom came to say good-bye to him before they left. 'Thanks, old sport, I owe all this to you!' whispered Richard, and the parrot feebly drooped his head on one side to be scratched.

'What were you saying to him, Dick?' asked his wife.

'Oh, just good-bye! I've an idea we sha'n't see him again, you know!' And Marianna's eyes were misty with tears.

The day afterwards Polly was too ill to move. Pamela suggested taking him upstairs to her room, where she had a fire; it was a room

which got all the afternoon sun. So they moved him up there, placed him where best the pale rays of an English winter sun could fall on the cage, and propped blankets around it. Feebly, but gratefully, the parrot lifted up his head to meet the sun. Were there, behind those glazing eyes, dim memories of other suns?

Suns of sweltering Africa? Morning suns of tropic seas and parched Pacific ports? Noon suns that fell on pig-tailed Chinamen, courtly Spanish captains, and bluff Dutch sailors from the Zuyder Zee? Evening suns that lit up the faces of befrilled, beringleted ladies and whiskered gentlemen with high stocks, as they made love among the roses long, long ago? Who knows?

But a November sun is pale and endureth not. It sank to the west as its rays grew faint and shadowy. And as it sank, the parrot's head drooped. The leafless trees outside took on a blacker hue and braced themselves, stilly, to the promise of frost in a yellowing sky. The sun turned red and dipped slowly to the horizon. The parrot's head sank lower still.

Presently the sun, like a red ball of fire, went down behind the hills and the day was gone. A cold, gray light filled the room, like the inevitable disillusion of a cheer that had been. No light in the sky now, nothing but a gray mist, sombre and final. The parrot was dead.

CURSES COME HOME.

By G. F. BYRON.

I.

IT was only half-past three when Bill Smithers quietly emerged from his bed, taking care not to disturb his wife, who slumbered on. In spite of his care, however, he did not avoid knocking his toe against the leg of the bed, and he but partly stifled a curse as he rubbed the tender part; never thinking how unnecessary it was for him to add to the sum total of curses, whose home-coming was to cause him so much discomfort during the next few hours. Being August, it was quite light, and he curtailed his hours of rest without reluctance, as the night had been insufferably hot, and it had been with difficulty that he and his family had slept at all. He got into his socks and trousers, and, carrying his boots and other clothes, made his way silently to the scullery; where, having filled the kettle and put it on the gas-ring, he proceeded to wash himself at the sink.

Bill was an engineer in the service of the Bay Side Corporation, for whom he drove the steam-roller; and sometimes it was necessary for him to commence work at an early hour, 1925.]

so as to finish the road-work before the day's traffic became dense. On the present occasion, the roadway at an important junction of roads, immediately opposite the Monarch Hotel, was under repair, and the efforts of Bill and his mates were required to start early and to function expeditiously.

After making himself a cup of tea, Bill cut off a crust of bread, which he liberally smeared with margarine, and, while he completed his toilet, steadily munched the dainty. He conscientiously tidied up a little in the kitchen to save his wife trouble, and then tiptoed into the bedroom, looked affectionately at her as she peacefully slept; and, kissing the baby, Ann Dorothy, as she lay in his old tool chest, converted into a serviceable cot, he quietly left the room. He glanced into young Bill's room, where his fifteen-year-old son slept; crept down stairs, put on his boots, stealthily opened the outside door, and let himself into the street.

It was a beautiful morning, still very hot, with the prospect of another day of intense heat, but Bill glowed with conscious virtue, and whistled an air associated with the state of the

banana market, as he walked rapidly to the scene of his morning's work, basking in the warmth of his own self-approval: for he easily assumed that his wife's appreciation of his worth, the healthy development of Ann Dorothy, his son's successful school-career, culminating in passing the sixth standard, the general happy condition of his whole small world and circumstances, were in some indefinite way the outcome of his own merit and early rising.

II.

Bill was the first to arrive, and at once proceeded to strip away the tarpaulin under which his beloved steam-roller snuggled its massive charms. After stoking up its furnace, he devoted himself to lubricating its bearings, and with oily rags and cotton-waste cleaning its metal parts, polishing the brass and steel gadgets with metal polish; all with the loving care and attention that a mother bestows on her favourite offspring.

Bill's mates, when they appeared, betrayed no such enthusiasm, nor exhibited any eagerness to start work. They were more inclined to become absorbed in thought. It seemed unnatural to them to disturb the silence, which at that early hour was only beginning to be broken by the early pipe of birds; and when they spoke, it was solely to express a mild disgust at finding themselves the only workers in an otherwise slumbering world.

Not so Bill; like a charioteer he stood on the platform of his machine, firmly handling the controls and urging on his noisy and uncouth steed.

The roadway had been picked over, and layers of hard angular stones deposited on its scarified surface, to be ground and incorporated, by means of Bill's delicate manipulations of his heavy-footed juggernaut, into a solid and concrete whole. As the atoms lay loose and inchoate, it was delightful to Bill to train his rolling mass over their shifting angularities, and to hear their crunching, grinding, and straining under the process; to feel the pained writhing and the tortured compression of the hard and resisting stone was a joy to him. He would set his teeth, and, glaring at the road, he would come charging on his heavyweight roller as if to grind to fragments the bones of an enemy. The more noise—and the sound was terrible—the greater his delight. The more the stones shrieked and rent the air in frenzied despair, the more relentlessly he urged on his heavy beast to their destruction.

As gradually the stones felt the weight of Bill's argument, their cries subsided, and from agonised groans sank into a melancholy scrunch of woe and rumbling pain. While the roadway in parts became solidified as the process was completed, the noise became less; and as the

noise decreased, the movement of the suffering roadway grew more pronounced, until the earth shook and houses trembled; until windows rattled and doors banged, and water-jugs performed cellar-flaps as they stood in wash-basins, gas-brackets shook indignantly, and hitherto complacent coal, stacked uncomfortably in cellars, tottered and tumbled to flatter and easier positions. It was then that Bill felt akin to the Immortals, the god in the car; and the hand of Bill lay heavy on the earth.

III.

Some twenty guests of the Monarch Hotel lay on their beds, sweltering in heat of body and anguish of mind. In the evening of an oppressively hot day, some had sought forgetfulness of discomfort by playing bridge; and though little was lost in the way of stakes, a good deal was in the way of temper. Others had been climbing hills in search of a refreshing breeze rumoured to have been lurking in the neighbourhood, but had only discovered midges, and had retired to rest wiser and bitten men. What sleep they had had was suffered rather than enjoyed, and they were doomed not to indulge in repose even of inferior quality—Bill and his steam-roller saw to that.

Some twenty inadequately-paying guests turned and tossed on their beds as though on racks, while they thus partook of their rest-cure. They groaned in rage, they blasphemed, they cursed.

The colonel, who professed to be able to sleep through bombardments, and in the saddle when charging, and who had slept comfortably through the Great War what time he was in the War Office, was thoroughly awakened. He swore very completely, using English, French, German, Dutch, and drawing on many Indian dialects for colour and variety: he made a very good job of it. If the colonel's advice had any influence on destiny, Bill's future was provided for.

As for Miss Packer—who claimed to be suffering from a nervous breakdown, and whose treatment appeared to consist of buying hats, eating chocolates, and the constant application of face-powder—she violently beat her pillow, used the most unladylike language, and wished very fervently that her breakdown could be transferred to Bill and his instrument of torture.

The Rev. Hankin Swotbury, writhing under his moist and bedraggled sheet, so far forgot himself as to remember only that he was an Old Blue, and used appropriately-hued language. He called upon the vague and strange gods of his college days to visit, with dire pains and punishments, the corporeal being of that Caliban of the Corporation who controlled the perambulatory horror of a steam-roller.

The world-renowned tenor, Signor Pogorotti, tore savagely at his more permanent locks; but

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as that poor gentleman was suffering from temporary loss of voice, he was denied the relief of uttered malediction, and perforce had to be dissatisfied by the internal congestion of fury taking place low down in his diaphragm, where his best notes were apt to be produced. As he thought of the times when he had all but sung the crowns off most of the royal heads of Europe, he fervently regretted his inability to dislodge the head of the demon mechanic outside, who was making more noise than he, in his best form, was ever able to do.

Numerous other disgruntled gentlemen of various ages, and ladies of invarious ages, tossed about restlessly, furious with anger at the outrageous behaviour of Bill and his mates; and all, in their different ways, wished intently that unpleasant things should occur to Bill.

IV.

Things were not going so well with Bill as his cheery hopes and early enthusiasm had promised. Juggernaut was in a pesky mood and required humouring, and Bill's humour was not equal to the demand. Buffin, Bill's mate, was less adroit at his job than usual. He it was who distributed the stones over the correct spots before the oncoming machine; strewing, as it were, Juggernaut's path with votive offerings. Buffin's judgment became faulty; the fragments were not placed to Bill's liking.

'Can't yer pack it proper?' inquired Bill, sarcastically. 'Wot yer think it is—confetti? Spread out those there lumps and 'eave out that stone monument. Looks as if yer want to trip the old girl up.'

'It's your driving wot's gone off,' replied the insulted Buffin. 'P'raps you'd like a carpet put down for you, or some train lines to run on. Ought to chuck that crusher and shove a blooming bath-chair, you ought.'

Buffin swore at Bill. Bill swore at Buffin. Juggernaut jibbed, shied, staggered, and, after running over Buffin's toe, came to a standstill in an awkward and inconvenient angle.

Bill had to investigate Juggernaut's interior, and it was not the kind of jug he preferred to look into. Parts had to be unscrewed, taps tested, bearings examined, with no better result than the jamming of Bill's finger in some part of the annoyed mechanism.

The roadway was finished somehow by nine o'clock, and by the time the hotel visitors were served with their shaving water, they were at liberty to sleep. A melancholy procession of depressed mechanics accompanied the steam-roller to its yard: Bill nursing a damaged finger, Buffin dragging a crushed toe, and all throwing out an aura of weary disgust and disillusion. How different from the cheerful setting forth of the early morning! 'Never glad, confident morning again,' thought Bill, though he would have expressed it differently.

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Nor was Bill's depression lifted when he arrived home, to find that the baby had broken out in spots, that the bottom of the best kettle had burnt out, and that his promising boy had been sent home from school in disgrace for having a dirty neck.

The baby was fractious, his wife was bad-tempered, his boy was sulky, his finger was aching; peace, comfort, and contentment had departed from his home.

V.

It was after breakfast, and the hotel guests were grouped about the lounge and the entrance lobby, discussing the early morning's disturbance. Each was intent on emphasising his or her particular individual suffering. But they had all passed a bad night; and even Mrs Wodwool, who was all but stone deaf, complained that she had been greatly disturbed by someone in the hotel working a typewriter in the small hours.

The morning was lovely; a pleasant breeze had sprung up; already it was cooler, and the heat-wave of the last few days appeared to have broken. After the excellent breakfast the hotel had provided, they felt altogether in a better temper. The angry colonel's rage was assuaged. He was pleased to find the *Times* had actually printed his letter on the advisability of substituting red tape for buttons on soldiers' tunics. He had had less difficulty than usual in arranging his scanty locks to fall over his bald spot; and, in spite of his broken repose, he felt he looked at his best. He glowed with benevolent patronage.

Miss Packer's jumper had been admired by Mrs Wodwool. Mrs Wodwool had been asked by the pretty Miss Taddle where she had bought that sweet blouse, and other ladies had made remarks of approved puerile politeness suitable to any and every occasion; so that there was a temporary glow of good feeling uniting the lady guests of the hotel.

Signor Pogorotti had received so much sympathy from the ladies that he very nearly recovered his voice, or enough of it to take a limited part in the general conversation.

'They've certainly made a good job of it,' said the colonel, as, glass in eye, he critically examined the hard and even surface of the repaired roadway. 'Now it will be possible to draw the car up to the curb without upsetting the whole outfit on to the paving, or twisting the tires off. There was a time, early this morning, gentlemen, when I cursed that roller and its cont-roller—ha! ha!—very heartily indeed; and, if my remarks carried any weight with the department that attends to such affairs, that demon driver's body would now be blended with that paving, and the whole of his family housed in Hades.'

'Yes,' murmured the Rev. Hankin Swotbury,

'I fear we were all severely tried last night. I must confess that I had myself thoughts and wishes of a distinctly evil nature with regard to that inexpert mechanic; but I trust, in view of the intolerable nature of the nuisance, such thoughts and—eh—expressions, will be forgiven us.'

'Anyhow,' the colonel advised the company generally, 'I think we may now lift off our combined curses. The row is over and the work is finished. He was only carrying out somebody else's orders, and he's made a good job of it. So peace be with you, my noisy friend: and peace for *us* to-night!' he added, with a wink. 'Carry on.'

'Peace be it!' chimed in his reverence in his best pulpit manner. 'I look forward to our having a good sleep to-night, my friends.'

'Peace by all means,' the tenor succeeded in uttering, much to his pleased surprise. And the lounge echoed with the response, 'Peace, peace!' uttered by the guests assembled.

VI.

Bill was feeling better. He had made several disparaging remarks about his wife's family, which always afforded him a measure of relief when domestic affairs were not as easy-going as he liked. He had sent his son into the scullery, with orders to have a bath and not to show himself until he could appear without a blemish

on his person. His wife, after searching *Home Life's* baby-care column, under the head of 'Spots,' had applied the simple curative advised; and the exasperating condition of things was distinctly improved.

But happiness was not entirely re-established until Mr Johnson, Superintendent of Roads, looked in, and after expressing himself as well pleased with Bill's general performance, promised to put his name before the chief for advancement.

Bill's boy, coming into the room at the right moment, glowing and highly polished from his bath, impressed the superintendent so favourably by the cleanliness of his appearance, that after a few preliminary inquiries, and receiving intelligent answers to his questions from that youth, he proposed getting him a position in the office of the Corporation. As he remarked on leaving the house on his way to inspect Bill's work of the morning, 'If cleanliness is next to godliness, why, the Corporation could do with a bit of it.'

Later. Note received by Bill. 'Not your fault, but on inspection, I find the stones and ballast supplied you for roadway opposite Monarch Hotel too light and quite unsuitable. The whole will have to be raked up and re-rolled. How early can you start to-morrow? —J. JOHNSON.'

THE AUTOCRAT.

The policeman at the corner is very great and grand,
He stops the hugest motor-van by holding up his hand.
The driver of the tramcar and the lordly taximan—
They dare not try to hurry past until he says they can.

You'd think they'd take no notice, and just go on their way,
But somehow no one ever seems to try to disobey.
He's like a mighty wizard as he stands there all alone—
He only has to wave his arm, and lo! they're turned to stone!

And yet this splendid policeman, what do you think he'll do—
At least for me and Mary Ann?—though not, of course, for you!
He'll hold up all the traffic just to let us safely by,
And as we run across he smiles, and *winks his nearest eye!*

Sometimes there's Mr Hopkins, who is a millionaire,
Kept waiting in his grandest car—but little we two care!
The policeman at the corner is grander still, and he
Is quite an extra special friend of Mary Ann and me.

B. NOËL SAXELBY.

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